

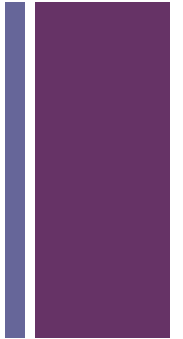


# Coaching for Leadership: Not an optional extra

Dr. Sandra J. Stein  
Former CEO, NYC Leadership Academy



# A Brief History of Coaching at the NYC Leadership Academy



## First year free-for-all

- Sitting and retired principals
- Limited training and accountability for professional practice
- Primarily technical assistance and guidance



## Conceptual shift: Accountable system for coaches of first-year principals

- Build coaching staff
- Introduce coaching practice beyond technical assistance
- Training in facilitative, competency-based coaching approach and reform-driven initiatives



## Expanded coaching services: years 1-3

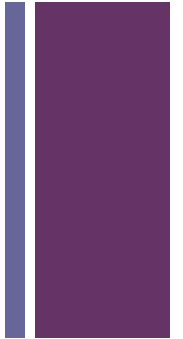
- Grow coaching staff: hone selection process
- Define coach competencies
- Continue training



## Fee-for-service

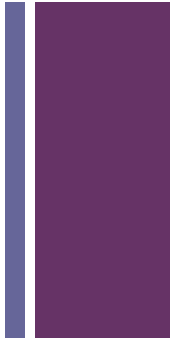
- First-year principal support funded centrally
- Principals in years 2 and beyond pay out of school-based budgets
- Menu of coaching packages

# + Drivers of coaching need



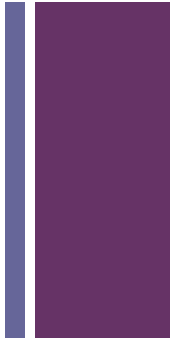
- High-stakes formal accountability systems
  - Supervisory incentives
- Media-driven informal accountability systems
- Lack of protected path for principals in struggling schools
- The supervisory bind
  - Facing the problem together rather than each other as the problem
  - Authoritative power and the transference of parent-child dynamics
- The pace and scale of current reform efforts

# + Two Premises



- Leadership for improved outcomes requires constant action and reflection
- School leadership can be isolating, particularly for new principals

# + The role of the coach



- Jointly define leader's individual learning needs against standards/competencies and school needs
- Listen, observe and reflect on leader's practice
- Facilitate leader's thinking
  - Work from within coachee's sense-making
  - Create opportunities for meta-cognition
- Create opportunities for practice
  - Role play
  - Thought experiments
- Model when necessary

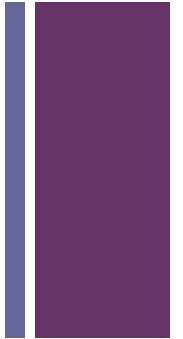


# Building an accountable system



- Competency-driven practice
  - Leadership Performance Planning Worksheet defines competencies for early-career principals
  - Standards for coaching practice define coach competencies
- Selection and performance management of coaches against standards
- Continual training and support
- Peer and supervisor observations of and reflection on coach practice
- Systematic evaluation of coaching program

# + Competency-driven practice

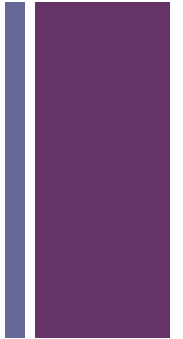


- Principal competencies

- Leadership Performance and Planning

- Worksheet <http://www.nycleadershipacademy.org>

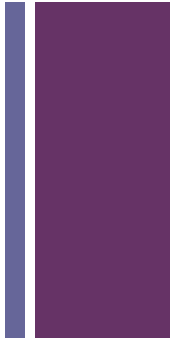
# + Competency-driven practice



- Coach competencies
  - Organizational accountability
  - Co-creates an environment that maximizes learning
  - Stance of a coach
  - Differentiates coaching aligned to school and principal needs

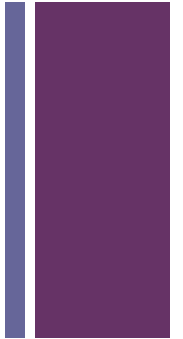


# Coach selection and performance management



- Selection: Staffing for learning stance
  - Group interviews—text based conversations
  - Role play
- Performance Management: Annual Performance Appraisal aligned to coach competencies
  - Includes observation of practice and coachee assessment of coach effectiveness

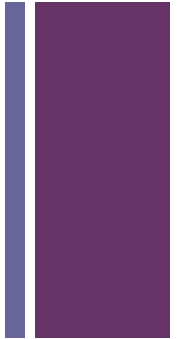
# + Training and support



- Content training
  - New initiatives
  - Data
  - Systems thinking
- Coaching practice
  - Role play
  - Learning/thinking styles
  - Improvisation
  - Systems thinking
- Case conferences
  - Every 6 weeks between individual coaches and program team



# Peer and supervisor observation and reflection



- Each coach observed by program team three times per academic year
  - Used for development and accountability
- Inter-visitations coordinated by program team
  - 1-2 times per year
- Working groups
  - Exploring data systems, identifying online resources
  - Relationships between principals and APs
  - Peer support

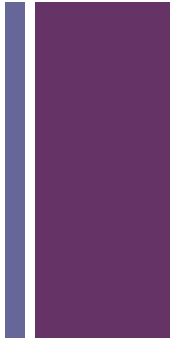
# + Evaluation of programs



- Perception of principal growth in leadership dimensions and goal attainment
  - Principal
  - Coach
  
- Participant satisfaction
  - Surveys
  - Program demand/retention
  
- School learning environment surveys
  
- Student outcome trends
  
- Principal retention

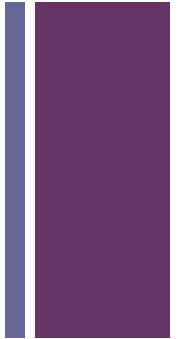


# Some challenges and tensions



- Need for continual learning
  - Considerable initial investment in coach training
  - The work is adaptive
  - Once you're there, there moves
- Moving school leaders from dependence to independence
- Generational differences
  - Demographics
  - Career trajectory
- Matching coaches to school leaders
- Relationships between school leaders' supervisors and coaches
- Isolating the effect of coaching

# + The commitment



- Commitment to sustainable leadership practices
- Resource allocation and maximization in trying times
- Purposeful systems of support