Five Key Foundational Pillars for Building an Effective Instructional Coaching Model

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March 2015

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS
at American Institutes for Research ■

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Welcome, Introductions, and Outcomes

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Mission

The mission of the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) is to foster the capacity of vibrant networks of practitioners, researchers, innovators, and experts to build and sustain a seamless system of support for great teachers and leaders for every school in every state in the nation.

American Institutes for Research

Established in 1946, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., American Institutes for Research (AIR) is an independent, nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance both domestically and internationally.

As one of the largest behavioral and social science research organizations in the world, AIR is committed to empowering communities and institutions with innovative solutions to the most critical challenges in education, health, workforce, and international development.

Outcomes for Session

- Establish roles and responsibilities for instructional coaches.

- Understand the coaching cycle.

- Use coaching language to provide meaningful feedback.

- Prepare to communicate to the staff about coaching.

- Use data collection systems to monitor and evaluate coaching effectiveness.

Why Focus on Instructional Coaching?

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), requires that districts develop and implement school improvement plans that include professional development programs for teachers at schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress for two years or more. Specifically, it requires that these professional development programs incorporate activities, such as coaching, that are provided consistently across time.

What the Research Tells Us

- As research has shown for years, traditional forms of professional development are not effective, usually achieving an implementation rate of no better than 10 percent (Bush, 1984).

- Evidence of increased student learning as a direct result of coaching is not yet well documented (Poglinco et al., 2003).

What the Research Tells Us

- Joyce and Showers (2002) states that workshop-based professional development, no matter how well designed and delivered, had little effect on classroom practice.

- This outcome could be changed dramatically if participants actively practiced new skills in the workshops and then were given feedback and coaching on-site in their classrooms on the application of those skills.

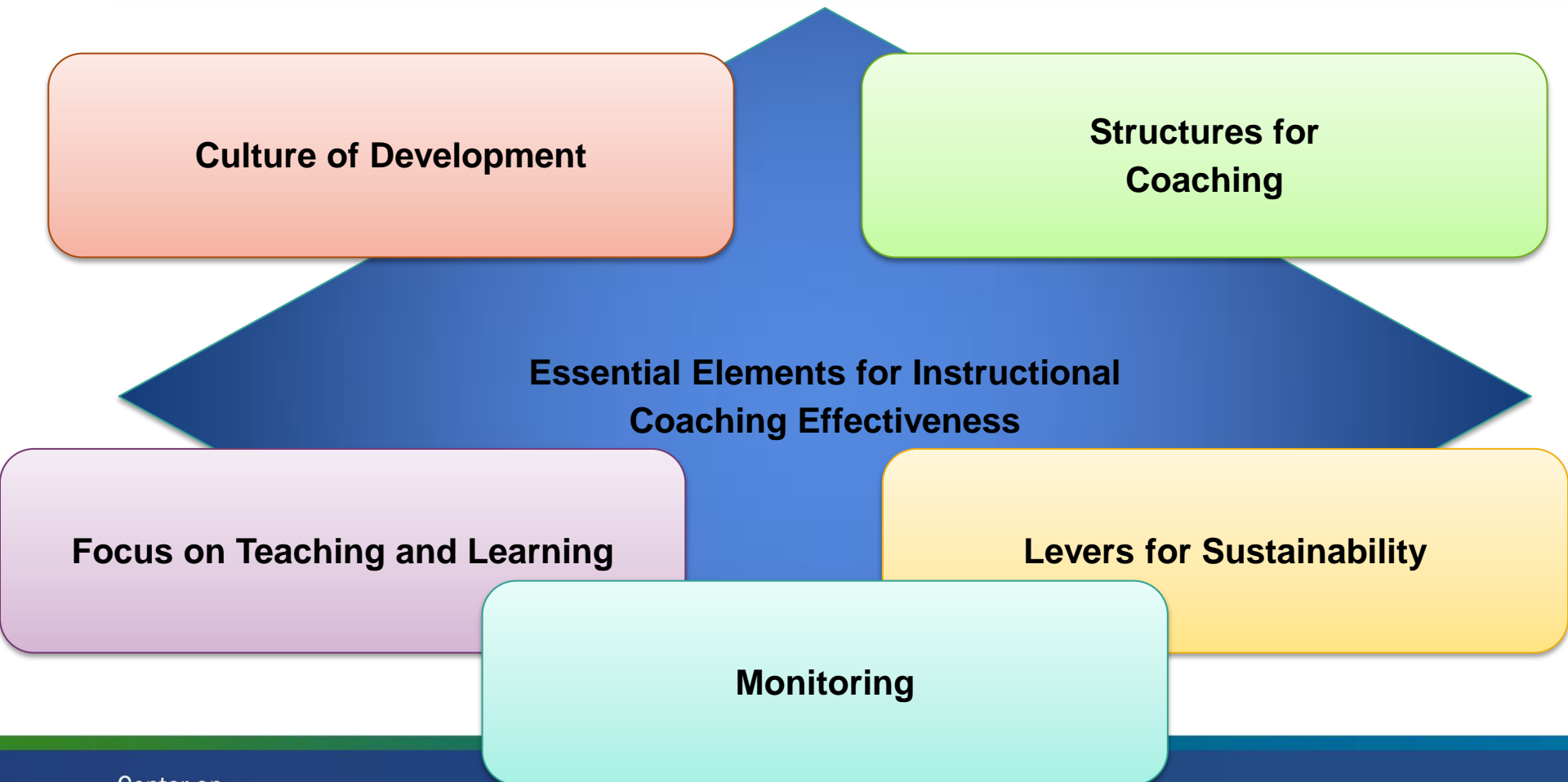# What Is Effective Professional Learning?

Focused   Active   Collaborative

Ongoing, Embedded, and Differentiated

Adapted from Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe (2011)

AIR Instructional Coaching Elements

Culture of Development

Structures for Coaching

Essential Elements for Instructional Coaching Effectiveness

Focus on Teaching and Learning

Levers for Sustainability

Monitoring

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Culture of Development

Coaching Alignment

- A broadly shared definition of excellent teaching, based on professional teaching standards, provides the anchor for coaching conversations and the vision for school improvement work.

- Alignment among all professional development experiences, including evaluation, creates coherence for teachers.

- A relational-trust-focused culture, with a solutions orientation and a focus on improvement, is spearheaded by leaders and shared among staff.

Killion's Shifts to Coaching Heavy

Coaching Light	Coaching Heavy
Focus on teaching practices identified by teachers	Focus on student learning and the use of specific practices within the school's or district's instructional framework, teachers' performance standards, or aligned with the adopted curriculum
Feedback on teaching practices	Feedback on the interaction between student engagement in learning, performance, and achievement and teaching
Teacher self-assessment based on perceptions or opinions	Data-driven assessment based on student data
Voluntary coaching—only those teachers who request coaching receive it	Expectation for all teachers to engage in coaching—all teachers engage in continuous improvement with specific feedback and support from the coach
Focus on adapting or refining instructional strategies	Focus on transforming practice, examining beliefs, and testing assumptions
Focus on implementing strategies	Focus on deep understanding of the theory and research underlying strategies to ensure executive control
Emphasis on feeling supported	Emphasis on developing expertise

Source: Killion (2010)

Structures for Coaching

Role and Responsibilities

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"If you don't know where you are going, then any path will do."
~ *Alice in Wonderland*

Definition of an Instructional Coach

- Primary professional responsibility is to bring practices that have been studied using a variety of research methods into classrooms by working with adults rather than students.

- Instructional coaches may spend some time working with groups of teachers and may have other administrative responsibilities, but they set aside a significant portion of their time to offer classroom modeling, supportive feedback, and specific observations of individual teaching practices.

Source: Kowal & Steiner (2007)

East Middle School Coaching Roles and Responsibilities

- Provide differentiated coaching support.
- Provide coaching feedback based on data: assessment data, student work, and observation data (quantitative and qualitative).
- Support core curriculum implementation through professional development to include modeling and demonstrations.
- Monitor student learning (e.g., rigor and engagement) to drive data-based professional learning community (PLC) discussions focused on increasing student achievement.
- Inform student interventions (starting with teacher support but following through to impact on learning and achievement).
- Guide formative assessment development.
- Participate on the instructional leadership team (ILT).

Coaching Activities

Classroom-Based Activities With Individual Teachers	Classroom-Focused Activities With Groups of Educators
Demonstrating and modeling instructional practices and lessons	Conducting study groups
Observing instruction	Providing training and professional development workshops
Coteaching	Organizing and brokering instructional materials
Coplanning lessons and units	Administering assessments and monitoring results
Providing feedback and consultation	Chairing or serving on school and district committees
Promoting reflection	
Analyzing students' work and progress	

The Instructional Coaching Cycle

➢ Teacher and coach share clear instructional expectations.
➢ Teacher and coach build trust…and

➢ Do a demo.
➢ Share a resource.
➢ Observe again.
➢ Analyze student work.
➢ Set up a peer observation.
➢ Lesson plan together.

Teacher and coach set, revise, and review professional growth plan

Teacher teaches; coach observes and collects data.

COACHING CONVERSATIONS

Teacher and coach agree to next steps.

Our theory of change: Strong support for teachers → improved instruction and connections for kids → increased learning and higher achievement

East Middle School Professional Learning

- August summer institute (five days)
- August 9: professional development full day
- PLCs: grade level and content
- Grade level meetings: new protocols
- Learning walks (focused on schoolwide trends)
- Teach Like a Champion Study Group
- Assessment literacy professional development
- Afterschool staff professional development (teachers sharing best practices)
- Content-driven professional development sessions

- Vertical team conversations (District induction
- School-based induction (both mentoring and support networks)
- Teach For America
- Graduate school
- Scholastic Read 180 support
- Connected mathematics support
- Teacher leaders leading PLCs
- Teacher leadership professional development
- Positive behavioral interventions and supports training
- Committee meetings (formal and ad hoc)

Focus on Teaching and Learning

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Building Coaching Skills

- AIR on-site coordinator and ELA content coach model preconferencing protocols while school-based instructional coaches observe.

- Conferencing questions:
  - What specifically would you like for me to look for during your model lesson?
  - What are the intended outcomes for the lesson?
  - How will students be assessed?

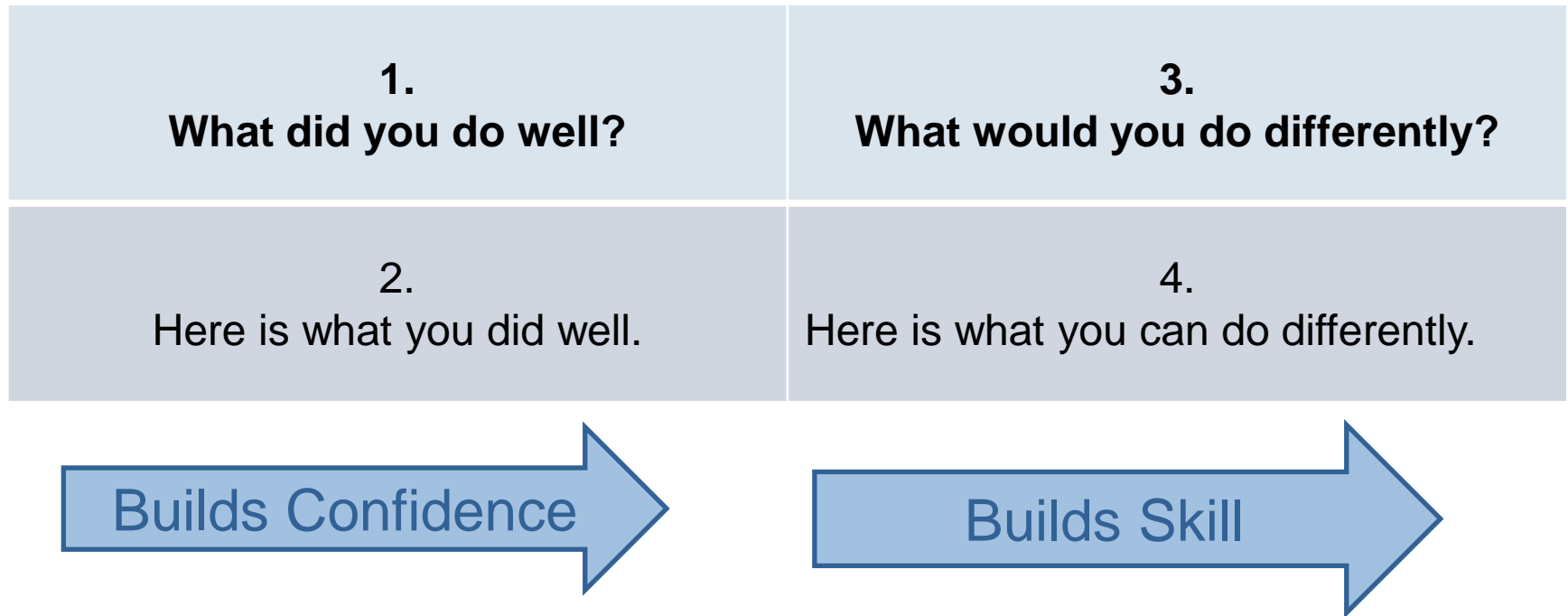- Debrief of preconference, identifying coaching process and strategies

Fishbowl Model Lesson

- The ELA content coach models writing mini-lesson in the classroom.

- Observers:
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
  - School-based coaches
  - On-site coordinator

- A coaching session immediately follows.

Coaching Session

- The AIR on-site coordinator and the English language arts (ELA) content coach model a coaching session.

- Two areas of emphasis:
  - Coaching preconference look-fors
  - World's simplest feedback model

- Instructional coaches and teachers provide authentic feedback to the ELA content coach,

World's Simplest Feedback Model

1. **What did you do well?**	3. **What would you do differently?**
2. Here is what you did well.	4. Here is what you can do differently.

Builds Confidence →

Builds Skill →

Building Coaching Capacity

- Training and coaching modeling has translated to the following:

  - Understanding of the role of the coach and the teacher's role in being coached

  - Establishing trust between the coach and teachers

  - Specific feedback during coaching sessions

  - Increased confidence in coaches

Coaching Capacity

From an ELA high school teacher:

> I feel that I am free to ask coaches specific questions about what I need and get the answers and supports I need. I feel they are very open to helping with ideas, tips on how to implement strategies, and ideas to support instruction. Though I may not specifically work with coaches every day, I do feel I get enough support from them. I also feel that they work hard to streamline a lot of the confusing information and details of programs and make them easier and more understandable.

Levers for Sustainability

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Communication Framework

	Key Words
What we believe about I. **Teaching** II. **Student learning** III. **Their relationship**	Coaching is key for us to become effective teachers. The better we become as teachers, the more our students will learn.
Some history I want to acknowledge	Too many initiatives have been tried and failed. I have spent too much time in the office.
The commitments our leaders have made	Dedicate two full-time positions for coaching. Dedicate time for teachers to meet with coaches. Learn effective coaching practices.
What we have committed to in our school improvement plan	Improving student achievement in reading and mathematics; weekly PLC time.
The commitment I am making	I will be conducting daily learning walks with the coaches to learn about our progress and observe in classrooms.
What I hope the results are	Assessments will indicate that our students are improving in every academic area.

Coaching Communication

- Post a monthly coaching blog.

- Report coaching updates of progress at faculty meetings, school leadership team meetings, and ILT meetings.

- E-mail weekly updates from coaches, sharing successes that might include pictures or video clips from classrooms.

- Host weekly *Breakfast with the Coach* sessions to share articles, talk about coaching, and talk about students.

Monitoring for Coaching Effectiveness

School Leadership Team

- Schedule periodic monthly meetings with coaches to analyze coaching data.

- Determine instructional areas (i.e., teacher, content, grade level to adjust, revise, or intensify support).

- Communicate to staff updates and improvements to the coaching program based on data.

Teacher Development Dialogue Tool

- Ensure that all teachers have a well-planned system of support or goals in place that align to district initiatives, the goals of the school improvement plan, and teacher evaluation standards.

- Identify the tiered level of support needed by each teacher and specific support steps to be taken by the evaluator, the school-based instructional coach, and the teacher.

- Regularly track the progress of each teacher in alignment with the district or school evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of the support plan or modifications to the support needed for the teacher.

- Aggregate relevant evaluation, coaching, and professional growth data to assist administrators in staff planning issues, such as tenure, teaching assignments, leadership opportunities, retention, and more.

Process: Teacher Development Dialogue Tool

- **Prior to meeting**
  - Each administrator or designee should add his or her assigned teachers to the tool and provide updated information for the customized columns.
  - Team members should come to each teacher development dialogue meeting ready to discuss the current status of support provided and progress made by each teacher.
- **Participate in quarterly meetings (90 minutes to two hours)**
  - Team members should discuss progress and existing support of teachers to determine the continued plan of support.
- **Between quarterly meetings**
  - Administrators should observe and meet with teachers and coaches to discusses progress and provide specific feedback.
  - Instructional coaches should support teachers according to the teacher development dialogue plan.

Weekly Coaching Schedule

- Based on your teacher development/teacher goals, develop a weekly coaching schedule.

- A weekly schedule has the following characteristics:

  - Provides coaches a focus and direction.

  - Allows for external accountability and communication.

  - Provides an opportunity for the supervisor and teachers to know how the coach prioritizes his or her day or week.

Teacher Goal Setting

- Teacher coaching goals are based on a review of observation data, student data, and teacher and coach input.

- Goals are aligned with school improvement goals, are aligned with teacher evaluation standards, and move the teaching practice.

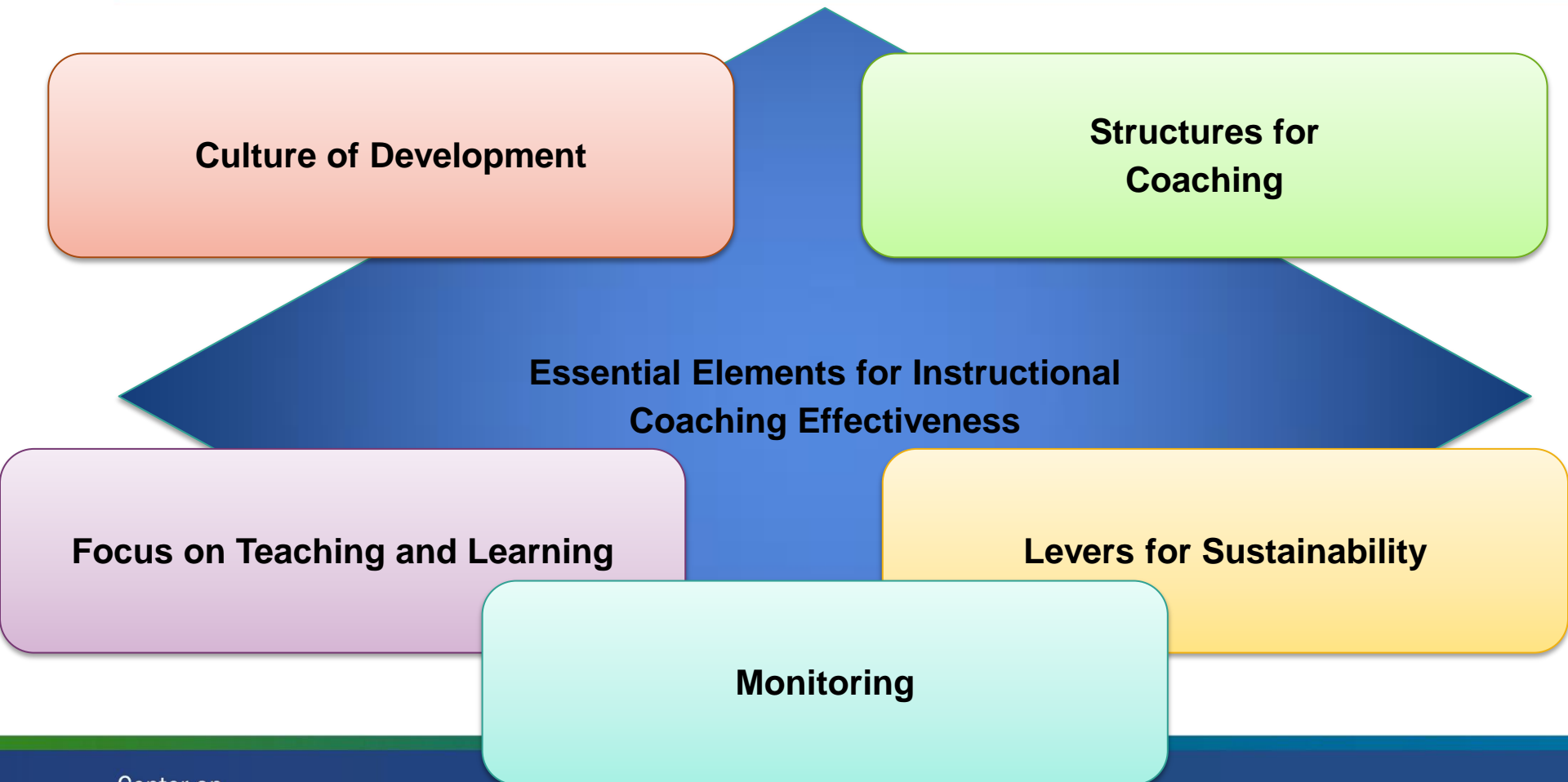- Goals are specific, concise, obtainable, measurable, and time bound.

Coaching Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00		Analyze student data	Read literature on assessment practices		Review lesson plans and provide feedback
9:00	Observe teacher A			Weekly meeting with principal	Develop coaching schedule
10:00	Plan Wednesday's PLC meeting	Model lesson for teacher B	Prepare materials for PLC meeting	Observe teacher D	
11:00		Observer teacher C	Model lesson for teacher A	Observe teacher E	Facilitate 8th grade meeting
12:00	Debrief with teacher A	Gather materials for meeting next ILT meeting	Debrief with teacher A	Facilitate department meeting on writing	Review work plans for teacher; determine next steps
1:00	Coaching notes on teacher A and plan	Facilitate walk-through observations with ILT	Coaching notes on teacher A	Participate in walk-through observations with principal	
2:00	Read literature on teacher leadership	Attend coaching meeting with principal	Facilitate PLC meeting	Research on English language development practices	My professional development: Coach's meeting
3:00	ILT meeting	Debrief with teacher B	Write up notes and documentation from PLC meeting	Meet with teacher D	
4:00		Meet with teacher C		Meet with teacher E	
5:00				Coaching notes on teachers D and E	

Monitoring Tools

- Professional growth plans evidence

- Teacher performance on teacher evaluation instrument

- Student assessment results (formative and summative)

- Periodic coaching surveys to assess teacher's perceptions of coaching

- Coaching Tracking Tool to monitor coaching activities to collect and analyze data on how coaches are spending time (e.g., one-on-one coaching, lesson planning, demo lessons)

Wrap Up and Reflection

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