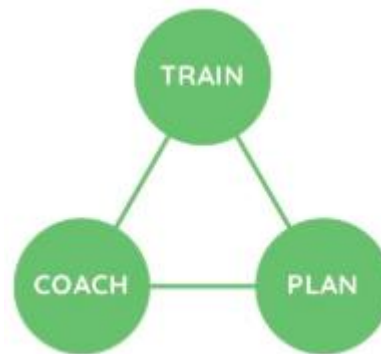


Three Pillars of Teacher Support

This resource provides an overview of the Three Pillars of Teacher Support—train, plan, and coach—including their key components and how they work together.



The triangle of teacher support includes three pillars: training, planning, and coaching. These three pillars need to work in tandem to support effective implementation and result in quality instruction for students. Each of these is an ongoing endeavor to support the implementation of the curriculum in response to student and teacher needs and to strengthen the quality of instruction over time.

Train

Train refers to the explicit training that teachers, instructional coaches, and school leaders need to:

- Understand the design of the curriculum and its alignment to the standards
- Best utilize the materials at the lesson and unit levels to provide quality instruction for students
- Implement the instructional practices within the curriculum that make the curriculum come to life
- Customize the materials, where appropriate, to make informed instructional decisions that strengthen student engagement and success
- Utilize the specific protocols and tools provided for pacing, collaborative planning, student work analysis, and data analysis from curriculum-embedded assessments

One of the pitfalls that many districts/charter networks encounter is viewing "training" as a one-time activity—providing initial training for teachers, coaches, and leaders when a curriculum is first adopted and implemented—but not having a plan to provide ongoing training to continuously improve implementation. The most successful districts/charter networks engage in continuous training in response to evolving teacher needs to strengthen their use and implementation of the materials over time.

Plan

Plan refers to the collaborative and/or independent planning processes that teachers engage in on a daily, weekly, and quarterly basis to:

- Deeply study unit plans and lesson plans to understand the intended outcomes for students
- Internalize daily lessons to prepare for instruction, including deeply understanding the standard(s) addressed within the lesson, the expectations for the work students will do and/or produce, and anticipating potential misconceptions and how to respond to them
- Practice lesson delivery as part of preparation for instruction
- Analyze student work to strategically respond to student needs in instruction

As teachers begin to engage with a new curriculum, it is important to consider that the work shifts from instructional planning to intellectual preparation—that is, the goal is for teachers to deeply study and understand the materials through intellectual preparation as a means of preparing for instruction.

Coach

Coach refers to the ongoing coaching and feedback teachers should receive to improve their content-specific instructional practices and strengthen their use of the curriculum. Coach is where the three pillars intersect because it provides several different opportunities to:

- Observe teachers, which can be an informal opportunity to monitor implementation of the materials because coaches are able to see how they are being used in practice
- Identify trends in instruction and in the use of materials, which can inform future trainings, help to identify planning challenges, and identify model classrooms
- Provide individualized support to teachers to implement the training they have received or to execute the plan created during internalization

Coaching can be utilized strategically to be a key driver of strengthening implementation. Strong coaching includes:

- Cycles of inquiry grounded in the *Train* and *Plan* work where teachers receive explicit support to implement new practices learned in training or are provided with feedback on lesson implementation based on their planning
- Explicit coaching and support on the intellectual preparation conducted as part of the *Plan* pillar to strengthen the use and understanding of instructional materials

A common pitfall in the implementation of *Coach* is that the people charged with providing coaching to teachers have not received their own version of *Train*, *Plan*, *Coach* to fully understand the materials, how to use them effectively, and how to integrate the materials into their current coaching work. When this occurs, coaches

can sometimes view their role as separate from the instructional materials and only provide coaching on instructional practices. This has the potential to undermine implementation efforts as coaches can give feedback that conflicts with the design of the materials and therefore erodes teacher trust. It is essential that *Coach* is tightly aligned to the implementation of the instructional materials and that coaches receive the training, planning, and coaching support necessary to implement these pillars for teachers.