Structured Coaching Triads
Churchlands/Shenton Regional Networks

Dale Mackesey and Donna Snow
Australian Professional Standard for Principals

Context: School, sector, community: socio-economic, geographic: and education systems at local, regional, national and global levels

The standard for principals: The role in action

Leadership requirements

Professional practices

- Vision and Values
- Knowledge and understanding
- Personal qualities, social and interpersonal skills

- High quality learning, teaching and schooling
- Successful learners, confident creative individuals and active informed citizens

- Leading teaching and learning
- Developing self and others
- Leading improvement, innovation and change
- Leading the management of the school
- Engaging and working with the community
Support for planning

School planning is aligned to systemic policy and directions.
School Improvement and Accountability Framework

The conceptual model has five components:

- Successful students are at the core.
- Assess-plan-act cycle.
- School operations including both pre-requisites for successful students – teaching, and learning environment; and enablers of successful students – leadership, relationships and resources.
- Schools report at particular points in time about their performance.
- Schools participate in school review processes that evaluate school effectiveness and provide feedback about how schools might improve their performance.
School Review

• Through the devolution process, Independent Public Schools (IPS) no longer have a District Director and subsequent biannual school review visits. IPS are now reviewed in either three or five year periods by external reviewers from the Department of Educational Services.

• IPS develop three-year Business Plans and conduct annual self-assessment to drive school improvement and strategic planning. They also develop Operational Plans each year with specific strategies based on the self-assessment process.

• Academic and non-academic data is collected and assessed by staff and the School Board with recommendations forming the basis for planning.
Aim of the Coaching Triads

• To establish mini networks of schools (3) that share self-assessment processes and use the coaching model to assist colleagues in areas of perceived need.

• Establish a coaching philosophy across the Networks in relation to school improvement and accountability.

• Add rigour and external moderation to school improvement and accountability processes.

• Share expertise and best practice across ‘like’ schools.
The Churchlands /Shenton Network of schools consists of over 30 schools in the Western Australia, all with high ICSEAS and high parent and community expectations. The primary schools feed into a variety of high performing Public Secondary Schools and Private Schools.

Across the two Networks, participating Principals are organised into triads.

All participating Principals engaged in three days Professional Learning with GCI-Western Australia to hone their coaching and questioning techniques.
Underpinned by Trust

• **Trust** is a critical ingredient of the social context of schools not only for leadership, but also because it *improves cooperation* (Putnam, 1993; Tschannen-Moran, 2001), it *enhances openness* and *health* in a school climate (Hoffman, 1994; Hoy, *et al.*, 1992), and perhaps most importantly, it *facilitates student achievement* (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard, *et al.*, 2001; Hoy, 2002).

• The Coaching Triads *set the conditions* for trust to be readily established through *deep engagement* in goal setting, connected practice, feedback and celebrations.
The Coaching Triad Process
Step 1a - Independent Reflections

On my Leadership:
• What aspects of my leadership do I want to know more about?
• What tools could help inform this (i.e. self-reflection, 360 feedback tools - LSI, AITSL or targeted questions)?
• What could the leadership focus of my review be?

On my school:
• What areas of the school do I want to know more about and/or develop?
• What school initiatives or Business Plan priorities do I need to review?
• How will I choose a focus area (i.e. through the National School Improvement Tool, the Australian Teaching and Learning Toolkit)?
• What could be the school improvement focus of my review?
The Coaching Process
Step 1b – Planning for the Triad Review

- What data do I need collected as part of the review (qualitative or quantitative)?
- What is the best way to have my colleagues capture this (i.e. interviews, observations, policy/data review)?
- What information do I need to give my colleagues to prepare them for the review?
The Coaching Process
Step 2 – Planning for the Triad Review

Pre-Review Conversation (meeting, email, phone call)

• What is the focus for the review?
• What data do you need collected, and how do you want us to collect it?
• Is there anything we should know about the context before going forward?
• Do you want feedback about any areas outside of the focus area(s) if something emerges?
The Coaching Process
Step 3 – Triad Review and Data Collection

Conducted by Triad colleagues

- This should be conducted based on the direction of the leader being reviewed.
- An opportunity for the two reviewers to collate the data is necessary.
The Coaching Process
Step 4 – Coaching Day

Arrange at least half a day.

Elicit reflection:
• What strengths do you hope emerge from the data collection in the focus area you’ve chosen?
• What areas of improvement do you anticipate?

Collaboratively examine the review data:
• What opportunities for improvement do you see? What tells you that?
• What do you want to know more about that the data doesn’t tell you?
• What focus for future development (in your leadership and as a school priority) has emerged?

Ensure rigour and stay on task.
The Coaching Process
Step 5 – Coaching Day

Goal Setting and Action Planning:

• Use the GROWTH coaching approach to help the leader to establish 1-3 primary goals and some key strategies to carry out intended actions and habits to stay accountable going forward.

• If relevant, make explicit links to the Australian Professional Standards for Principals or the leader’s Principal Performance Review / Professional Leadership Action Plan.

Regular check-ins and ongoing support:

• Keep the goals alive through informal and formal conversations and share celebrate successes.
The Dip (Schools are busy)

Minimise the dip through:

• collaborative planning
• coaching and mentoring
• providing leadership support
• celebrating successes
• reflecting on and refining the implementation process.