

Systems Thinking in Schools, Waters Foundation Follow-up Coaching and Support Structures

Follow-up coaching and support are critical structures of the Waters Foundation 3-year plan, and ensures sustained capacity building for all those who participate as cohort members after completing the Level 1 and 2 systems thinking workshops. The following describes the process and structures we have established to ensure ongoing skill development and support that directly impacts classroom practice and school and district leadership.

Pre-visitation work

Before we begin our coaching visits each year, we assign Waters Foundation/Systems Thinking Group (WF) coaches to support each cohort school. After the completion of Level 1, introductory/welcome back emails are sent to each cohort member, visitation schedules are coordinated, and phone calls with new cohort members are scheduled when possible.

During the coaching week

Typically a coach spends each day at 1-3 schools working with participating teachers, counselors, curriculum coordinators and administrators. The content of individual coaching sessions is based on the cohort member's preferences and needs, with the goal being that each cohort member will be observed teaching lessons or actively using ST habits and tools independently during the year.

Coaching sessions can include:

- planning time with teachers based on the incorporation of ST habits and tools into lessons that support district curriculum.
- planning time with principals, assistant principals and curriculum coordinators focused on how to infuse ST habits and tools to support the goals and daily operations of the school.
- coaching focused on student work samples.
- co-teaching of lessons (teacher and WF coach teaching together).
- lesson observations with the teacher teaching independently and the coach observing.
- debriefing observed lessons.

After each coaching session, participants self-assess their progress and development using the WF Systems Thinking Instructional Rubric (watersfoundation.org/resources/systems-thinking-rubrics/). This developmental data is used to track individual and cohort progress.

Between coaching visits

Coaches continue to provide support for each of their assigned cohort members. Examples of support include:

- feedback emails sent by each coach that summarize and validate the evidence of learning observed during coaching sessions.
- phone calls to discuss lesson planning or to respond to questions about a particular ST tool or strategy.

- email support that responds to questions and provides existing resources that can be sent electronically (e.g. sample lesson plans or student work examples).
- lesson plan development: a coach reads an upcoming literature selection or piece of informational text that is provided by the teacher so that together the teacher and coach can plan a lesson incorporating ST strategies that meets the teacher's needs.
- providing resources, such as a coach physically mailing pertinent articles or books.

Web-based support structures

- Instructional Webinars: This option provides cohort members an opportunity to delve more deeply into a tool or strategy by engaging in web-based instruction. Webinars can be regularly scheduled or scheduled based on a particular need.
- Collaborative webinars: Scheduled collaborative webinars can be used when the time and expense of face-to-face meetings is too great. In a facilitated setting, cohort members can share student work samples, lesson plan ideas, and/or questions among cohort colleagues using a web-based platform.
- Virtual coaching: The same webinar platform or our GoToMeeting platform can be used to schedule virtual coaching sessions. These coaching sessions can be organized for school, grade level, subject area, inter-district level groups or for individual, one-on-one sessions.
- Waters Foundation WebEd (watersfoundation.org/webed): This series of free, online learning modules provides cohort members a resource for ST content review and for resources that can be used with students in a classroom setting.