

## Coaching Within Tiered Support Models Overview

Broadly defined, *coaching* is “a form of professional learning within the classroom or school that helps [educators] develop and apply new knowledge, make strong plans for instruction and assessment, obtain feedback, refine their practices, and examine results” ([The University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, Learning Forward, & Public Impact, 2016, p. 5](#)). In simpler terms, coaching provides educators with the support they need to apply a newly learned skill within their own context ([Horner, 2018](#)). Coaching differs from training or traditional professional development (PD) workshops that serve the purpose of developing new knowledge, because coaching focuses on the application of new knowledge over time. Coaching plays a vital role in the implementation of tiered support models to ensure fidelity of learned practices by educators and within systems (i.e., structures or supports provided by those individuals in leadership roles). Throughout this document, examples across educator-level or instructional- and systems-level or team coaching will be shared. Many states use similar coaching strategies for induction and instructional coaching; this document extends those strategies to specific coaching features for effective MTSS and DBI implementation.

Differences between **educator-** and **systems-level** coaching include the following:

- The nature of the goals
  - **Educator-level** or **instructional** coaching activities support MTSS and DBI practices that lead to student learning.
  - **Systems-level** or **team** coaching activities support practices that lead to the overall functioning of a group of individuals gathered around supporting MTSS and DBI implementation (e.g., healthy routines for communication, discussion, and consensus building; defining roles and responsibilities; increasing implementation buy-in or engagement; common vision and expectations).
- The nature of the relationship
  - **Educator-level** or **instructional** coaches work directly with an educator to shape their MTSS and DBI practices (e.g., data-driven instruction).
  - **Systems-level** or **team** coaches work with school teams or groups of educators and/or directly with a team’s facilitator to shape their practices (e.g., developing guidance and policies related to MTSS and DBI implementation).

Regardless of the level (i.e., educator or systems), coaching occurs within the context of ongoing professional learning and may be influenced by an educator or team’s familiarity with the practice or set of practices being coached.

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**Educator-Level Coaching:** [The Art of Coaching](#)

**Systems-Level Coaching:** [The Art of Coaching Teams](#)

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