

STUDENT-CENTERED COACHING

FROM A **DISTANCE**

Coaching Moves for Virtual, Hybrid, and In-Person Classrooms



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that many districts established no-grading policies. As the months have progressed, things have gotten better. Yet it is also becoming evident that this is going to last a while, and we may be shifting between virtual and in-person learning for many months to come.

MOVE 1: CONTINUE TO COACH IN A WAY THAT'S STUDENT-CENTERED

Because COVID-19 has disproportionately affected our underserved populations, certain schools are finding that it is more of a struggle to return to “normal.” Take Denver Public Schools as an example. Several years ago, the district moved to a choice-based enrollment model, which means that today, students don't necessarily attend their neighborhood school but are dispersed throughout the city. Couple that with the fact that the transportation offered for high school students is a city bus pass, which now is limiting ridership. Even though the district wants to return to in-person instruction, it turns out that one of the biggest barriers it's facing is getting these students to school.

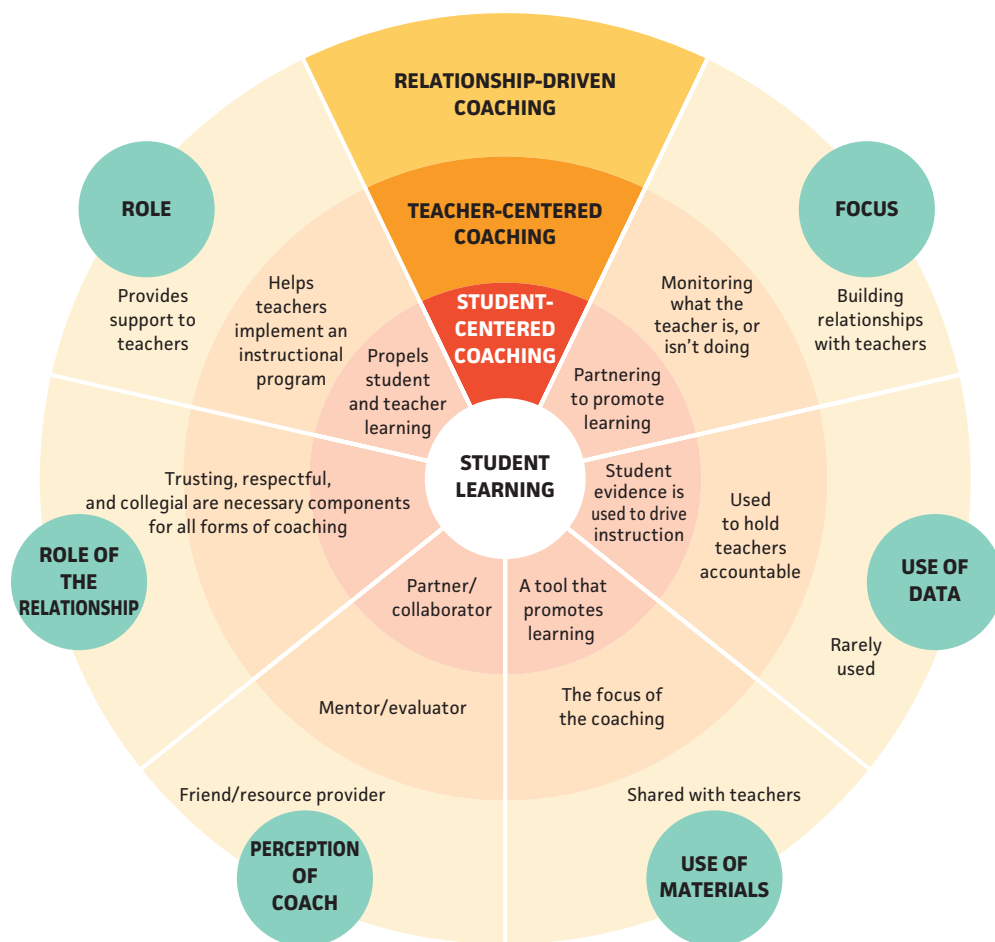
With such profound challenges, it is easy to overlook the power of coaching. It's also easy to get overwhelmed and wonder where we fit in as coaches. We understand that there has been some need for teachers to adapt, but we will also continue to advocate for coaching on behalf of our students. We can be a part of the solution, no matter whether schools are virtual, hybrid, or in-person.

HOW CAN WE STAY STUDENT-CENTERED?

When describing different approaches to coaching, we use the language of relationship-driven, teacher-centered, and student-centered coaching to frame what we've seen as we have supported coaches over the past few decades. Figure 1.1 details the role, focus, use of data, and other common coaching behaviors for each approach.

We like to think of this figure as a dartboard. While we continually aim for the center, which is student learning, it doesn't mean that we won't hit the outer rings at certain

FIGURE 1.1 • Student-Centered, Teacher-Centered, and Relationship-Driven Coaching



Source: Sweeney, D., and Harris, L. (2020). *The Essential Guide for Student-Centered Coaching*. Reprinted with permission.

times, especially in the current landscape of schools. The key is to aim our attention toward student learning as much of the time as possible.

How we accomplish this can happen in many different ways. While we have emphasized coaching cycles in the past (and we still believe in them), they aren't the only structure we can use to have student-centered conversations with teachers. This year has been hard on coaches who hold themselves to a high bar and measure their value based solely on implementing coaching cycles. We certainly celebrate this