

Professional Development and Instructional Coaching Vision

Our instructional coaching program aims to foster a culture of continuous professional growth and collaboration among educators. By providing personalized support and professional development, we strive to enhance teaching practices, improve student outcomes, and create a dynamic learning environment that meets the diverse needs of our grade 6-12 students.

Teaching is a complex endeavor that deserves a multifaceted approach to supporting the growth and development of educators. Educator development takes several interdependent forms at Boston Prep.

- **Departmental Professional Learning Community (PLC):** Teachers of the same department meet once each week under the guidance of the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI). Departmental PLCs focus on a quarterly cycle of inquiry grounded in backward planning from quarterly interim assessments, providing teachers with support with unit and lesson planning/internalization.
- **1-1 Instructional Coaching:** Every teacher participates in weekly or biweekly 1-1 instructional coaching with a member of the school leadership team. These sessions take one of two forms: observation and feedback or weekly data meetings.
 - Observation/Feedback: The coach observes instruction and then supports the teacher during coaching to identify a bite size action step to strengthen further their instructional impact.
 - Weekly Data Meetings: The teacher and coach collaboratively analyze student work to identify procedural and conceptual gaps relative to the language of the standard, and plan a reteach to target misconceptions. The coach comes to observe the reteach and to offer feedback on implementation.
- **Professional Development:** Sessions for the entire teaching staff, focused on introducing new topics and skills aligned to our school-wide priorities.
- **Practice Clinics:** Practice Clinics are short (usually 30-45 minutes) additional practice-based sessions for small groups of teachers to get additional practice implementing specific teaching strategies previously introduced during professional development sessions.

By committing to this vision, we aim to empower our educators, inspire our students, and cultivate a thriving academic community.

The Details

The details below are meant to provide additional logistical information about how we operationalize our vision for professional growth.

Classroom Observations

Boston Prep instructional leaders value frequency over length of observation. As such, you can expect that your coach will spend 15-20 minutes in your classroom during an observation. If you are a teacher in Years 1-3 at Boston Prep, you will start on a weekly coaching meeting cycle and weekly observations. For teachers in Year 4+ at Boston Prep, you will start on biweekly coaching meetings. School leaders may adjust the coaching cadence to be more or less frequent depending on demonstrated need.

During a classroom observation, Coaches may interact with students (when it's not disruptive to direct teacher instruction). Otherwise, the Coaches will remain out of the way to take notes. Please do not feel the need to introduce or welcome your Coaches to the class during visits. The coach's goal is to be as least disruptive as possible during visits and to observe a "normal" classroom lesson. Most observations are unannounced. There will be times, however, when your coach will schedule an observation in advance.

Overview of a Coaching Session

Coaching sessions are 45 minutes in length and will typically follow a predictable format:

- **Check In**
- **See It:** Analysis of sample of strong execution of a specific planning skill or teaching move OR analysis of student work
- **Name It:** Naming the gap in instructional practice and/or student mastery of the standard to create an action step
- **Do It:** Planning and practicing implementation of the action step

The purpose of a classroom observation and coaching session is to provide job-embedded professional development. As such, coaching sessions are “future-oriented.” In other words, Coaches will focus on the lesson observed only to help the teacher identify a future area of focus. For the majority of a coaching session, Coaches will focus on supporting teachers in applying the focus area to an upcoming lesson.

Preparing for a Coaching Session

To prepare for a coaching session, bring the following:

- Charged laptop
- Lesson plan and/or associated material from the lesson observed
- Lesson plans and/or associated materials for upcoming 2-5 days and/or current unit plan
- Gradebook
- Student work from the lesson observed (if applicable)

Expectations for a Coaching Session

To ensure a productive, efficient coaching session, coaches put forth the following expectations:

- Arrive on time.
- Come prepared to plan.
- Bring a “learning orientation”, not a “performance orientation”.

During a Coaching Session

How you and your coach plan for future lessons during a coaching session will vary depending on the individual teacher and the current focus area. Planning activities might include:

- Writing a specific part of an upcoming lesson plan
- Scripting a specific moment or portion of an upcoming class
- Role Playing
- Revising an upcoming unit plan or action plan

Keeping Track of Our Work Together

Boston Prep has moved the majority of coaching documents to be on TeachBoost. All staff will be onboarded to the system during One Team Orientation!

A Note on Mindset:

View each observation for what it is—a brief snapshot in time that provides valuable information about how we can plan together most effectively at a given point in time. No single observation defines who you are as a teacher; therefore, try to keep that “learning orientation” alive throughout the year. Try to avoid “performance orientation”, a mindset that can hinder productivity. When we are in performance orientation, we see observation as the ultimate “test” that illustrates our value as a teacher, and we see feedback as a personal attack on our hard work. We all work extremely hard, and we all want the best for our students. Coaches will always ground our work in this belief.