

## Introduction to the Suite of Briefs on Coaching\*

Teaching expertise evolves through the continuous crafting of visions of optimal learning, the design and implementation of these visions carried out alone and in collaboration, the support received for continuous reflection and action, and the constant refinement of practice. An important contributor to teacher development is coaching.

Accomplished teaching is developed over time. It occurs when teachers offer their students the just right learning opportunities to embrace, problematize, and construct evolving understandings of a variety of texts within specific schooling contexts-and to critically analyze those instances of learning for improvement. Becoming an accomplished teacher also entails always having the best interests of students in mind and action, including advocating for them during problematic, discriminatory circumstances (Shultz, K. & Coleman-King, C. (2012); Faltis & Valdés, 2016).

As with teaching, accomplished coaching is complex, variable, often problematic, situated in the specifics of a context, and yet, when done right, immensely satisfying and productive for both teachers and more importantly, for students. While coaching is typically focused on in the improvement of classroom activity, it is equally impacted by relationships in the school, community, and society.

There are many effective ways to work with teachers as they are assisted to better meet the needs of all of their students, specifically in our case, of students classified as English Learners. However, the ideas offered here are equally valuable for working with other students and contexts.

Addressing English Learner education at the center of our exploration is important because both societally (at the macro level), as well as in schools (at the meso level, Thompson and Umansky, 2024) and in classrooms, the micro level (Walqui, 2024) these students are typically not provided with quality opportunities to learn and usually face discriminatory practices (Villegas et al, 2012).

Using cases, and brief vignettes that illustrate critical moments in the development of successful practice can help teachers recognize crucial episodes and reflect, alone and collaboratively on practices in need of conceptual reconsideration and redirected action (Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

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In this suite of briefs related to coaching, we present general comments and recommendations on coaching, the role that states and districts (at the macro level of the ecology), schools (at the meso level), and educators involved in coaching, alongside students (the micro level) play in promoting successful coaching or preventing it.

## References

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