



RUTGERS
NEW BRUNSWICK



The Coaching Role

Alicia Sordillo Drozd

September 24, 2026



EVERYONE NEEDS A COACH

What is the Coaching Role?

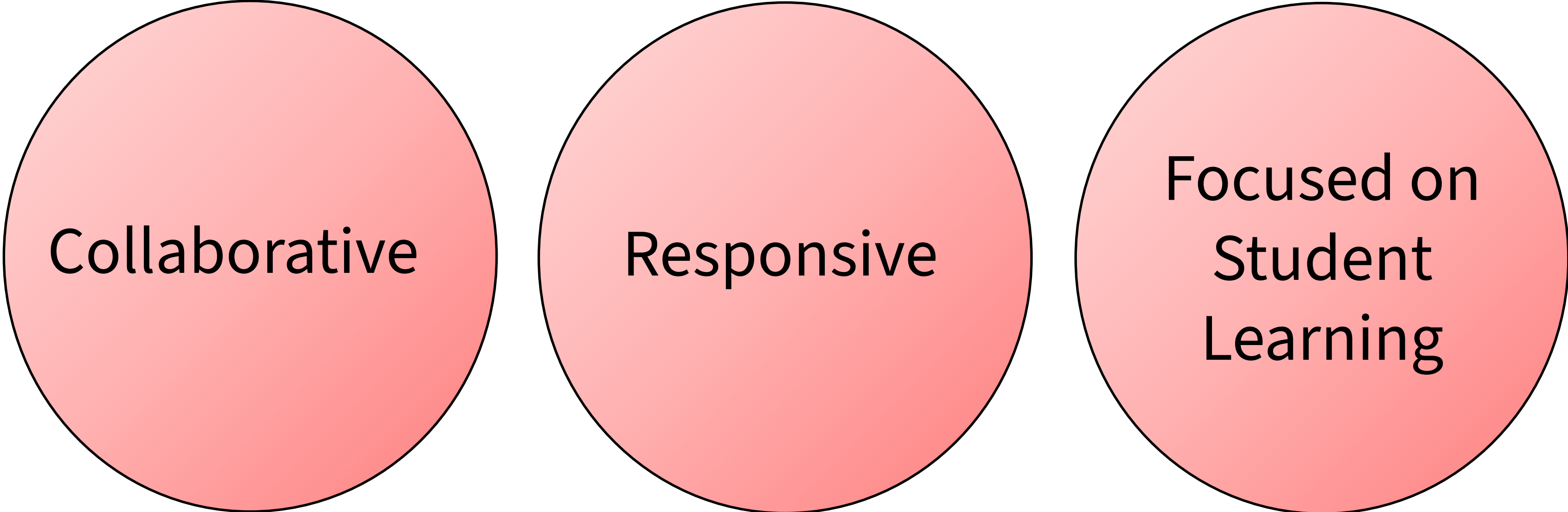


Coaching is NOT...

- Evaluating
- “Fixing” Teachers
- Providing Support ONLY When Something Is Wrong
- Telling Others What To Do



Coaching is ...



Collaborative

Responsive

Focused on
Student
Learning

Coaching only has impact when it meets teachers where they are not when the same approach is applied to everyone.





Sometimes the teacher needs you beside them.

Sometimes they need you to demonstrate.

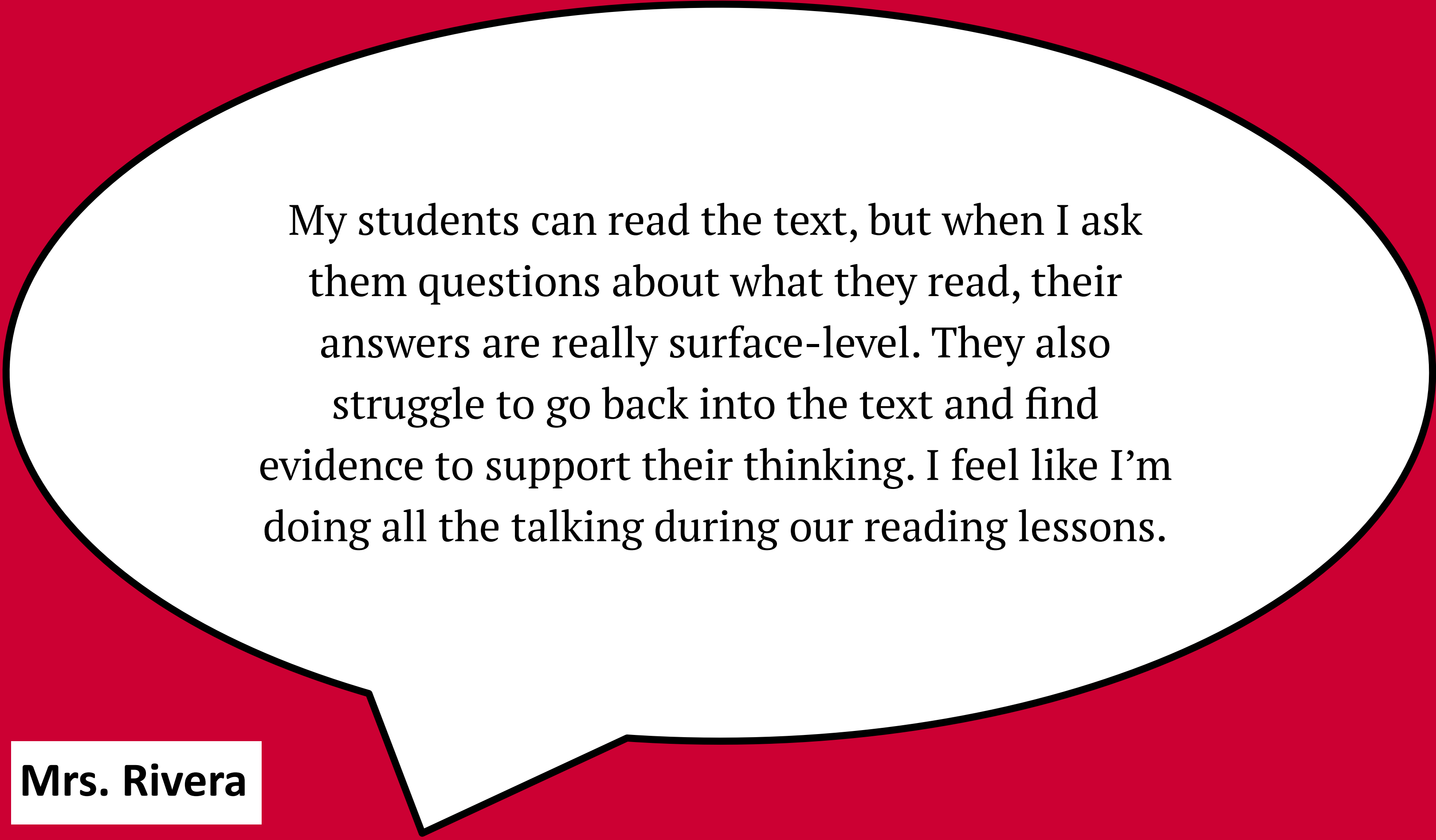
Sometimes they need you to observe.

Sometimes they need you to help them reflect.

Contextual Coaching

- No two teachers or classrooms are identical.
- Strategies that work in one room may not succeed in another.
- Coaching becomes most powerful when it honors the realities of each teaching context





My students can read the text, but when I ask them questions about what they read, their answers are really surface-level. They also struggle to go back into the text and find evidence to support their thinking. I feel like I'm doing all the talking during our reading lessons.

Mrs. Rivera

What Can Coaching Look Like INSIDE a Classroom?



Modeling

You teach a reading lesson while Ms. Rivera observes how you use questioning and prompts to deepen student thinking.

PROVIDE LOOK FORs

Co-Teaching

Teach the lesson together. Requires planning.

Coach Assist

The teacher leads the lesson while you circulate, listen to student conversations, and support students in finding text evidence.



Observation + Feedback

Before the lesson, choose a specific focus, such as “Who is doing most of the talking?” You collect data during the lesson and analyze it together afterward.

Planning

Look at an upcoming text together and identify places to pause, questions to ask, and opportunities for students to talk with one another.

Student-Work Analysis

You look at students' written responses together and identify patterns: What are students already doing? Where are they getting stuck? What might we try next?



What Can Coaching Look Like **OUTSIDE** a Classroom?



Coaching Doesn't Always Require an Observation





**Planning
Together**

**Curriculum
Navigation**

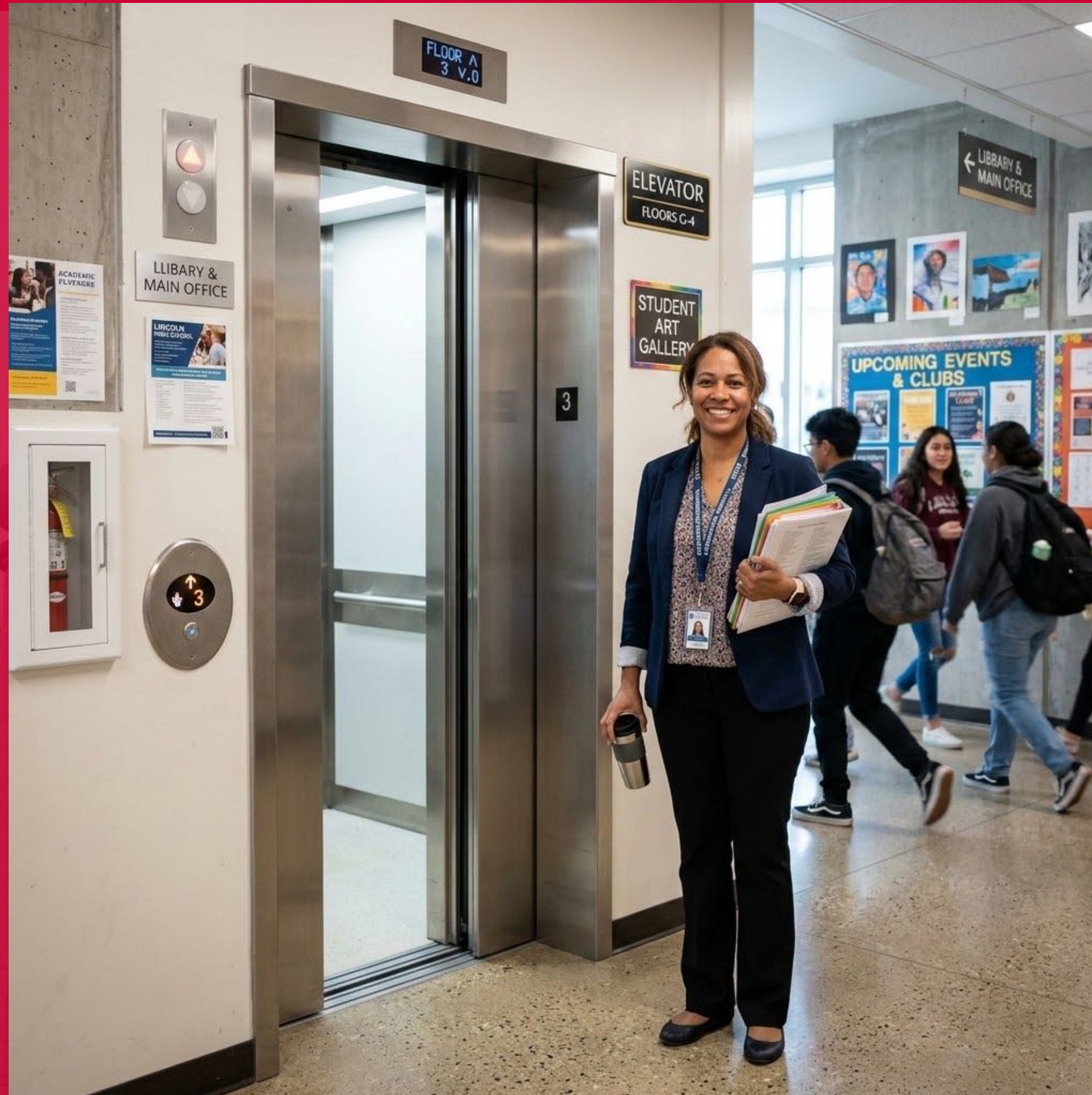
**Looking
at
Student
Work**

**Problem
Solving
Conversations**

**PLC/Team
Coaching**

**Resource
Development**

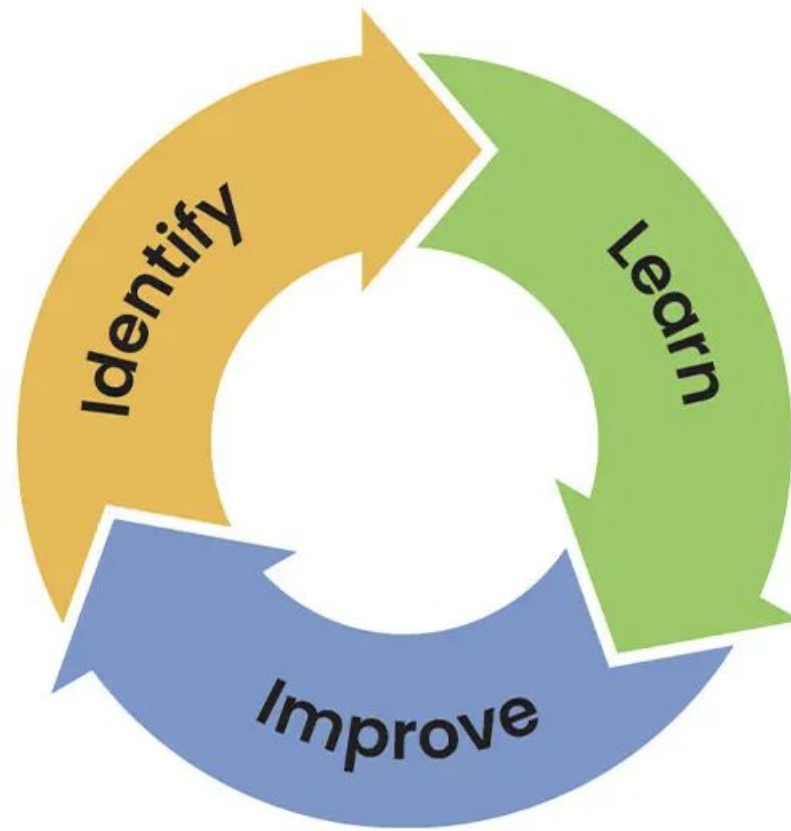
**Reflection
Debriefing**



Scheduling Coaching



Model 1: Coaching Cycles



Source: Adapted from Knight, J. (2018).
The impact cycle: What instructional coaches
should do to foster powerful improvements in
teaching. Corwin.

Week 1: Set Up

- Set Goals
- Plan Activities
- Agree on Coaching Sessions

Week 2:

- Planning Coaching

Week 3: Reflection

Model 2: Flexible Coaching

Teachers Sign Up Based on Need

- planning
- modeling
- observations
- troubleshooting
- curriculum questions

Model 3: Flexible Coaching

A combination of scheduled coaching cycles
+ flexible/drop-in support + PLC/teamwork.

Sample Schedule

Sample Schedule for Coaching Cycles

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:15-8:45	Coach Planning Time				
9:00-10:00	Cycle #3 Co-Teaching	Cycle #3 Co-Teaching	Grade 1 PLC	Cycle #1 Co-Planning	Cycle #4 Co- Planning
10:00-11:00	Cycle #4 Co-Teaching	Cycle #1 Co-Teaching	Cycle #1 Co-Teaching	Cycle #2 Co-Planning	Cycle #1 Co-Teaching
11:00-12:00	Meet with the Principal	Cycle #3 Co-Teaching	Cycle #3 Co-Teaching	Cycle #3 Co-Teaching	Cycle #4 Co-Teaching
12:00-1:00	Lunch/Office Hours				PD @ District
1:00-2:00	Cycle #2 Co-Teaching	Cycle #4 Co-Teaching	Cycle #2 Co-Teaching	Grade K PLC	
2:00-3:00	Informal Support	Grade 2 PLC	Cycle #3 Co-Planning	Informal Support	
	180/300 60%	240/300 80%	240/300 80%	180/300 60%	180/360 50%
	Total = 66 % of coaching time is in cycles				

Source: Sweeney & Harris (2020), “Coaching Cycles – Getting to 60%,” Diane Sweeney Consulting.

Coaching Tool: Sample Weekly Coaching Schedule					
Orange: Coaching Observations and Conversations, Yellow: Reflection and PD, Teal: Preparation, Blue: Team Participation/Facilitation, Green: Collaboration					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00	Office hours	Office hours	Office hours	Office hours	Office hours
7:30	Morning supervision	Morning supervision	Morning supervision	Morning supervision	Morning supervision
8:00	Email catch-up	Prepare model lesson for Teacher C on Thursday	Reflective writing time: Reflect on co-teach with Teacher B and plan next conversation	Research strategies/articles for coaching connection for following week	Admin alignment huddle
9:00	Finalize presentation for tomorrow's PL	Rehearse PL	Analyze grades 3–6 CFU data	Model math lesson Teacher C	Prep next week's coach schedule
10:00	Finalize presentation for tomorrow's PL	Observe ELA lesson with Teacher A	Analyze grades 3–6 CFU data	Model math lesson Teacher C/in-class debrief	Write instructional coaching connection for following week
11:00	Rehearse PL	Personal reflection on observation	Learning walks with 4th-grade PLC	Check-ins with new teachers to see if there are any immediate supports needed	Review work plans for teachers; document growth, collect evidence, and determine next steps
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00	Observe/ support RTI reading intervention	Co-teach math lesson with Teacher B	Learning walks with 4th-grade PLC/debrief	Check-ins with new teachers to see if there are any immediate supports needed	Review work plans for teachers; document growth, collect evidence, and determine next steps
2:00	Dismissal supervision	Dismissal supervision	Dismissal supervision	Dismissal supervision	Dismissal supervision
3:00	Planning session with Teacher A	Whole-staff teacher clarity PL	PLC meetings	Reflection meeting with Teacher A	Office hours
4:00				Reflection meeting with Teacher B	Office hours

Source: Fisher et al. (2025), *Coaching for Impact: A Guide to What Works Best in Instruction*, Corwin, p. 176

Everyone Needs a Coach

Teacher Level	Examples of Effective Coaching Actions
Novice or struggling teacher	Model lessons, co-teaching, step-by-step strategy guidance, front-loaded clarity
Mid-level developing teacher	Co-planning, reviewing student work together, shared reflection, identifying next instructional moves
Highly skilled teacher	Reflective coaching, questioning, data inquiry cycles, leadership development



Effective Coaching Requires...

Relationships

Trust

Flexibility

Intentional language

Strong professional learning

Reflection



Ms. Rivera tells you that her students aren't transferring the phonics skills they've learned into their reading and writing. What could your role be?"

*Could I model? **Yes.***

*Could we co-teach? **Yes.***

*Could I observe? **Yes.***

*Could we analyze student work? **Yes.***

*Could we plan together? **Yes.***



**Which one should
the coach choose?**

It depends

