

[Track the instructional coaching impact across district coaches](#)

Data on instructional coaching impact for a districtwide report showcases its efficacy and encourages continuing educational improvement.

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In my previous article, ["7 ways to measure instructional coaching for impact, not activity,"](#) (see below for her previous article). I addressed the importance for all coaching programs and coaches to collect efficacy data for themselves and various stakeholders. Instructional coaches should set specific goals and collect relevant data at the start of the year to ensure they have a clear direction and can measure their impact.

While tracking [instructional coaching impact](#) is critical, another overlooked aspect of coaching is tracking its effect at a district level. As coaches start a new school year, this is the perfect time to plan how they can collaborate to set specific goals, collect relevant data and track coaching impact by:

- Determining which district-level data to compile and analyze that demonstrates teacher growth and student outcomes.
- Identifying common data mistakes and avoiding them.
- Creating district-level reports to illustrate the effectiveness of coaching.

Why track coaching impact at a district level?

Tracking coaching impact goes beyond simply logging coaching activities and delves into measuring the effectiveness of coaching on teacher growth and student outcomes.

Coaching impact matters because it validates the effectiveness of coaching in supporting teacher growth, improving instructional practices and positively affecting student outcomes. Instructional coaches can gain valuable insights into their coaching efficacy and teacher growth. It's essential to be intentional about data collection and use it as a tool for continuous improvement and evidence-based decision-making.

District-level reports compiled by coaches can showcase coaching achievements, highlight success stories and demonstrate the effectiveness of coaching programs across the district. That's essential for gaining support from school leaders, teachers and stakeholders and ensuring the sustainability and continuation of coaching programs.

Will ESSER affect district coaching initiatives?

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds were part of the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support education and schools across the US. These funds helped implement safety measures, support remote learning and mitigate learning loss. They also played a significant role in funding coaching initiatives to support teachers' professional development, enhance instructional practices and promote student learning outcomes.

It's essential to recognize that ESSER funds are time-limited. When this article was published, the availability of [ESSER funds was expiring for the 2024-25 school year](#). When these funds expire, school districts may need to explore alternative funding sources, reduce or adjust coaching positions funded by this money, or even scale back coaching services. These ESSER funds in my former school district funded \$2.2 million of teachers' salaries.

As ESSER funding ends, it becomes even more crucial for schools and districts to evaluate the impact of coaching initiatives on teacher practices and student outcomes. This evaluation can help determine the most effective coaching strategies and guide future decision-making.

What's needed in a district instructional coaching impact report?

District-level reports compiled by instructional coaches showcase coaching achievements, highlight success stories and demonstrate effectiveness across the district. Coaches can collaboratively gather data from coaching logs, pre-and post-surveys, student performance data analysis, goal attainment, classroom observations, progress monitoring, journals, reflective questions, focus groups, action research projects, portfolios and teacher artifacts. Report examples might include:

- **Coaching Impact Summary Report.** An overview of coaching impact across the district, highlighting key data points such as the number of teachers coached, coaching goals achieved, coaching cycles and student outcomes.

- **Teacher Survey Analysis Report.** A comprehensive analysis of pre- and post-surveys administered to teachers to measure changes in their instructional practices, confidence and perceptions of coaching effectiveness.
- **Student Performance Data Report.** An analysis of student performance data, comparing the academic progress of classes that received coaching support with those that did not.
- **Teacher Growth Profiles.** Profiles of individual teachers showcasing their growth journey with coaching support, along with specific examples of improved instructional practices.
- **Case Studies of Coaching Success.** Detailed case studies of teachers who have experienced significant growth and success through coaching interventions. These stories highlight specific coaching strategies and their impact.
- **Visual Infographics on Coaching Impact.** Infographics that visually represent coaching impact data, success stories and key achievements. Infographics make data more accessible and engaging for a wider audience.
- **Coaching Outcomes by Subject Area or Grade Level.** An analysis of coaching outcomes illustrating how coaching has influenced specific instructional domains.
- **Teacher Reflections and Feedback Report.** A compilation showcasing the qualitative impact of coaching on teachers' professional growth.
- **Coaching Program Evaluation Report.** An evaluation of the program's overall effectiveness, examining coaching objectives, alignment with district goals and recommendations for improvement.
- **Impact on School Culture and Collaboration Report.** An analysis of how coaching has contributed to a positive school culture, increased teacher collaboration and integrated coaching practices into schoolwide initiatives.

How can district coaches track coaching impact as a group?

To show how teacher growth and student learning have been positively affected, instructional coaches must carefully consider data collection, analysis and reporting.

- **Define clear coaching objectives and intended outcomes.** These should be aligned with district priorities and goals to provide a focused direction for data collection and ensure the data collected aligns with teacher practices and student learning.
- **Use multiple data sources.** Collect data from coaching logs, surveys, observations, teacher artifacts, student performance data and other sources. This should provide a holistic view of coaching impact, allow for collecting quantitative and qualitative data, and strengthen the validity of findings.
- **Collaborate on data collection.** Gather with other coaches for regular data analysis meetings to share insights, data collection methods and best practices. This ensures consistency in data collection and promotes collective learning and improvement among coaches.
- **Ensure data quality and accuracy.** Pay close attention to the quality and accuracy of data collected to ensure it draws accurate conclusions and allows for informed decisions. Develop data validation processes, conduct regular checks and cross-reference data with other sources for verification.
- **Analyze data thoughtfully.** This will help identify trends, patterns and meaningful insights to draw evidence-based conclusions. Use data visualization tools to create graphs and charts that make data more accessible and facilitate data-informed decision-making.

- **Prioritize impact on student learning.** Emphasize data related to student outcomes and learning growth because they are the ultimate indicator of coaching effectiveness on academic achievement, development and progress.
- **Showcase success stories and case studies.** Personal narratives add a human touch to the data and demonstrate coaching's direct impact on individuals. Collaborate with teachers to develop case studies highlighting coaching strategies and their effect on classroom practices.
- **Align data with district goals.** Alignment demonstrates how coaching initiatives contribute to broader district objectives and serve as a reference point when demonstrating coaching impact.

By collaborating as a group, instructional coaches strengthen the districtwide coaching program, enhance data analysis capabilities and foster a supportive learning community for coaches and teachers.

How can you avoid common data mistakes?

Just as instructional coaches must [empower teachers to analyze and use student data](#), coaches need to avoid common data pitfalls in their own reports. To present an accurate, comprehensive view of coaching impact, avoid:

- **Over-reliance on quantitative data.** Consider qualitative insights, too, so you don't overlook important nuances.
- **Failing to collect baseline data.** Don't start coaching initiatives until baseline data is gathered, or you won't be able to measure progress and growth accurately.
- **Cherry-picking data.** Avoid selectively presenting only positive data and excluding less favorable findings, challenges or areas for improvement. A balanced view is essential for a comprehensive report. Embrace areas of improvement as opportunities for growth and development, as they may provide the "what's next" perspective.
- **Using data without context.** Data can't be offered in isolation; it requires context or background information.
- **Drawing causal conclusions without evidence.** Correlation does not necessarily imply causation. Strong evidence is imperative when suggesting causal relationships.

How might coaches structure a district-level report?

An effective coaching program evaluation report should provide a comprehensive assessment of its impact, effectiveness and alignment with district goals. It should include qualitative and quantitative data to present a well-rounded view of outcomes. These sections are typically found in a coaching program evaluation report:

- **Executive Summary.** Present an overview of the coaching program, its objectives and the purpose of the evaluation. Summarize the main findings and key recommendations.
- **Introduction and Background.** Provide context for the coaching program, including its inception, goals and target audience. Explain the rationale for conducting the evaluation.
- **Evaluation Methodology.** Describe the evaluation approach, data sources and data collection methods used. Explain how qualitative and quantitative data were gathered and analyzed.

- **Coaching Program Components.** Outline the various components of the coaching program, such as one-on-one coaching, group workshops and professional learning communities.
- **Coaching Goals and Objectives.** Present the coaching program's goals and objectives, aligning them with districtwide instructional priorities.
- **Data on Coaching Activities.** Provide data on coaching activities, including the number of coaching sessions, teachers coached and the frequency of interactions.
- **Teacher Surveys and Feedback.** Share results from pre- and post-surveys administered to teachers, capturing their perceptions of coaching effectiveness and impact on their instructional practices.
- **Student Outcome Data.** Include data on student performance, growth or achievement, comparing classes that received coaching support with non coached classes.
- **Teacher Growth and Progress.** Share case studies or testimonials of individual teachers who have experienced significant growth through coaching, highlighting specific strategies that led to their improvement.
- **Impact on School Culture.** Describe how the coaching program has contributed to a positive school culture, fostering collaboration and improving instructional practices.
- **Coaching Program Successes and Challenges.** Discuss notable successes and challenges encountered during the implementation of the coaching program.
- **Recommendations and Future Directions.** Offer recommendations for enhancing the coaching program's effectiveness, areas for improvement and potential future directions.
- **Reflections From Coaches and Administrators.** Include feedback from instructional coaches and school administrators regarding the coaching program's strengths, areas of growth and its impact on teacher and student outcomes.
- **Alignment With District Goals.** Assess how the coaching program aligns with the district's strategic goals, professional development and instructional improvement priorities.
- **Conclusion.** Summarize the key findings and the overall impact of the coaching program. Emphasize the importance of coaching in supporting teacher growth and student achievement.
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When instructional coaches collaborate — sharing insights and strategies and tracking coaching impact using evidence-based methods — they provide a compelling case for the value of coaching in supporting teacher development and student achievement.

[7 ways to measure instructional coaching for impact, not activity](#)

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“Know thy impact” — John Hattie, author of “Visible Learning”

In recent years, many school districts have hired instructional coaches to personalize professional development and meet professional learning needs within districts. Spurred on by No Child Left Behind, the staffing rate of coaches **doubled** from 2000 to 2015.

At the time of my retirement from public education in June 2023, my school district had five buildings, approximately 3,400 students, around 275 teachers and 11 coaches (e.g., reading, math, social and emotional learning, special education, para-professional, instructional and technology). That is a significant number of coaches for a relatively small district.

Two primary goals for effective instructional coaching are to create meaningful change in teachers’ instruction and positively impact the school building and **system**. When you ask coaches how they know they are being effective, coaches will often talk about activities they are doing. However, busyness isn’t necessarily productivity, and activity doesn’t necessarily equate to a positive impact.

Schools rarely require or train coaches on how to collect any data to assess the effectiveness of coaching programs. In addition, schools often don’t have coaches collect formative data to ensure the coaching being provided is responsive to the needs of the teachers. When coaching programs and coaches don’t track coaching impact, you cannot ensure that coaching is effective and aligned with the goals of improving teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

While there is no single way to measure coaching impact — and it can be challenging — it is something that all coaching programs and coaches need to consider if they are serious about providing coaching that works.

What is coaching impact?

Coaching impact refers to positive and measurable outcomes that result from coaching interventions and coaching strategies with educators. It represents how much coaching contributes to improved teaching practices, enhanced student learning, teacher professional growth and positive organizational change.

Why is measuring impact important?

Defining and defending coaching impact is critical for many reasons, and both the district and a coach or the coaches should be concerned with measuring their coaching impact.

- **Accountability.** When a district hires a coach or coaches, it cuts into the limited resources of a district and the schools' need to appropriately allocate limited resources of time, money and effort. Coaches who measure data can provide tangible evidence to stakeholders (i.e., administrators, teachers, parents and the school board) of the value and impact of coaching on teacher effectiveness, student achievement and overall school improvement. It builds understanding, support and buy-in from stakeholders.
- **Data-informed decision-making.** Measuring coaching impact allows coaches to align their work with evidence-informed practices and research. Instructional coaches focus on ensuring their coaching strategies and interventions are grounded in research and create positive outcomes for teachers and students.
- **Teacher professional growth and student achievement.** Instructional coaching is ultimately about improving teachers' instruction to increase students' achievements and outcomes. By sharing data and evidence of coaching impact, coaches empower teachers to partner with them in using and implementing strategies and interventions to improve students' learning.
- **Continuous improvement.** Defining and defending coaching impact promotes the professional growth of coaches themselves. Through the process of collecting and analyzing data, coaches gain insight into areas of strength and improvement with coaching strategies and interventions. Measuring coaching impact allows coaches to make informed decisions on refining practices, improving professional learning efforts, and adjusting their approach to better meet the needs of supporting teachers and enhancing student learning outcomes.
- **Advocacy and support.** Being able to demonstrate and show coaching impact helps coaches advocate for their role and show its value. It builds understanding, support and buy-in from stakeholders and can help secure resources for continued or increased investment in coaches or coaching programs.

How do you measure impact beyond return on investment?

The outcomes of instructional coaching are often complex and multifaceted. Simply calculating the benefits or effects of coaching against the costs associated with a coaching program as a quantifiable measure for ROI is challenging. But that doesn't mean you don't need a system that shows the effectiveness and value of instructional coaching. Measuring impact goes beyond simply keeping track of daily activities through a shared calendar or a form.

While there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to measuring coaching impact, whatever data is collected should encompass both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Relying on only quantitative or qualitative data has its shortcomings. If only quantitative data is collected, you will have limited insight into the experiences, perceptions, contextual factors or unintended consequences of the coach's impact. Relying only on qualitative data may lack measurable outcomes, making it more difficult to identify data-informed decisions. Using both data types provides a more comprehensive and stronger case of coaching impact on staff, students, the building and the district.

7 ways to measure coaching impact

Here are some ideas to consider:

1. Student achievement data (*quantitative*). This is one of the most concrete measures of an instructional coach's impact to show how coaching interventions have contributed to improved student learning.

Try this: Compare student performance before and after the coach's intervention to look for positive trends and growth with pre- and post-assessment results or comparing student performance against benchmarks. You might also compare the students' scores in coached classrooms compared to non-coached classrooms to see if the coach's support positively impacted students' achievement.

2. Teacher surveys and feedback (*qualitative*). This approach will result in valuable data regarding teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of instructional coaching.

Try this: Distribute a survey to teachers to assess their level of confidence in implementing new instructional strategies in their classroom after receiving coaching support and their perceptions of the coach's effectiveness, changes in instructional practices and satisfaction with the coach's support.

3. Classroom observations (*quantitative*). Regular classroom observations allow the instructional coach to assess instructional practices, provide targeted feedback and track improvements over time. Coaches need to be where the instructional action is, and that is in teachers' classrooms.

Try this: Conduct observations of a teacher's classroom before, during and after (in person or through video) coaching support. The coaching cycle should have clear goals (i.e., student engagement, differentiated instruction, effective questioning, etc.). Throughout the cycle, the teacher and coach collect data on the frequency of teaching strategies or changes in the classroom to demonstrate the impact of coaching on teaching quality and/or student responses.

4. Teacher reflection and self-assessment (*qualitative*). Encouraging teachers to reflect on their coaching experiences and set goals can provide evidence of a coach's impact.

Try this: The coach creates self-assessment tools, reflective prompts or a portfolio of teacher reflections to show progress towards goals. This can help paint a picture of how coaching has impacted a teacher's professional growth.

5. Longitudinal data (*quantitative*). Assess longer-term impact of coaching on student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

Try this: Compare multiple months' or years' worth of data on the progress of teachers and students through benchmarks, local assessments or surveys, and/or standardized testing.

6. Peer collaboration and coaching feedback (*qualitative*). Using interviews, surveys and/or video, teachers share how peer collaboration has positively impacted their instructional strategies or classroom, leading to greater effectiveness and/or student learning with coaching feedback. This data demonstrates the coach's impact on growing a culture of peer collaboration along with professional sharing and growth.

Try this: Create opportunities for teachers to engage in peer collaboration and/or learning walks to provide peer observation and feedback. The coach also provides support to teachers trying new things they saw from their peers.

7. Case studies of teacher growth through coaching cycles (*qualitative and quantitative*). Through qualitative data of interviews, observations and artifacts and quantitative student work samples before and after coaching interventions, the coach captures the growth journeys of the teacher and their students. This illustrates the coach's impact on professional learning, instructional effectiveness and students' achievement.

Try this: Select a few teachers to conduct in-depth case studies on their growth trajectory with the coach's support through a six- or 12-week coaching cycle. Collect data through interviews, observations and artifacts along with student work before and after coaching interventions. Analyze the student work samples to identify improvements in student understanding, skills and achievement.

As the field of instructional coaching continues to grow and evolve, it is critical that educational organizations and coaches recognize the importance of measuring coaching impact. Remember that measuring instructional coaching impact requires considering multiple data sources, perspectives and indicators. It is essential to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to have a comprehensive view of the coach's impact and how coaching has or has not impacted teachers' practice and students' outcomes.