

# TAKING THE LEAD

*New roles  
for teachers and  
school-based  
coaches*

SECOND EDITION

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THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ASSOCIATION

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## Taking the Lead

Coaches and teacher leaders assume significant roles in schools and school systems today. Learn about the ten roles described in the second edition of *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-based Coaches*, how the roles contribute to teaching quality and student learning, and the knowledge, skills, practices, and challenges associated with each role. Teachers, teacher leaders, coaches, principals, and district leaders will learn how to select, narrow the focus of coaching roles, assess the impact of each role, and address common challenges coaches face.

### Outcomes:

- Understand the ten roles of coaches, what coaches in each role do to support teachers, the knowledge, skills, and practices they use, and the challenges they commonly face to analyze and adjust the current work of coaches to increase its effectiveness.
- Use the roles to communicate to teachers, principals, resource personnel, and others how coaches support teaching quality and student learning.
- Examine criteria for narrowing the focus of coaches' work using the roles.
- Generate strategies and tactics to resolve common challenges coaches in each role face to increase the effectiveness of coaching.

*What I hope to learn is ...*

Why roles . . .

Killion, J. & Harrison, C. (2017). *Taking the lead: New roles for teacher leaders and school-based coaches*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Knowledge/Skills</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Resource provider</b>			
<b>Curriculum specialist</b>			
<b>Instructional specialist</b>			
<b>Classroom supporter</b>			
<b>Data coach</b>			

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Knowledge/Skills</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Mentor</b>			
<b>Learning facilitator</b>			
<b>School leader</b>			
<b>Catalyst for change</b>			
<b>Learner</b>			

# Instructional Coach

## Roles of Coaches

**Resource provider**

**Data Coach**

**Instructional specialist**

**Curriculum specialist**

**Classroom supporter**

**Learning facilitator**

**School leader**

**Catalyst for change**

**Learner**

**Mentor**

**Naperville Community School District 203**  
**Learning Support Coach**  
**Program Outcomes**

**Year 1**

- Increased job-embedded and collaborative **professional learning** opportunities for individual teachers and building-based communities of learning
- Increased instructional capacity of teachers in meeting the needs of ALL students and the implementation of core (tier 1) instruction (**building capacity**)
- Evidenced facilitation of teacher collaborative planning and reflection that increases the schools' **culture of collaboration**
- Evidence of implementation of the four coaching roles—classroom supporter (partner), instructional specialists, data coach, and learning facilitator—and building- and district-level support for **building the coaching role**

**Year 2**

- **Increased student performance** on state and district measures with an emphasis on closing achievement gaps.
- Evidence of instructional and curricular support to implement **Common Core** States Standards and educational changes associated with Common Core implementation
  - Literacy (integration in all disciplines)
  - Math
- **Increased instructional capacity** of teachers in meeting the needs of ALL students and the implementation of core (tier 1) instruction (**building capacity**)

**Year 3**

- **Increased student performance** on state and district measures with an emphasis on closing achievement gaps.
- Evidence of teacher growth and leadership in instructional planning, effective practices in instruction, data-informed culture, and collaborative culture (**Building teacher leaders**)
- Increased level of implementation of co-teaching, co-planning, engaging teachers in collaborative planning and data analysis structures, and in leading building-based professional learning (**Level of Implementation**)
- Increase in **purposeful use of collaborative planning time**

## **Learning Support Coach Job Description**

### **Purpose:**

This position will provide support for teachers in the implementation of effective instructional practices to ensure high academic achievement of all students. This position is designed to increase individual and collective teacher capacity to provide leadership for change. Increased and collective teacher capacity is an integral part of the district moving forward in implementing the Common Core States Standards, the teacher evaluation system, and for student success with the PARCC assessments.

### **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS (as demonstrated in application process):**

- Valid Illinois teaching license or certificate
- Minimum of five years of successful teaching experience
- Advanced degree or comparable experience in content (preferred higher level degree in curriculum and instruction or a content-specific area)
- Demonstrated classroom implementation of best practices in instruction
- Demonstrated success in working with adult learners
- Demonstrated strong leadership skills with evidence of taking leadership positions
- Demonstrated ability to engage with and facilitate groups
- Demonstrated desire for continuous learning
- Demonstrated skills in organization, problem solving and communication with a variety of audiences in a variety of situations
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate with others
- Demonstrated ability to build trust with a variety of groups and build consensus within groups
- Ability to use standard district technology effectively and efficiently for a variety of purposes and willingness to learn new technology
- Willingness to work a flexible schedule, school day, and school year

### **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Demonstrated ability to close the achievement gap between groups of students
- Evidence of productive experience with communities of practice or similar results based collaboration
- Ability to help others make sense of and adjust to change
- Demonstrated flexibility and capacity for dealing with ambiguity
- Ability to manage multiple projects and meet deadlines
- Willingness to successfully implement all relevant parts of the school improvement plan
- Experience with coaching adults
- Knowledge of effective professional learning structures

## **RESPONSIBILITIES (Essential functions – job description and limited number of employees:**

- Partner with principals, individual teachers, school sites to implement effective instructional practices with a focus on co-planning, co-teaching, and modeling.
- Provide support for the consistent implementation of adopted curriculum and district standards through co-planning lessons with teachers and teams.
- Assisting in identifying, planning and facilitating professional learning opportunities for teachers.
- Meet with individual teachers and teams of teachers to have collaborative conversations and identify the needs, interests and type of coaching desired by teachers, teams and communities of practice.
- Purposefully and frequently communicate with teachers, principals, and district-level administrators through conversations, emails, memos newsletters, websites, study groups and other appropriate methods.
- Provide modeling and co-teaching of a variety of proven instructional methods, use of materials and assessments in classroom settings to increase teacher efficacy.
- Participate in ongoing personal professional learning experiences in which coaches examine their own practice, share ideas, problem solve and develop best practice expertise and tools as a means of enhancing the instructional practices of all teachers.
- Establish trust, rapport, and credibility with entire school community.
- Facilitate conversations with individual teachers, grade level teams, whole staffs, and other groups.
- Work with other support personnel and coaches as necessary.

Must be available for summer training  
Work 10 days in addition to the contract year

The Roles:	The Work:
<p><b>Classroom Supporter (partner):</b> The Learning Support Coach provides direct support to teachers in their classrooms through co-planning, co-teaching and modeling effective instructional strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-teaches, models strategies and techniques that ensures rigorous core instruction for <i>all</i> learners</li> <li>• Co-plans to support implementation of units using backward design and effective instructional practices</li> <li>• Observing &amp; providing feedback to teachers with a focus on results with students</li> <li>• Has conversations with teachers to promote reflection and identification of next steps based on teacher direction</li> <li>• Provides timely and specific feedback that facilitates adult learners’ personal growth and changes in instructional practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Instructional Specialist:</b> The Learning Support Coach’s depth of instructional knowledge provides all teachers with the skills to deliver quality core instruction ensuring high student achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands, instructs, and models for teachers effective instructional practices.</li> <li>• Supports teachers individually and in groups in meeting the needs of ALL students and the implementation of core (tier 1) instruction.</li> <li>• Supports teachers with differentiated instruction</li> <li>• Assist teachers in the selection and implementation of appropriate instructional practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Data Coach:</b> The Learning Support Coach is the catalyst to move teachers beyond what the data means to the actions that will close the gap between current student performance to the desired student performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports Implementation of data informed instruction</li> <li>• Supports teachers as they develop understandings of proficiency as connected to state standards in all grades and contents</li> <li>• Engages teachers in the use of multiple data sources</li> <li>• Assists teachers in focusing on student work to identify information about students’ learning (formative assessment)</li> <li>• Facilitates reflections of individual and groups of teachers about student growth</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning Facilitator:</b> The Learning Support coach works collaboratively with teachers and administrators to design professional learning opportunities that meet the needs of the adults at the site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops relationships with adults that lead to increased rigor, change in practice, reflection and building-wide collective efficacy that results in increased student achievement as supported by research</li> <li>• Plans for high quality professional learning that is integrated and embedded into day-to-day teaching and learning and is aligned with school and district vision and mission</li> <li>• Facilitates teacher collaboration through structured learning opportunities and coaching conversations</li> <li>• Utilizes the national (Learning Forward) standards and research when designing and delivering professional learning</li> <li>• Actively learns and engages in professional reading and research to keep current and share ideas</li> </ul>

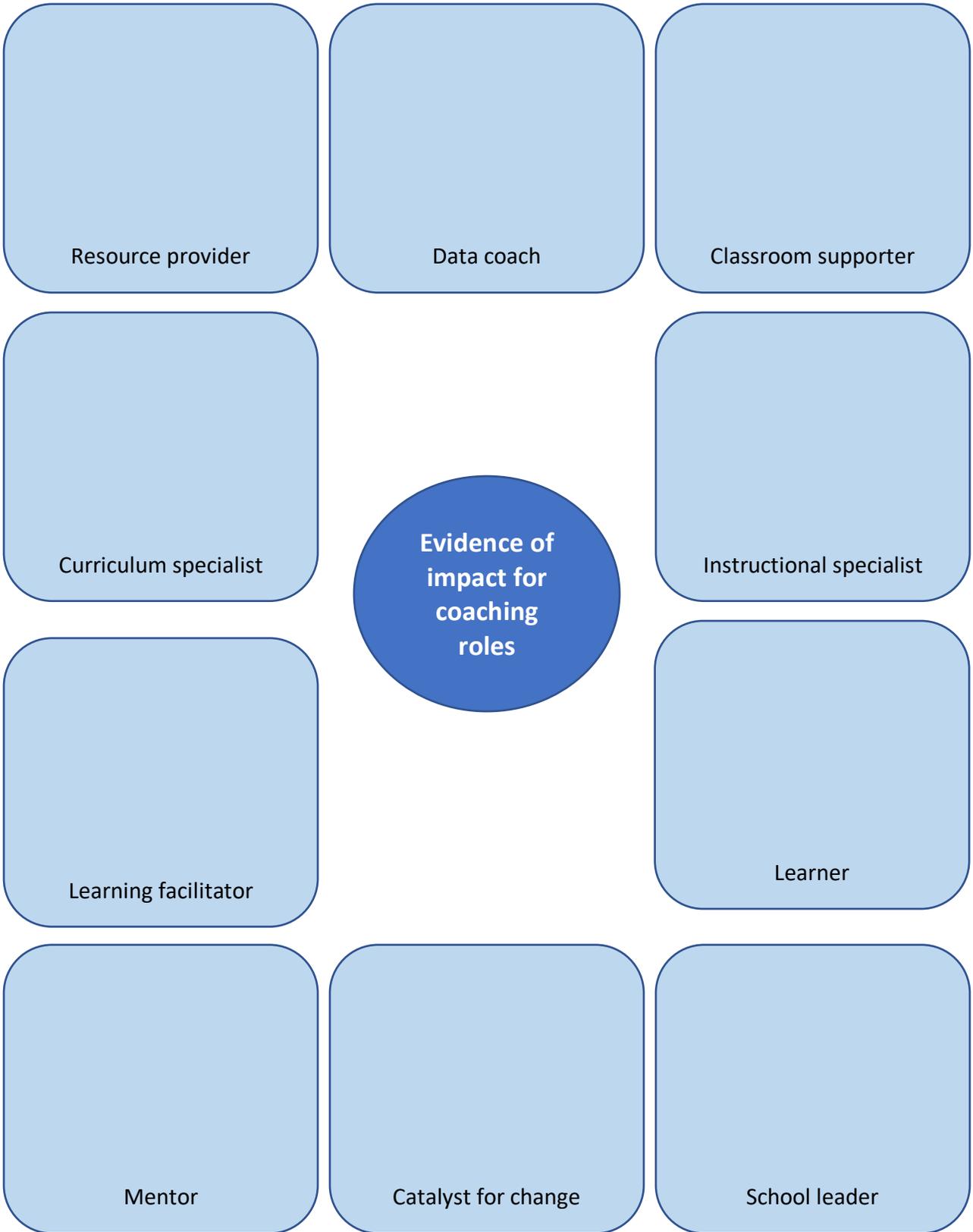
## Walk-Talk on Role Priorities

Consider which of the 10 roles has the greatest impact on the following. Share your thinking. Which roles have the greatest impact on:

1. Quality teaching?
2. Student learning/success?
3. Teacher efficacy?
4. School culture?
5. Coach satisfaction
6. Principal leadership?
7. Other areas?

### Reflection:

- How do coach supervisors/coaches decide what role to fulfill?
- What is the value of knowing the roles?
- How can you use the roles to strengthen the work of coaches?
- What are the priority roles for you as a coach/for those you support or supervise? What influences the prioritization of coach roles?
- How do you communicate to teachers, principals, coaches, and others which roles are priority roles?



## Coaching Challenges

Coaching challenges	Options for addressing

## Coaching Support Trio

- Form triads.
- Use the protocol to solve a real problem related to your work and to be equitable to all members.
- Identify a timekeeper to monitor time.
- Decide who will go first, second, and third.

<b>8 minutes</b>	The presenter describes the issue you want help with; provides background information that will help your partners understand the situation; explains what you have done so far. Use role names instead of names as you describe the situation. Presenter uses facts when talking about the issue and situation.
<b>3 minutes</b>	Partners ask clarifying questions and presenter answers them with facts.
<b>1 minute</b>	Presenter tells partners what kind of help s/he wants.
<b>5 minutes</b>	Partners offer help (the kind requested) to the presenter while s/he remains silent. Partners work to identify as many different ideas as possible rather than advocating for one idea.
<b>2 minutes</b>	Presenter shares what seems most helpful and what s/he might do next.

- Reflect on the value of the Consultancy Trio to you.
  - What did you learn?
  - How was the process helpful to you?
  - How did the process help your partners?
  - How might you use this process in your work as a coach?