

February 2026



LEADS

Louisiana's Educator Advancement and Development System



Dear Colleagues,

Coaching is one of the most effective ways for teachers to improve their instructional practice when it takes into account both individual teachers' needs and their students' needs. Embedding coaching into the LEADS evaluation process strengthens connections among observation, feedback, and a coaching partnership, resulting in timely, relevant, and actionable next steps.

The coaching cycle builds a partnership between each teacher and their coach, helping to turn reflections from the post-conference into actionable steps to advance your professional growth and your students' learning. Below, you'll hear from colleagues about their experience of coaching and how the coaching cycle is providing tangible benefits to their practice and their students' success.

Sincerely,

Arthur M. Joffrion, Jr., Ed.D.
Deputy Assistant Superintendent
Educator Talent and Workforce Development

Success Stories

"The coaching cycle and plan have enhanced my instruction by making me more aware of what my students need and how my instructional adjustments impact them throughout the lesson. A coaching cycle experience that positively impacted my teaching practice was noticing and naming. My coach, Mrs. Starks, modeled how to notice and name how students were developing toward mastery during small groups. She listened to their conversations, gave them feedback through questioning to encourage them (and me) to think deeper, and used their work to help me see where they were in their mastery of the standard.

This has contributed to my professional growth because I'm now able to develop look-fors in the student work before I start my lesson and can monitor



and adjust my instruction with the look-fors in mind. When I am analyzing student work during or after a lesson, I notice which errors or accomplishments students are making to help guide my instruction for future lessons.”

Jahnice Johnson
2nd Grade Math Teacher
Tanglewood Elementary School
Central Community Schools



“The teacher observation process is the ‘what,’ and the coaching plan is the ‘how.’ The teacher and coach can use the reinforcement and refinement areas and the PGP/coaching plan as tools to identify specific teacher strengths and needs so that they can set a measurable goal for the coaching cycle. The partnership between the coach and the teacher is completely rooted in student work, which allows the focus to be on the teacher’s moves and the impact they have on student learning.”

Amie Starks
K-5 Instructional Math Coach
Central Community Schools

Teacher Toolkit

The LEADS Coaching Cycle Supports Teacher Growth

The LEADS coaching cycle is designed to drive meaningful teacher growth. Through the 6-step cycle, teachers receive high-quality, individualized coaching plans that outline actionable steps for improvement and are rooted in post-conference feedback. For an overview of the coaching cycle, revisit [this past LEADS newsletter](#).



The goal of the LEADS coaching cycle is to support teachers in refining an area of growth that is identified in the post-conference plan. Together, the coaching cycle and the coaching plan ensure that evaluation is not just a one-time event for teachers, but is part of an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement.

The Coaching Plan Supports Teachers to Work through Refinement Areas:

In step 3 of the coaching cycle, teachers and their coach collaborate to create a coaching plan that includes a series of action steps and activities the teacher will take to improve in an identified refinement area. The coaching plan supports teachers in working through their refinement area by:

- Breaking down the recommended action into a series of activities that the teacher can take;
- Clearly defining teacher “look-fors” during the activities;
- Identifying resources the teacher will need for activities;
- Defining student “look-fors” to assist the teacher in making connections between their actions and impact on student learning; and
- Prompting the teacher to reflect on growth and improvement and think about next steps.

Reflections to Strengthen Coaching Plans:

The coaching plan is an especially powerful tool for teachers since it makes connections to the post-conference feedback and refinement area they

received. As teachers and coaches work together to develop the coaching plan, keep the following questions in mind:

1. **How does the teacher’s refinement goal align with the coaching plan?** A high-quality coaching plan includes a student need, and connects the refinement goal and instructional practice to student impact.
2. **Based on the refinement goal, what actions can the teacher take to demonstrate growth by their next observation?** Ensure that the actions are logical, sequential, and manageable so that the teacher can improve. A high-quality coaching plan will have scaffolded activities that are differentiated and responsive to the unique needs of the teacher.
3. **How will the teacher know that they are making progress on the actions outlined in their coaching plan?** Not only should a coaching plan have manageable activities, but it should also include teacher and student look-fors so the teacher can track their own progress.

When thoughtfully developed and supported, the coaching plan serves as a personalized roadmap for professional growth by meeting teachers where they are, supporting reflection and refinement, and keeping instructional improvement and student impact at the forefront.

Making a Connection: School Leaders

An impactful coaching plan for a school leader is an extension of their school’s existing school improvement plan, strategic plan, or long-range plan. Similar to teachers, school leaders collaborate with their evaluator to develop a coaching plan that includes a refinement area from the Louisiana Leader Rubric. The action steps in the school leader’s coaching plan not only support their personal growth but are also designed to help them address their school’s needs and goals.

School leaders should have their own coaching cycle and, in collaboration with their evaluator, might need to adjust actions based on updated observation data or student data. These adjustments throughout the year will ensure alignment between the school leader’s coaching plan and their school’s needs and goals.

Below is an example of the alignment between school goals detailed in a school improvement plan and the school leader’s action plan to improve in their identified refinement area. See what connections you can make between the school goals, the leader’s refinement area, and the action steps.

School Goal	Refinement Area
<p>Bayou Middle School will increase the School Performance Score (SPS) by 4 points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subgoal: The percentage of students scoring Mastery or above on the ELA LEAP assessment will increase by 5 percentage points.	<p>Teacher Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses teacher and student data gathered through observations to determine what development activities or instructional strategies will best meet the needs of each individual teacher to improve overall teacher effectiveness.

Action Steps	Action Steps
<p>Teachers will increase student mastery of grade-level ELA standards by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in unit and lesson preparation during Teacher Collaboration to strengthen alignment to the depth and rigor of standards. Using ELA Guidebooks unit assessments, culminating writing tasks, and daily student work to monitor progress toward mastery and plan instructional adjustments to meet student needs. Providing targeted supports and scaffolds from ELA Guidebooks and other state-approved resources to address identified student needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting frequent classroom observations and learning walks to gather evidence of instructional practices and student engagement, rigor, and mastery. Analyzing observation data and related student evidence to identify each teacher's specific strengths and areas for growth. Using this data to differentiate individual teacher feedback/coaching and inform Teacher Collaboration professional learning. Monitoring changes in teacher practice and student outcomes over time and adjusting supports accordingly.

Action Items

- Review the Professional Growth Plan (PGP)/Coaching Plan Samples [provided by LDOE](#). Use the Teacher Toolkit questions in this newsletter to help analyze how [the sample plans](#) create scaffolded and manageable steps for teachers.
- Use the reflection questions from the Teacher Toolkit to guide the development of your next coaching plan.

Quick Links

[LEADS Public Collection](#)
[LEADS Library](#)
[Post-Conference Template](#)
[Formal Observation Cycle of Support](#)
[Louisiana Educator Rubric](#)
[Teacher Handbook](#)

[Evaluation Learning Year FAQ](#)
[SLT Reflection Tool](#)
[LES 2024-2025 Timeline](#)
[Bulletin 130](#)
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