Instructional Leadership through Coaching

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Sherry St. Clair is the founder of Reflective Learning LLC, an educational consulting agency based in Kentucky. Her organization works with schools around the world, creating specialized training and coaching services for school administrators and educators. Additionally, Sherry serves as a Senior Consultant for the International Center for Leadership in Education and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. She holds a master's degree in Instructional Leadership, as well as a Rank I in Instructional Supervision.

As an international consultant, Sherry draws from her rich experience at various levels of public education–teaching elementary school, being an administrator in a high school of 1,300 students, working as a state consultant, and creating and facilitating virtual courses. Sherry is a highly regarded national speaker and consultant, providing educational agencies with expertise in the areas of instructional leadership, effective classroom practices, classroom walkthroughs, effective use of data and guidance on how to create structures for successful classroom coaching. Coaching schools to best meet the needs of all students is Sherry's passion.

Sherry is a contributing author to Effective Instructional Strategies Volume 2 published by the International Center for Leadership in Education and 100 No-Nonsense Things that All Teachers Should Stop Doing. She has published numerous professional l learning activity guides and facilitated webinar series focused on leadership and effective instructional practices. Additionally, Sherry developed virtual instructional workshops for the CTE Technical Assistance Center of New York. In partnership with the Successful Practices Network, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and The School Superintendent Association (AASA), Sherry has recently been a part of bringing innovative practices to scale. Her publication, Coaching Redefined: A Guide to Leading Meaningful Instructional Growth, was released in June of 2019.
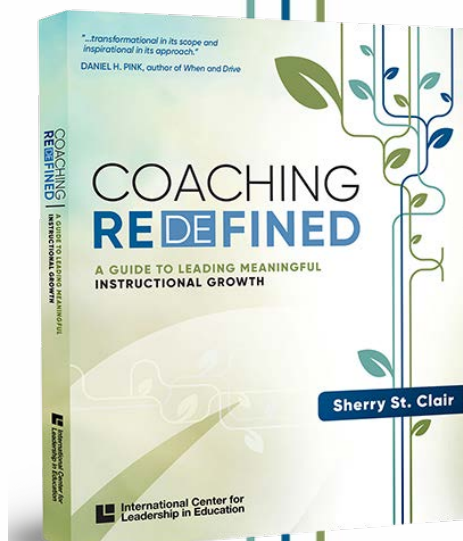
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	Real Value	Summary	Reflection
1	**Listening to Learn**		
2	**Leadership and Lifelong Learning**		
3	**Deep Thinking**		
4	**Communication**		
5	**Honesty and Courage**		
6	**Realistic Optimism**		
7	**Compassion**		
8	**Professionalism**		
9	**Commitment to Instructional Skills**		

Learner Engagement, Rigor and Relevance

Learner Engagement

Emotional engagement

How a student feels about the learning and herself in it. When a child is emotionally engaged, she feels safe in the environment, comfortable taking risks, and believes in the purpose and value of the learning.

Cognitive engagement

What the student is thinking about while in the classroom. When the student is thinking about the content, he is cognitively engaged; when he's thinking about something that someone said earlier in the day or what happened last night at home, he is not. Cognitive engagement is accessible through emotional engagement and is dependent on the learning task or instructional strategy the teacher is using.
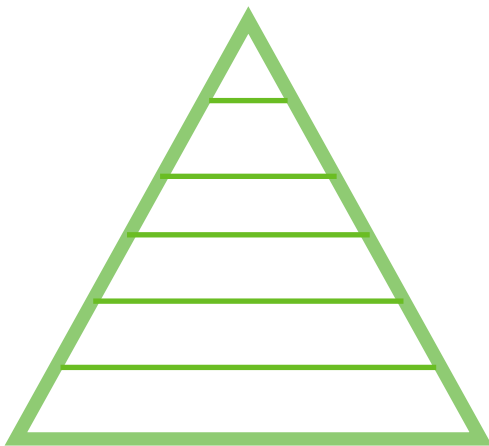
Behavioral engagement

What the student is doing. Behavioral engagement is the most observable type of engagement, as the teacher can see if a student is doing the work as intended or is off task or distracted.

Rigor

Rigor refers to the level of thinking required to accomplish the task and/or answer the question.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Creating ←

Evaluating ←

Analyzing ←

Applying ←

Understanding ←

Remembering ←

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Relevance

Personal Relevance

Learning that addresses an individual's aspirations, interests, and experiences. It is through this channel that we help students explore careers through the lens of their natural skills and interests.

Cultural Relevance

Learning that incorporates cultures and student backgrounds. It is through this channel that we teach our students that their culture and heritage are valuable, valued, and provide them unique perspectives and insights into the world they can apply to enrich a range of circumstances. Cultural relevance is a profound and accessible way to promote equity, which in turn instills confidence in our students.
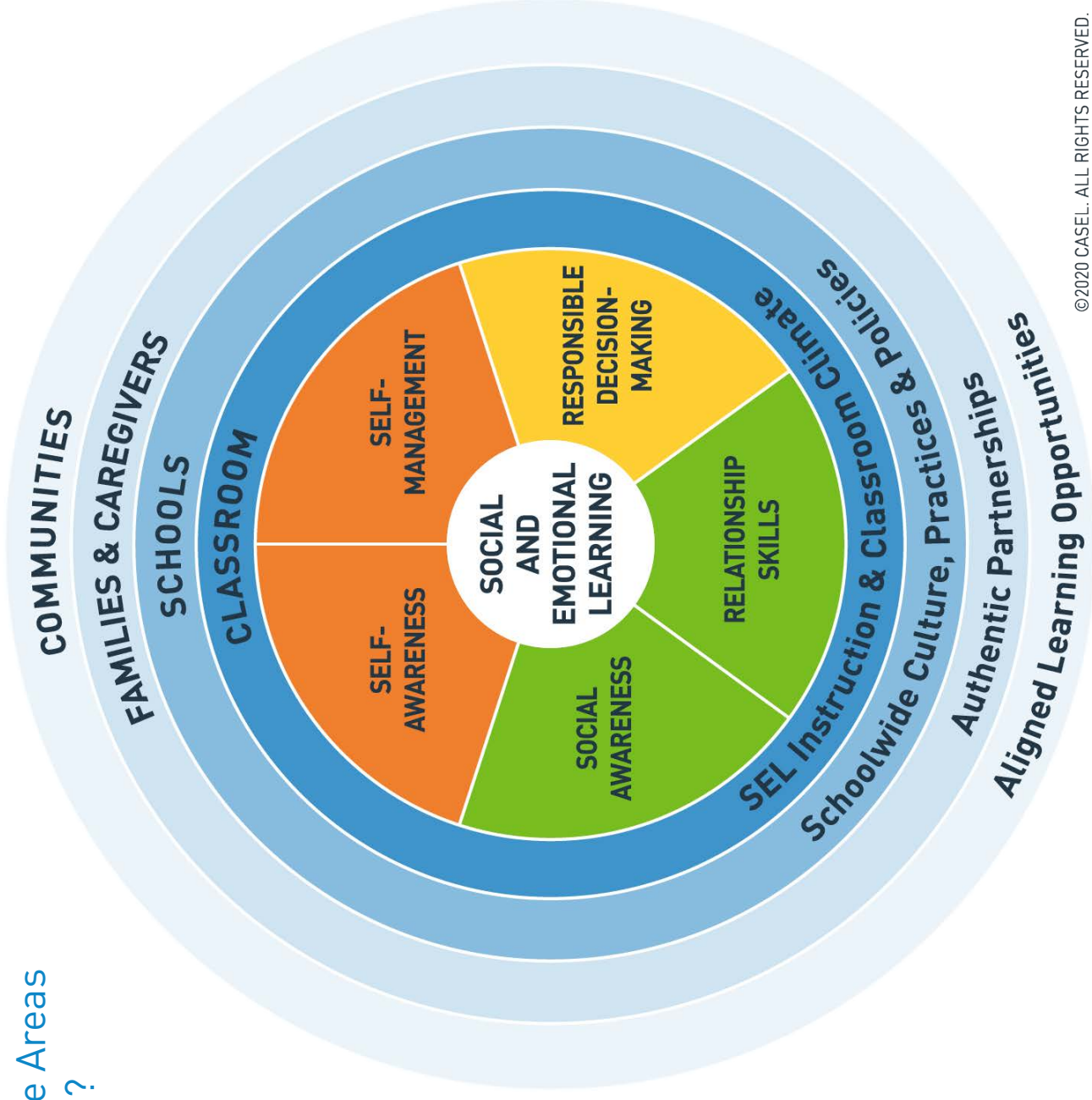
Global Relevance

Learning that incorporates real-world challenges, problems, and circumstances. It is through this channel that we show how knowledge and skills connect to the broader world.
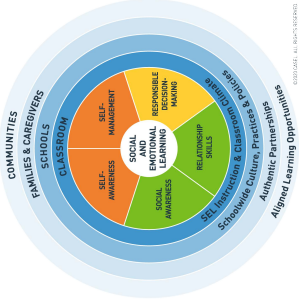
CASEL'S SEL FRAMEWORK:
What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where Are They Promoted?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.

Learn more: www.casel.org/what-is-SEL

SELF-AWARENESS: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose. Such as:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Examining prejudices and biases
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

SELF-MANAGEMENT: The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation & agency to accomplish personal/collective goals. Such as:

- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress-management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

SOCIAL AWARENESS: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. Such as:

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behavior

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed. Such as:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Demonstrating cultural competency
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being. Such as:
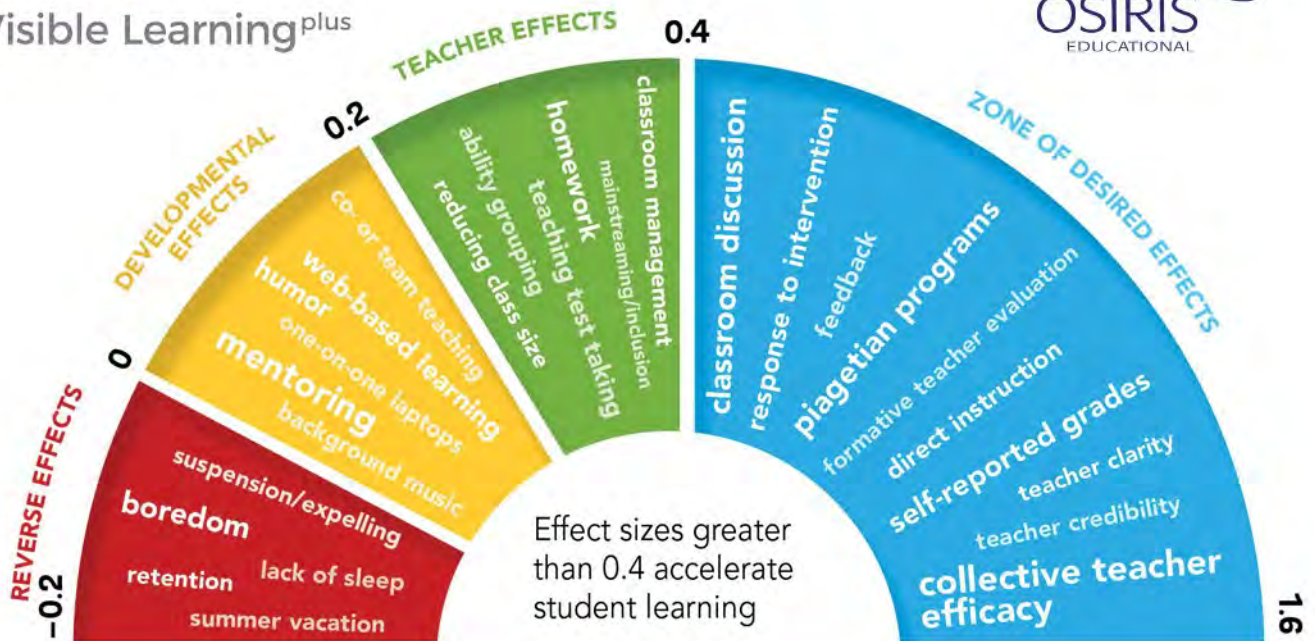
- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Learning to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, facts
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside & outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

THE CASEL 5:

The CASEL 5 addresses five broad, interrelated areas of competence and examples for each: *self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills,* and *responsible decision-making.* The CASEL 5 can be taught and applied at various developmental stages from childhood to adulthood and across diverse cultural contexts to articulate what students should know and be able to do for academic success, school and civic engagement, health and wellness, and fulfilling careers.

Visible Learning plus

TEACHER EFFECTS

DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTS

ZONE OF DESIRED EFFECTS

REVERSE EFFECTS

0
0.2
0.4
1.6
-0.2

classroom discussion
response to intervention
feedback
piagetian programs
formative teacher evaluation
direct instruction
self-reported grades
teacher clarity
teacher credibility
collective teacher efficacy

classroom management
homework
teaching test taking
ability grouping
reducing class size
mainstreaming/inclusion

co- or team teaching
web-based learning
humor
one-on-one laptops
mentoring
background music

suspension/expelling
boredom
retention   lack of sleep
summer vacation

Effect sizes greater than 0.4 accelerate student learning

Desired Effects

Collective teacher efficacy	1.57		Classroom discussion	.82
Self-reported grades	1.33		Teacher clarity	.75
Response to intervention	1.29		Feedback	.70
Piagetian programs	1.28		Direct instructions	.60
Teacher credibility	.90		Formative teacher evaluation	.48

Typical Teacher Effects

Classroom management	.35		Homework	.29
Ability grouping	.30		Mainstreaming/inclustion	.27
Teaching test taking	.30		Class size	.21

Developmental Effects

Co-/team teaching	.19		Mentoring	.12
Web-based learning	.18		Background music	.10
One-on-one laptops	.16		Humor	.04

Reverse Effects

Summer vacations	-.02		Suspension/expelling	-.20
Lack of sleep	-.05		Moving Between Schools	-.34
Retention	-.32		Boredom	-.49

Visible Learning™ 250+ Influences on Student Achievement

The Visible Learning™ research syntheses findings from **1,600+** meta-analyses of **95,000+** studies involving **300** million students, into what works best in education.

Key for rating

- Potential to considerably accelerate student achievement
- Potential to accelerate student achievement
- Likely to have positive impact on student achievement
- Likely to have small positive impact on student achievement
- Likely to have a negative impact on student achievement

ES Effect size calculated using Cohen's *d*

STUDENT

STUDENT	ES
Prior knowledge and background	
Field Independence	0.94
Non-standard dialect use	-0.29
Piagetian programs	1.28
Prior ability	0.98
Prior achievement	0.59
Relating creativity to achievement	0.35
Relating high school to university achievement	0.60
Relating high school achievement to career performance	0.38
Beliefs, attitudes and dispositions	
Self-reported grades	1.33
Working memory strength	0.66
Attitude to content domains	0.46
Concentration/persistence/ engagement	0.54
Grit/incremental vs. entity thinking	0.25
Mindfulness	0.28
Morning vs. evening	0.12
Perceived task value	0.46
Positive ethnic self-identity	0.12
Positive self-concept	0.47
Self-efficacy	0.71
Stereotype threat	-0.33
Student personality	0.30
Motivational approach, orientation	
Achieving motivation and approach	0.42
Boredom	-0.47
Deep motivation and approach	0.57
Depression	-0.26
Lack of stress	0.17
Mastery goals	0.06
Motivation	0.38
Performance goals	-0.01
Anxiety	-0.44
Surface motivation and approach	-0.14
Physical influences	
ADHD	-0.90
ADHD – treatment with drugs	0.32
Breastfeeding	0.04
Deafness	-0.61
Exercise/relaxation	0.21
Gender on achievement	0.08
Illness	-0.44
Lack of sleep	-0.05
Full compared to pre-term/low birth weight	0.57
Relative age within a class	0.45
Bullying	-0.20

CURRICULA

CURRICULA	ES
Reading, writing and the arts	
Comprehensive instructional programs for teachers	0.72
Comprehension programs	0.55
Drama/arts programs	0.42
Exposure to reading	0.43
Music programs	0.30
Phonics instruction	0.60
Repeated reading programs	0.75
Reading Recovery	0.53
Sentence combining programs	0.15
Spelling programs	0.58
Visual-perception programs	0.55
Vocabulary programs	0.63
Whole language approach	0.06
Writing programs	0.46
Math and sciences	
Manipulative materials on math	0.30
Mathematics programs	0.59
Science programs	0.56
Use of calculators	0.27
Other curricula programs	
Bilingual programs	0.36
Career interventions	0.38
Chess instruction	0.34
Conceptual change programs	0.99
Creativity programs	0.64
Diversity courses	0.09
Extra-curricula programs	0.20
Integrated curricula programs	0.47
Juvenile delinquent programs	0.12
Motivation/character programs	0.35
Outdoor/adventure programs	0.43
Perceptual-motor programs	0.08
Play programs	0.50
Social skills programs	0.37
Tactile stimulation programs	0.58

HOME

HOME	ES
Family structure	
Adopted vs non-adopted care	0.25
Engaged vs disengaged fathers	0.21
Intact (two-parent) families	0.22
Other family structure	0.16
Home environment	
Corporal punishment in the home	-0.33
Early years' interventions	0.44
Home visiting	0.29
Moving between schools	-0.30
Parental autonomy support	0.12
Parental involvement	0.45
Parental military deployment	-0.16
Positive family/home dynamics	0.52
Television	-0.18
Family resources	
Family on welfare/state aid	-0.12
Non-immigrant background	0.01
Parental employment	0.03
Socio-economic status	0.52

SCHOOL

SCHOOL	ES
Leadership	
Collective teacher efficacy	1.39
Principals/school leaders	0.37
School climate	0.43
School resourcing	
External accountability systems	0.20
Finances	0.21
Types of school	
Charter schools	0.04
Religious schools	0.24
Single-sex schools	0.08
Summer school	0.19
Summer vacation effect	0.02
School compositional effects	
College halls of residence	0.05
Desegregation	0.28
Diverse student body	0.10
Middle school interventions	0.18
Out-of-school curricula experiences	0.07
School choice programs	0.12
School size (600-900 students at secondary)	0.43
Other school factors	
Counseling effects	0.35
Modifying school calendars/ timetables	0.09
Pre-school programs	0.28
Suspension/expelling students	-0.20

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Visible Learning™ 250+ Influences on Student Achievement

CLASSROOM	ES
Classroom composition effects	
Detracking	0.09
Mainstreaming/inclusion	0.25
Multi-grade/age classes	0.04
Open vs. traditional classrooms	0.01
Reducing class size	0.15
Retention (holding students back)	-0.32
Small group learning	0.47
Tracking/streaming	0.12
Within class grouping	0.18
School curricula for gifted students	
Ability grouping for gifted students	0.30
Acceleration programs	0.68
Enrichment programs	0.48
Classroom influences	
Background music	0.10
Behavioral intervention programs	0.62
Classroom management	0.35
Cognitive behavioral programs	0.29
Decreasing disruptive behavior	0.34
Mentoring	0.12
Positive peer influences	0.53
Strong classroom cohesion	0.53
Students feeling disliked	-0.19

TEACHER	ES
Teacher attributes	
Average teacher effects	0.32
Teacher clarity	0.75
Teacher credibility	1.09
Teacher estimates of achievement	1.29
Teacher expectations	0.43
Teacher personality attributes	0.24
Teacher performance pay	0.05
Teacher verbal ability	0.22
Teacher-student interactions	
Student rating of quality of teaching	0.45
Teachers not labeling students	0.44
Teacher-student relationships	0.48
Teacher education	
Initial teacher training programs	0.10
Micro-teaching/video review of lessons	0.88
Professional development programs	0.37
Teacher subject matter knowledge	0.23

STUDENT LEARNING STRATEGIES	ES
Strategies emphasizing student meta-cognitive/ self-regulated learning	
Elaboration and organization	0.75
Elaborative interrogation	0.56
Evaluation and reflection	0.75
Meta-cognitive strategies	0.55
Help seeking	0.72
Self-regulation strategies	0.52
Self-verbalization and self-questioning	0.59
Strategy monitoring	0.58
Transfer strategies	0.86
Student-focused interventions	
Aptitude/treatment interactions	0.11
Individualized instruction	0.23
Matching style of learning	0.32
Student-centered teaching	0.36
Student control over learning	0.02
Strategies emphasizing student perspectives in learning	
Peer tutoring	0.51
Volunteer tutors	0.51
Learning strategies	
Deliberate practice	0.79
Effort	0.77
Imagery	0.51
Interleaved practice	0.47
Mnemonics	0.80
Note taking	0.51
Outlining and transforming	0.66
Practice testing	0.46
Record keeping	0.52
Rehearsal and memorization	0.73
Spaced vs. mass practice	0.65
Strategy to integrate with prior knowledge	0.93
Study skills	0.45
Summarization	0.74
Teaching test taking and coaching	0.30
Time on task	0.44
Underlining and highlighting	0.44

TEACHING STRATEGIES	ES
Strategies emphasizing learning intentions	
Appropriately challenging goals	0.59
Behavioral organizers	0.42
Clear goal intentions	0.51
Cognitive task analysis	1.29
Concept mapping	0.64
Goal commitment	0.40
Learning goals vs. no goals	0.51
Learning hierarchies-based approach	0.19
Planning and prediction	0.76
Setting standards for self-judgement	0.75
Strategies emphasizing success criteria	
Mastery learning	0.61
Worked examples	0.37
Strategies emphasizing feedback	
Classroom discussion	0.82
Different types of testing	0.12
Feedback	0.66
Formative evaluation	0.34
Questioning	0.48
Response to intervention	1.09
Teaching/instructional strategies	
Adjunct aids	0.35
Collaborative learning	0.34
Competitive vs. individualistic learning	0.24
Cooperative learning	0.40
Cooperative vs. competitive learning	0.53
Cooperative vs. individualistic learning	0.55
Direct instruction	0.59
Discovery-based teaching	0.21
Explicit teaching strategies	0.57
Humor	0.04
Inductive teaching	0.44
Inquiry-based teaching	0.46
Jigsaw method	1.20
Philosophy in schools	0.43
Problem-based learning	0.35
Problem-solving teaching	0.67
Reciprocal teaching	0.74
Scaffolding	0.58
Teaching communication skills and strategies	0.43

TECHNOLOGY, SCHOOL, & OUT-OF-SCHOOL STRATEGIES	ES
Implementations using technologies	
Clickers	0.22
Gaming/simulations	0.34
Information communications technology (ICT)	0.48
Intelligent tutoring systems	0.51
Interactive video methods	0.54
Mobile phones	0.43
One-on-one laptops	0.16
Online and digital tools	0.26
Programmed instruction	0.23
Technology in distance education	0.01
Technology in mathematics	0.33
Technology in other subjects	0.55
Technology in reading/literacy	0.29
Technology in science	0.23
Technology in small groups	0.21
Technology in writing	0.42
Technology with college students	0.42
Technology with elementary students	0.44
Technology with high school students	0.30
Technology with learning needs students	0.57
Use of PowerPoint	0.26
Visual/audio-visual methods	0.22
Web-based learning	0.33
Implementations using out-of-school learning	
After-school programs	0.40
Distance education	0.14
Home-school programs	0.16
Homework	0.29
Service learning	0.58
Implementations that emphasize school-wide teaching strategies	
Co- or team teaching	0.19
Interventions for students with learning needs	0.77
Student support programs – college	0.21
Teaching creative thinking	0.37
Whole-school improvement programs	0.28

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Coaching Through Resistance

Possible Causes	How Coaches Can Help
1 **People just lack the motivation to change.** *High Resistance to Change*	
• Exhaustion • Overwhelmed • Might no longer see themselves as people capable of climbing over the exhaustion	• Take goals and break them into smaller more manageable steps. • Use positive social pressure (i.e.asking all teachers to share a strategy they tried at the next meeting). • Have private conversations with those who still resist change even after your otherwise successful efforts to motivate people. • Reassure them you are a safe place where they can share their fears. • Don't allow them to slow the momentum of the school or let their resistance become an endpoint for school-wide growth. • As a coach, maintain control and do not let go of the goal.
2 **People don't believe there is a need for change.** *High Resistance to Change*	
• A problem of logic exists • Exacerbated by data	• Coach struggling to break it down the need for change logically and persuasively. • Use the data to strike an emotional chord. • Show them how a problem might snowball and impact actual lives.
3 **"We've never done that before."** *High Resistance to Change*	
• People are prone to resisting steps they've never taken before. • No proof it will work • Seen as a waste of time • Common to see this where there is a high fear of failure	• Look for threads in the environment or past initiatives that relate to what you are sharing. • Anchor the unfamiliar in the familiar. • Try fitting the new into a pre-existing structure.
4 **People were enthusiastic but then lost momentum.** *Medium/High Resistance to Change*	
• Disappointment in results to date can cause people to lose faith in themselves and/or their colleagues • Results of change efforts do not materialize as quickly as people expected or wanted	• Remind teachers how far they have come up to this point. • Enumerate and praise specific achievements where possible. • Teach a growth mindset. • Support momentum by reminding people that they are achieving objective and are getting closer to goals every day.
5 **People are stuck in analysis paralysis.** *Medium Resistance to Change*	
People are so inundated with data and can't see a way out.	• Pick an exit point (no matter how small or unsure) then use emotion to convince people to take a leap and try a solution.

	Possible Causes	How Coaches Can Help
6	**"I'll get to that change tomorrow."** *Medium Resistance to Change*	
	• Sometimes procrastination is at the root of resistance. • Usually a symptom of being overwhelmed	• Shrink the problem down so it can't overwhelm. • Put the big picture aside and ask teachers to think about one thing they can do this week. • If they still resist, ask, "What can you commit to try this week?" • Build in accountability. • Ask them to report back to you how it went. • The main point is to get people to do the task, not assess it.
7	**People are certain "it will never work."** *Medium Resistance to Change*	
	• Might no longer see themselves as people capable of climbing over the exhaustion • People have been inundated with initiatives.	• Show them it will work. • Prove them wrong, with patience and empathy. • Acknowledge concerns and fears, but don't let them stay there. • Look for schools where "it" is working and visit or do a video conference. • Find a classroom to visit where "it" is working. • Find ways to give voice to educators who are well developed in this area. • Look to other schools to visit or do video conference.
8	**"We know we should be doing this, but we're not."** *Medium Resistance to Change*	
	• Knowing isn't enough • Often stems from exhaustion	• Break down plans into smaller, more manageable parts. • Collaboration and accountability can be very powerful here. • Suggest people work in pairs or teams to build in natural accountability.
9	**Most people agree change is needed, but nothing is happening.** *Medium Resistance to Change*	
	• People cannot see the path forward due to lack of clarity. • People only see a roadblock.	• Make the end goal explicit and understood. • Vision Cast • Work from a series of smaller goals to light the path. • Look for roadblocks that could be standing in their way. • Refocus educator on growth mindset. • Make sure you, as the coach, believe in your colleagues' abilities and express it to them.

*Based on the work from *Coaching Redefined: A Guide to Leading Meaningful Instructional Growth* by Sherry St. Clair and *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath.

Teacher Visitation Form

Goal of Visit:	
Teacher Visited:	**Date/Time:**
Teacher Actions:	**Student Actions:**
Resources Shared:	
Summary:	

Coaching Conversation

Teacher Name	
Goal	
Observation Day and Time	
Summary of Collaborative Conversation	
Resources Shared	
Action Steps	

Reflective
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