# 1. Foundations

## Why Us, Why Now

Shanghai American School (SAS) has a **long**-**standing tradition of innovation in teaching and learning**—with coaching as a key pillar in that journey. As education evolves through approaches like **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**, **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)**, and the thoughtful integration of **Generative AI**, the need for systematic, job-embedded coaching has never been more critical. Research consistently shows that sustained coaching partnerships increase the likelihood that educators will implement and refine high**-**impact practices—leading to measurable improvements in student learning.

This is a pivotal moment to deepen and expand our coaching culture by embedding it more fully within SAS’s **comprehensive professional learning system**. When coaching is intentionally aligned with individual educator growth, divisional priorities, and school**-**wide initiatives, it amplifies our **One School philosophy** and strengthens **collective efficacy**—our shared belief in the ability to positively impact student learning.

By strategically investing in our coaching program, we position SAS to lead in educational excellence while building enduring capacity for innovation. Our commitment to coaching reflects our belief that when educators are empowered to grow, collaborate, and experiment, every student benefits from more personalized and meaningful learning experiences.

## Grounded in Research and Practice

Our **SAS Coaching Program Framework** is rooted in decades of educational research and intentionally designed to meet the unique needs of our school community. By integrating proven coaching methodologies, insights from program design, and the latest findings on professional learning, we’ve created a model that is both theoretically grounded and practically impactful.

### Foundational Influences

Several key coaching approaches have directly shaped our framework:

**-** **Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston):** - Supports reflective dialogue and educator autonomy - Recognizes that sustainable change emerges as educators deepen their metacognitive skills and sense of agency

**-** **Student-Centered Coaching (Sweeney):** - Maintains a laser focus on student learning outcomes - Ensures that every coaching conversation stays anchored in classroom practice and impact

**-** **Transformational Coaching (Aguilar):** - Attends to both instructional strategies and the beliefs, behaviors, and “ways of being” - Influences teaching practice at a deeper level

Programmatically, our framework is also informed by:

**-** **Joellen Killion** on building coaching cultures and embedding coaching within broader professional learning systems **-** **Jim Knight** on partnership principles and dialogic feedback, which reinforce trust and authentic, growth-oriented relationships **-** **Kim Cofino’s Thrive Model**, which emphasizes clarity, consistency, and community—ideals that align closely with our **One School philosophy** and help build coherence across divisions

### Broader Research Connections

In addition to coaching-specific literature, our framework is grounded in four foundational domains of educational research:

**-** **Adult Learning Theory** - Informs how educators acquire and apply new knowledge - Shapes coaching design that honors educator agency and metacognitive development - Emphasizes relevance, context, and active engagement

**-** **Implementation Science** - Offers strategies for successfully adopting and sustaining new practices - Identifies conditions and drivers for meaningful implementation - Provides insights into navigating change over time

**-** **Communities of Practice Research** - Explores how professional learning communities develop, share knowledge, and sustain growth - Highlights the importance of relational trust and shared goals - Informs how we structure learning networks within and across divisions

**-** **Collaborative Learning and Collective Efficacy** - Demonstrates how educators learn most effectively in community - Identifies conditions that support impactful collaboration **-** Reinforces the power of shared belief in our collective capacity to improve student outcomes

## Three Critical Elements

Amid the diverse research and models that inform our approach, **three elements consistently emerge as essential** to successful coaching at SAS:

1. **Genuine Partnerships Built on Trust and Skilled Dialogue**
   * Foster a culture where candid reflection is welcomed
   * Create psychological safety that enables risk-taking and innovation
   * Encourage authentic, respectful professional conversations
2. **Clear Focus on Student Learning and Evidence of Impact**
   * Ground coaching in the day-to-day realities of classroom practice
   * Use tangible evidence to guide reflection and assess growth
   * Reinforce SAS’s commitment to meaningful, student-centered outcomes
3. **Coherent Systems That Support Ongoing Professional Growth**
   * Align coaching with other professional learning initiatives
   * Promote consistency across divisions, teams, and practices
   * Establish structures that support long-term sustainability

By centering our work around these elements—and remaining responsive to SAS’s **strategic priorities**—we’ve built a flexible yet robust coaching framework. This structure allows our program to evolve alongside new research and practice, while staying deeply aligned with our **Core Commitments**.

[Note: Consider adding a visual representation of the three critical elements here]

## Purpose and Organization of the Framework

Our **SAS Coaching Program Framework** provides the foundational architecture for transformative coaching across all divisions. It defines the core principles, systems, and practices that make coaching a catalyst for educational excellence—ensuring alignment with SAS’s mission and the **One School philosophy**.

Designed for coaches, leaders, and educators, our Framework serves several key purposes:

* Establishes a shared understanding of effective coaching at SAS
* Outlines the systems and structures that sustain impactful coaching relationships
* Illustrates how coaching integrates with broader professional learning initiatives
* Provides practical guidance for navigating complex or ambiguous situations **-** Sets clear expectations for measuring coaching’s impact on teaching and learning

### Framework Structure

Our Framework is organized into these interconnected domains:

1. **Foundations and Core Beliefs** – our coaching vision and its alignment with SAS’s mission
2. **Coaching Approaches** – the four support functions and coaching cycle that guide our practice
3. **Systems and Structures** – the operational foundations that support effective coaching
4. **Organizational Support and Leadership** – how leadership enables and sustains coaching
5. **Embedding Coaching Across the School** – integration with professional learning systems
6. **Operational Systems** – processes that enable implementation across campuses
7. **Program Integrity** – principles for maintaining trust, ethics, and clarity
8. **Evaluation and Professional Growth** – approaches for coach development
9. **Program Impact and Evaluation** – methods for assessing coaching effectiveness

This document focuses on the “what” and “why” of coaching, while companion resources support the “how.” Readers will find targeted implementation tools in:

**-** **Appendices** – detailed protocols, templates, and reference guides **-** **Coach Toolkit** – a curated set of practical resources and guides to support daily coaching practice (currently in development)

Implementation Resources are noted throughout the Framework to guide stakeholders to relevant tools and templates. This layered design ensures that our coaching vision is both grounded in enduring principles and equipped for flexible, real**-**world application.

## SAS Coaching Program: Core Beliefs & Values

### Introduction

At Shanghai American School (SAS), we believe the most meaningful professional growth occurs through purposeful, trusting relationships rooted in reflective dialogue. These shared values guide every coaching interaction—whether through collaborative design, targeted consultation, group facilitation, or sustained coaching cycles. Together, these support functions work in harmony to help educators continually elevate their practice in service of student success.

### Definition of Coaching

At Shanghai American School, we define **coaching** as a transformative process that amplifies educators’ capacity—individually and collectively—to deepen student learning and refine student-centered pedagogical practices through purposeful dialogue and reflection.

This non-evaluative process cultivates self**-**directed educators who reflect on their thinking, set purposeful goals, and engage in iterative cycles of growth. By activating educators’ knowledge, experiences, and strengths, coaching enhances educator efficacy and growth, leading to meaningful and equitable student success.

### Why a Coaching Program?

We believe transformative student learning depends on educators who possess the skillfulness and capacity to grow individually and collectively. Our **Coaching Program** is an important component of our **Professional Learning System** because it cultivates the synergy where individual educator goals, division priorities, and whole**-**school initiatives intersect—bringing our **Core Commitments** and **One School philosophy** to life.

By investing in a dedicated coaching team, we ensure professional growth remains intentional, coherent, and impactful. Rather than relying on isolated professional development events, we embrace sustained, job**-**embedded learning experiences that foster ongoing inquiry, collaboration, and reflection. This commitment to building collective capacity while honoring educator agency drives meaningful innovations that serve every student.

### Our Core Beliefs About Coaching

Our coaching practice is grounded in **eight core beliefs** that define how we support, partner, and grow together at SAS:

1. **Trust & Psychological Safety**  
   Coaching thrives in environments rooted in honesty, vulnerability, and confidentiality. When relationships are non-evaluative and growth**-**oriented, educators feel empowered to take risks, explore new ideas, and share authentically.
2. **Transformational Partnership**  
   Effective coaching is a reciprocal relationship built on mutual trust and shared expertise. Coaches and educators co**-**create solutions, drawing on one another’s strengths to achieve lasting, meaningful improvement.
3. **Reflective Practice**  
   Purposeful reflection is the engine of professional growth. Through structured inquiry and open dialogue, educators examine their practice, surface assumptions, and gain insight that drives continuous improvement.
4. **Evidence**-**Informed Dialogue**  
   Coaching conversations grounded in concrete data—such as student work, classroom observations, or assessments—stay objective, actionable, and tightly focused on student learning.
5. **Adaptive Expertise**  
   We value both structure and flexibility. Coaching cycles offer a framework for growth, while real**-**time responsiveness ensures educators receive the right support, in the right format, at the right time.
6. **Equity & Belonging**  
   Coaching should create inclusive spaces where every educator is seen, heard, and supported. Recognizing diverse contexts and ensuring equitable access to growth opportunities fosters belonging and enhances student outcomes.
7. **Continuous Growth**  
   Professional learning unfolds through cycles of planning, action, reflection, and refinement. Each coaching interaction builds momentum for sustained individual and collective development.
8. **Professional Agency & Innovation**  
   Coaching fuels educator agency and sparks innovation. By honoring educator expertise and encouraging experimentation, coaching drives meaningful transformation in classrooms and across the broader school community.

[Note: Consider adding a visual representation of the eight core beliefs here]

## Strategic Alignment & Theory of Change

### Why a Theory of Change?

A **Theory of Change** helps us articulate how our coaching beliefs and practices lead to lasting improvements in teaching and learning. It connects coaching at the educator level to broader outcomes—student achievement, collective efficacy, and system**-**wide growth—underscoring that coaching is not just a set of activities, but a strategic driver for our **One School vision**.

### Statement of Change

If SAS cultivates a coaching culture anchored in:

1. **Transformative Change** (deep individual and systemic impact)
2. **Strategic Integration** (alignment with organizational priorities)
3. **Collective Capacity** (shared ownership of professional learning)
4. **Systemic Support** (leadership, time, and resources)
5. **Student Success** (improved engagement, achievement, and equity)

Then educators will refine instructional practices through reflective dialogue, real**-**time collaboration, and targeted expertise. This will lead to stronger student outcomes, a more inclusive and collaborative culture, and sustained innovation—ultimately advancing SAS’s mission to empower learners to shape a better world.

### Underlying Assumptions

To achieve our vision, the following conditions must be present:

1. **Educator Engagement & Coachability**  
   Educators approach coaching with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to reflect and adjust their practice.
2. **Collaborative Culture**  
   A school**-**wide ethos of trust, inquiry, and improvement strengthens engagement and supports shared growth.
3. **Strategic Alignment**  
   Coaching goals connect to SAS’s core initiatives (e.g., CRP, UDL, wellbeing, generative AI), ensuring cohesion and focus.
4. **Leadership Advocacy**  
   School leaders actively champion coaching and provide the structures and time needed to support its success.
5. **Adequate Resources**  
   Educators and coaches have access to the tools, technology, and learning opportunities required to implement and sustain change.
6. **Data**-**Driven Inquiry**  
   Teams use student work, assessments, and observation data to inform decisions and measure impact.
7. **Community Support**  
   Parents and other stakeholders understand and value the role of coaching in improving student learning and driving school improvement.

### How It All Fits Together

By embedding coaching within the broader professional learning ecosystem, we ensure that every coaching conversation contributes to a culture of shared growth. When factors like engagement, leadership, and resources are in place, coaching becomes a **transformative lever**—bridging personal learning and school-wide progress. This integrated approach drives innovation, supports equity, and keeps student success at the center of all we do.

[Note: Consider adding a visual representation of the Theory of Change here]

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# 2. Coaching Approaches

## Coaching Program Structure and Functions

At Shanghai American School (SAS), we design our **Coaching Program** as a cohesive, adaptive system of professional learning support. At its core are **four distinct yet interconnected support functions**—coaching, consulting, collaborating, and facilitating. These functions provide clarity, intentionality, and flexibility in how we serve educators, leaders, and teams.

While each function has its own purpose, together they form a unified approach aligned with our school-wide goals. They foster strong relationships and create meaningful opportunities for growth at every level of the organization.

## Why a Shared Language of Support Functions?

We develop a common language for these functions to strengthen understanding and coherence across the school:

**-** **Clarifies Intent and Purpose:**  
Naming the function helps educators understand the goal of each interaction—whether it’s reflective dialogue (coaching), targeted advice (consulting), joint problem-solving (collaborating), or structured group facilitation (facilitating). This alignment supports clarity and relevance.

**-** **Creates a Consistent Frame of Reference:**  
A shared vocabulary fosters coherence across divisions and teams, reinforcing a culture of continuous professional growth.

**-** **Guides Reflective Practice and Ownership:**  
Transparency empowers educators to consider which forms of support are most helpful and why. Over time, this fosters trust, autonomy, and greater ownership of one’s learning.

[Note: Consider adding a visual comparison of the four support functions here]

## The Four Support Functions

### Coaching: The Most Transformative Function

We believe coaching is the most transformative pathway for educator growth and student success. Grounded in reflective dialogue, inquiry, and goal-setting, coaching fosters a culture of curiosity, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Through coaching, educators build capacity by analyzing their thinking, refining instructional practices, and pursuing purposeful growth. This non-evaluative process supports the development of self-directed professionals and equitable, student**-**centered outcomes.

**Key Principles of Coaching at SAS:** **-** **Cognitive Mediation:** Intentional questioning surfaces beliefs, decisions, and assumptions **-** **Student-Centered Focus:** Conversations remain rooted in student engagement, learning, and well-being **-** **Reflective Cycles:** Educators engage in sustained reflection and action, building momentum for ongoing improvement **-** **Goal Alignment:** Coaching aligns individual goals with broader school priorities while respecting educator agency

### Consulting: Targeted Expertise and Guidance

When consulting, our coaches offer direct knowledge, strategies, or resources to help educators navigate specific needs—such as adopting a new instructional tool or addressing a pedagogical challenge.

**Key Aspects of Consulting:** **-** **Sharing Expertise:** Provide targeted advice and proven strategies **-** **Focused Problem-Solving:** Deliver clarity and next steps for timely issues **-** **Capacity Building:** Help educators apply new knowledge in context—without creating dependency

Consulting can be highly effective in fast-paced or high-stakes situations, but works best when balanced with reflection and co-ownership. When used intentionally, it supports immediate needs while still empowering long-term growth.

### Collaborating: Shared Ownership and Innovation

Collaboration is a partnership built on mutual accountability and shared decision-making. Our coaches and educators co**-**create ideas, design solutions, and refine practices together. Collaboration thrives on equal partnership, combining diverse expertise to strengthen professional relationships and instructional design.

**Key Elements of Collaborating:** **-** **Co-Creation:** Generate new strategies and refine ideas through shared dialogue **-** **Mutual Accountability:** Share responsibility for outcomes and next steps **-** **Dynamic Innovation:** Use real-time problem-solving to spark creativity and continuous growth

By co**-**planning lessons, analyzing student work, or exploring new approaches, collaboration fosters **collective efficacy** and energizes teaching practice.

### Facilitating: Guiding Groups Toward Shared Goals

Facilitation involves designing and leading structured group processes that result in collective learning, shared decisions, and cohesive action. In this role, our coaches guide teams through reflective dialogue, protocols, and planning sessions to advance instructional priorities.

**Key Components of Facilitating:** **-** **Process Leadership:** Design and guide agendas to maintain focus and drive progress **-** **Equity of Voice:** Encourage participation from all team members, fostering inclusivity and trust **-** **Shared Accountability:** Ensure collective ownership of decisions and follow-through

Whether supporting a Professional Learning Community (PLC), a team-based inquiry, or a cross-divisional initiative, facilitation helps teams move from dialogue to coordinated action.

### Strategic Blending of Functions

While coaching remains the core of our practice, the ability to blend all four functions—based on context, readiness, and need—is what makes our coaching program dynamic and responsive. By adapting the type of support to fit the moment, we ensure every educator receives the most relevant, timely, and impactful partnership possible.

## The SAS Coaching Cycle: A Flexible Yet Cyclical Foundation

We recognize that effective coaching can take many forms and does not rely on a single, fixed model. However, our experience shows that cyclical structures—grounded in clear goals, reflective inquiry, data**-**informed adjustments, and synthesis—consistently foster deeper educator growth and improved student learning.

To ensure clarity and consistency across coaching interactions, we highlight the **Plan–Implement–Reflect model** as a foundational framework. This flexible cycle keeps coaching student**-**centered, purposeful, and measurable—regardless of the format or focus.

### The SAS Coaching Cycle

**1. Plan – Setting Clear Purpose** **-** **Initial Goals Discussion:** Identify educator goals and student learning outcomes **-** **Baseline Data & Current Practice:** Examine student work, observation notes, or other evidence **-** **Success Metrics:** Determine how impact will be measured **-** **Timeline & Check-Ins:** Agree on a timeframe and cadence for ongoing reflection

**2. Implement – Taking Purposeful Action** **-** **Experiment with New Strategies:** Collaborate on techniques aligned to identified goals **-** **Collect Evidence of Impact:** Use student work and classroom observations to assess progress **-** **Adapt in Real Time:** Adjust strategies based on emerging insights **-** **Maintain Momentum:** Use check**-**ins to support pivots and celebrate progress

**3. Reflect – Learning and Refining** **-** **Metacognitive Prompts:** Explore what’s working, what’s challenging, and why **-** **Data Review:** Analyze outcomes in relation to goals **-** **Strategic Adjustments:** Decide which approaches to keep, refine, or discontinue

**Cycle Synthesis** **-** **Impact Review:** Evaluate progress toward student outcomes **-** **Celebrate Growth:** Acknowledge both educator and student learning **-** **Transfer Practices:** Identify strategies that can be scaled or repeated **-** **Plan Next Steps:** Set goals for a new cycle, if appropriate

[Note: Consider adding a visual representation of the coaching cycle here]

### Why Cycles Matter

**-** **Promote Iterative Growth:** Build and refine skills through ongoing, connected practice **-** **Adapt to Readiness:** Use varied coaching approaches (e.g., cognitive, student-centered, educator-directed) to meet educators where they are **-** **Foster Ownership:** Encourage self-direction through goal-setting, reflection, and agency

Our coaches may choose from a range of models—such as Cognitive Coaching maps or student**-**centered cycles (e.g., Sweeney, Knight)—but all uphold four essentials: clear goals, reflective inquiry, strategic adaptation, and synthesis.

## Mentoring: A Distinct but Related Practice

At SAS, we view mentoring and coaching as closely related, yet distinct practices within our professional learning ecosystem. While our **Coaching Program** is structured around four core support functions, mentoring exists outside of this framework as a separate, developmental relationship that may arise in specific contexts.

### What is Mentoring?

Drawing on the work of Wellman and Lipton, we define mentoring as a long-term, guidance-based relationship in which a more experienced educator provides support, perspective, and professional wisdom to a less familiar colleague. Mentoring often includes:

* Modeling professional identity
* Offering contextual advice based on experience
* Helping others navigate a new school or career stage

Unlike coaching, which is grounded in reflective dialogue and self-directed growth, mentoring is typically more directive and rooted in personal experience.

### Mentoring at SAS

While we generally do not employ novice educators, many are new to our school. In these cases, a coach may adopt a mentoring stance—helping colleagues acclimate to SAS’s culture, systems, and expectations. However, this is an informal and situational role—not an explicit part of the coaching framework.

Examples of mentoring might include: - Explaining SAS’s instructional norms or professional culture - Offering perspective on navigating initiatives, policies, or systems **-** Providing collegial insight on balancing workload and responsibilities

As educators gain familiarity, the relationship transitions into a coaching dynamic—centered on reflective practice, instructional growth, and student impact.

By recognizing when mentoring is appropriate—and keeping it distinct from the four core support functions—we ensure every educator receives the right support at the right time, without blurring the boundaries of our coaching model.

## Balancing Roles and Priorities in Coaching

The four core support functions—coaching, consulting, collaborating, and facilitating—form the foundation of our coaching practice. Drawing on the research of Killion and Harrison, we recognize that coaches may take on multiple roles (e.g., curriculum specialist, data coach, change agent), but never all at once. **Role clarity** and **intentional alignment** with school needs are essential to preserving quality and avoiding overload.

### Domains of Coaching Focus

While grounded in the **One School vision**, coaching must be responsive to both local context and individual needs. Typically, our coaching support emerges from three interconnected domains:

**1. Schoolwide Strategic Priorities** - Our coaches support mission-aligned initiatives (e.g., UDL, CRP, generative AI, well-being) across divisions **-** This ensures every coaching interaction contributes to shared goals grounded in equity, excellence, and innovation

**2. Local Context and Application** - Our coaches tailor their work to departmental or grade-level needs, adapting to each division’s priorities and culture - This local alignment ensures relevance while preserving coherence with whole**-**school direction

**3. Individual Educator Growth** - Our coaches partner with educators to set meaningful, personalized goals - This honors professional agency while reinforcing schoolwide initiatives through classroom**-**level action

By aligning their support across these domains, we ensure every interaction is purposeful, responsive, and strategically aligned.

### Adapting Coaching Roles to Meet Needs

Our coaches are skilled in fluidly shifting among the four support functions—sometimes even within a single conversation. This adaptability is grounded in three key capacities:

**1. Human-Centered Awareness** - Our coaches read verbal and nonverbal cues—such as tone, body language, and readiness for change **-** They use this insight to choose when to deepen reflection, offer expertise, or facilitate group process

**2. Contextual Responsiveness** - Each conversation is shaped by real-world instructional data, curricular goals, and broader initiatives (e.g., CRP, UDL, AI integration) **-** Our coaches adapt their approach to support both the moment and the mission

**3. Real-Time, Evidence-Informed Decisions** - Our coaches pivot flexibly—moving from inquiry to resource-sharing, or from targeted consulting to facilitation—based on emerging needs **-** These decisions are always anchored in impact, integrity, and student learning

Through this adaptive practice, we model instructional agility and strategic partnership. This responsive approach ensures that coaching remains meaningful, grounded in the **One School philosophy**, and deeply supportive of both educator and student growth.

Supporting Learning Through Technology

### Instructional Technology Coach Role at SAS

At SAS, our **Instructional Technology Coaches** bring specialized expertise in leveraging digital tools to enhance student learning, while remaining firmly grounded in our coaching philosophy of purposeful dialogue and reflection. Although all our coaches recognize technology as an integral part of modern pedagogy, Instructional Technology Coaches leverage their in-depth knowledge of digital tools to transform teaching and learning. Through trusting, non**-**evaluative partnerships, these specialists help educators explore and realize the full learning potential of technology.

### Core Identity

As members of our coaching team, Instructional Technology Coaches facilitate transformative growth with an emphasis on technology integration—yet they remain coaches first. They engage educators in reflective dialogue about how digital tools might deepen student learning and refine pedagogical practices. Their expertise centers on:

**Pedagogical Technology Integration:** - Fostering innovation that advances student learning outcomes - Designing and implementing technology-enhanced learning experiences - Aligning digital tools with learning goals

While they bring this specialized knowledge, their primary role remains activating educators’ knowledge and vision for meaningful technology use in their specific contexts.

### Strategic Balance

Our Instructional Technology Coaches maintain a deliberate balance between supporting educator growth and ensuring technology optimally serves teaching and learning across the school. Their foremost responsibility is to cultivate sustained, reflective partnerships that enhance technology integration at the classroom level. At the same time, they provide critical guidance and coordination for broader technology needs, including:

* Collaborating with IT and other stakeholders to ensure a learning-centered infrastructure (e.g., reliable networks, accessible devices) that supports educational goals and removes barriers to learning
* Consulting on emerging technologies from a pedagogical perspective to validate alignment with instructional outcomes
* Facilitating implementation decisions that advance teaching and learning objectives **-** Providing targeted operational support (e.g., troubleshooting, device setup) to address educators’ immediate technology needs

These operational aspects, though essential, serve to facilitate rather than define the coach’s work. In some cases, this may include coordination and resourcing responsibilities—such as managing a Makerspace, leading device deployment, or overseeing digital platforms. While these tasks are often necessary to keep technology initiatives running smoothly, we recognize they can draw significantly on a coach’s time.

As we continue to implement and refine our **Coaching Program**, leadership teams will make intentional decisions about the scope of these operational functions. Our guiding principle remains ensuring that coaches have the capacity to engage fully in meaningful, reflective partnerships that drive instructional growth and student learning.

### Amplifying Innovation

In this balanced approach, our coaches guide educators in exploring emerging tools—such as AI and advanced digital platforms—by anchoring conversations in pedagogy while offering technological insight. By maintaining a focus on coaching as the primary pathway for professional growth, they foster innovation that amplifies effective teaching practices that leads to student success. Through this specialized lens on technology integration, our Instructional Technology Coaches contribute to SAS’s broader vision of transformative professional learning—one trusting partnership at a time.

*Additional implementation details, protocols, and strategies—including guidance on operational responsibilities—are available in the appendix.*

## Navigating Coaching Grey Areas

While our four support functions—coaching, consulting, collaborating, and facilitating—provide a strong foundation for most interactions, some situations fall outside these clearly defined roles. Coaches may occasionally be asked to support tasks that don’t align neatly with instructional improvement or reflective practice. These “grey areas” require thoughtful decision-making and principled reflection.

### Common Examples

**Requests from educators that feel tangential to instruction** - *Example:* An educator asks for help organizing digital files. - *Coaching stance:* The coach reframes this as an opportunity to support the creation of accessible learning materials aligned with UDL principles—thus maintaining focus on student learning.

**Requests from administrators that extend beyond coaching scope** - *Example:* A coach is asked to compile and analyze assessment data for a board presentation. - *Coaching stance:* Rather than completing the task independently, the coach proposes a collaborative process—partnering with department leaders to build their capacity for data-informed decision-making.

In each case, the coach navigates ambiguity by returning to the core purpose of coaching: supporting educator growth and student learning.

### Acknowledging Positional Authority

In any school context, leadership roles come with inherent authority. Coaches may feel pressure to take on tasks out of alignment with their role—especially when requests come from those in formal leadership positions. Even when these requests are made with good intentions, they can blur the boundaries of non-evaluative coaching relationships.

At SAS, we approach these moments not as conflict, but as opportunities for dialogue. We encourage coaches, school leaders, and **Educational Programs** to co-design solutions that maintain program integrity and ensure that coaching remains educator**-**centered, reflective, and focused on instructional growth.

### Collective Responsibility for Program Integrity

Upholding the integrity of our coaching program is a shared responsibility. All stakeholders—coaches, school leaders, educators, and **Educational Programs**—play a role in protecting the non-evaluative, growth-oriented nature of coaching:

**-** **Educational Programs & Academic Leadership Team:** Respect coaching boundaries and avoid assigning tasks that are more appropriate for other roles **-** **Coaches:** Communicate transparently when requests fall outside the coaching scope, and seek collaborative alternatives where appropriate **-** **Educators:** Engage voluntarily in coaching for professional growth, rather than using coaches as general troubleshooters or task managers

## By maintaining these boundaries together, we reinforce a coaching culture built on trust, clarity, and purpose—ensuring that every coaching interaction remains aligned with our commitment to meaningful educator and student growth.

# 4. Organizational Support and Leadership

## Human-Centered Organizational Design

The organizational structure of our coaching program is designed to create a **human-centered ecosystem** where relationships flourish and professional growth thrives. While charts and reporting lines might appear formal on paper, in practice they represent carefully crafted pathways for communication, collaboration, and shared purpose. The **co**-**supervision model**, for instance, isn’t about dividing accountability—it’s about enriching support through diverse perspectives and ensuring coaches receive balanced guidance that honors both local contexts and school-wide vision.

When a coach partners with an elementary educator to explore culturally responsive mathematics instruction, the organizational structure ensures this work is simultaneously connected to divisional mathematics priorities and broader school-wide equity goals. This coherence doesn’t constrain—it amplifies. By creating intentional connections across the organization, we ensure that a single coaching conversation can ripple outward, influencing practice beyond one classroom while remaining deeply personal and context-specific. Our organizational design thus serves as an invisible support system that allows the very visible, human work of coaching to flourish.

## Structure of the Coaching Program

The SAS Coaching Program includes three distinct yet interconnected groups:

* **Instructional Coaches** **-** **Instructional Technology Coaches** **-** **Instructional Coaches – Chinese**

Each group plays a specialized role in supporting professional growth and ensuring that instructional practices align with SAS’s mission. Coaches are strategically positioned across both the **Puxi** and **Pudong campuses**, addressing local needs while contributing to schoolwide initiatives. Together, they form a unified, cross-campus network that fosters continuous growth, innovation, and reflective practice.

### Coaching Team Overview

| Campus | Division | Role | Count |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Puxi | PXES | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | PXMS | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | PXHS | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | All Divisions | Instructional Coach | 1 |
|  | PXES/MS/HS | Instructional Coaches | 3 (1 per) |
| Pudong | PDES | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | PDMS | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | PDHS | Instructional Technology Coach | 1 |
|  | PDES/MS/HS | Instructional Coaches | 3 (1 per) |
| Cross**-**Campus | Elementary | Instructional Coach – Chinese | 1 |
|  | Secondary | Instructional Coach | 1 |

**Summary:** - Instructional Coaches: 7 - Instructional Technology Coaches: 6 - Chinese Language Coaches: 2 **-** Total Coaching Team: 16

## Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

The success of our **Coaching Program** is a shared responsibility that spans all levels of SAS leadership. Each stakeholder contributes to fostering a culture of coaching grounded in continuous learning, collaboration, and our **One School philosophy**.

| **Leadership Role** | **Core Responsibilities** |
| --- | --- |
| **Head of Educational Programs** | • Holds ultimate accountability for the coaching program’s vision• Ensures strategic alignment with SAS’s overall educational goals |
| **Associate Director of Educational Programs (ADEP)** | • Leads coaching advocacy and strategic direction within Educational Programs• Facilitates ongoing collaboration with school leaders and coaches to keep coaching aligned with One School initiatives |
| **Heads of Campus (Puxi & Pudong)** | • Provide contextual leadership specific to each campus, ensuring local coaching needs are met• Collaborate with the Head of Educational Programs and ADEP to maintain cross-campus alignment |
| **Divisional Principals** | • Ensure coaching supports division-specific goals and priorities• Partner with ADEP and coaches to tailor coaching approaches for divisional contexts |
| **Director of Technology** | • Co-supervises Instructional Technology Coaches alongside divisional principals• Aligns technology integration efforts with school-wide instructional goals |
| **Academic Leadership Team (ALT)** | • Composed of principals, assistant principals, and instructional leaders• Advances a unified coaching strategy and provides regular feedback to strengthen program implementation |

## Fostering a Culture of Coaching

Leadership at SAS plays a critical role in embedding coaching into the school’s professional culture. This is achieved through:

* **Shared Ownership:** Promoting coaching as essential to growth and student success **–**
* **Active Engagement:** Modeling reflective dialogue, evidence-based practices, and continuous improvement **–**
* **Strategic Integration:** Weaving coaching into existing initiatives to maximize coherence **–**
* **Resource Commitment:** Allocating time, space, and tools for effective coaching partnerships **–**
* **Celebrating Impact:** Publicly recognizing coaching’s contributions to teaching and learning

Together, these actions ensure that coaching is not a standalone program, but a **system**-**wide strategy for educational excellence**.

## Supervisory and Reporting Structures

To ensure clarity and consistency in implementation, we employ a structured supervisory model based on role and focus area:

| Coach Type | Supervisor(s) | Notes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Instructional Coaches | Division Principal & ADEP | Jointly evaluated |
| Instructional Technology Coaches | Director of Technology & Division Principal | Jointly evaluated |
| Instructional Coaches – Chinese | Associate Director of Chinese Programs | Collaboration with Educational Programs for strategic goals |
| Campus-Based Coaches | Associate Director of Educational Programs | Focus on cross-divisional and cross-campus support |

## The Co-Supervision Model

Our **co**-**supervision model** was intentionally designed to: - Balance local responsiveness and strategic alignment - Support coach development with multiple perspectives - Promote shared ownership of outcomes and clarity of expectations

### Key Benefits

* **Balanced Guidance**  
  Coaches receive input from both divisional and system**-**level leaders, ensuring their work is contextually grounded and strategically aligned.
* **Clarity and Accountability**  
  Multiple supervisors provide consistent expectations and feedback, promoting role clarity and shared responsibility for growth.
* **Holistic Development**  
  Coaches benefit from broad insight across leadership domains—curriculum, technology, language instruction—enriching their professional learning.
* **Alignment with the SAS Mission**  
  This model reinforces **One School cohesion**, ensuring coaches are connected to both local and schoolwide priorities.

By embracing co**-**supervision, we support a unified and flexible coaching system—one that adapts to diverse contexts while driving transformative professional learning.

## Communication and Coordination: A One School Approach

At SAS, we embrace a **One School mindset** that fosters alignment, coherence, and shared understanding across all divisions and leadership teams. Coaches often support multiple leaders—including Divisional Principals, Educational Programs, and the Director of Technology—each contributing to varied initiatives.

While this cross**-**functional collaboration is a strength, it also introduces the potential for evolving responsibilities. To maintain clarity and alignment, we emphasize three key coordination principles:

1. **Role Clarity**  
   Coaches benefit when their responsibilities are clearly defined and aligned to the One School vision. Clear expectations help coaches prioritize their work and stay focused on supporting educators and students.
2. **Coordinated Communication**  
   When a coach takes on a new initiative or shifts focus, leaders are encouraged to keep relevant stakeholders informed. This fosters shared understanding of how coaching aligns with division-wide and system**-**wide priorities. Communication levels may vary by task scope, allowing flexibility while maintaining coherence.
3. **Shared Accountability**  
   All leaders—whether in divisions, Educational Programs, or school operations—share the responsibility of setting expectations, monitoring workload, and ensuring coaching stays connected to SAS’s mission. This collaborative approach reinforces coaching as a system-wide support, not a siloed service.

## Balancing Local and System-Wide Needs

The program actively harmonizes divisional autonomy with school-wide coherence, recognizing that both perspectives enrich SAS’s collective work. Because coaches receive guidance from multiple leaders, consistent communication and flexibility are essential to keep vision and priorities aligned.

By sharing updates proactively and adapting as circumstances change, the program keeps coaching focused on its core mission—enhancing teaching and learning—while sustaining the One School philosophy.

## Acknowledging Positional Authority

In any school context, leadership roles come with inherent authority. Coaches may feel pressure to take on tasks out of alignment with their role—especially when requests come from those in formal leadership positions. Even when these requests are made with good intentions, they can blur the boundaries of non**-**evaluative coaching relationships.

At SAS, we approach these moments not as conflict, but as opportunities for dialogue. We encourage coaches, school leaders, and **Educational Programs** to co**-**design solutions that maintain **program integrity** and ensure that coaching remains educator**-**centered, reflective, and focused on instructional growth.

## Collective Responsibility for Program Success

The Coaching Program succeeds only when everyone works together—coaches, divisional principals, Educational Programs, the Academic Leadership Team (ALT), and classroom teachers. When these groups join forces, coaching links individual growth, team goals, and schoolwide initiatives.

By sharing this commitment, we weave coaching through every part of the school—from daily lessons to cross-campus projects—so it continuously supports our mission: helping every learner thrive and shape a better world.

# 5. Embedding Coaching Across the School

## Coaching as a Core Professional Learning Practice

At Shanghai American School (SAS), our Coaching Program functions as an integral thread woven through our comprehensive Professional Learning System. All coaches, divisional leaders, and educational administrators share the responsibility for realizing the goals of the **Coaching Program Strategic Plan**. This collective responsibility fosters a collaborative ecosystem in which each group contributes to the success of the program.

Coaches actively collaborate with divisional leadership to ensure that coaching is integrated into the larger strategic initiatives of the school, and they play a crucial role in shaping professional learning across all divisions. By working together as a unified team, coaches help facilitate a continuous cycle of improvement, where teaching practices evolve to meet the needs of students and align with SAS’s Core Commitments. This collaboration ensures that the coaching program is not just a collection of isolated efforts, but a **cohesive, system**-**wide initiative that is instrumental in achieving SAS’s mission of transformative education**.

Coaching serves as one of the key practices—alongside communities of practice, data-informed reflection, classroom integration, and personalized pathways—that together create a dynamic ecosystem for educator growth. While professional development introduces educators to new ideas and skills, **coaching provides the sustained, job-embedded support essential for translating these concepts into daily practice**. Through reflective dialogue, collaborative planning, and focused feedback, coaches help educators deepen their understanding, refine their approaches, and measure their impact on student learning.

This integration ensures that coaching conversations—whether in a single classroom or spanning multiple campuses—directly support the continuous improvement cycles that characterize effective professional learning at SAS while advancing our **collective commitment to excellence** in teaching and learning.

[Note: Consider adding a visual representation of how coaching connects with other professional learning practices here]

## Strategic Initiative Alignment

The Coaching Program acts as a **linchpin** between division-level focal areas (disciplinary literacies, UDL, generative AI, etc.) and SAS’s One-School strategic plan. Regular checkpoints—cross-river collaboration days, principal conferences, and ALT data dives—allow coaches and leaders to:

* monitor initiative penetration,
* reflect on evidence of practice change, and
* adapt support so coaching remains context-responsive across campuses.

By keeping coaching tightly woven into both the PGPE cycle **and** the strategic-initiative roadmap, SAS ensures that every coaching conversation advances individual growth **and** whole-school improvement.

## Professional Growth and Evaluation Framework Alignment for Educators

| **Focus Area** | **What It Means for Educators** | **Coach’s Role & Guard-Rails** | **Typical Timing / Artefacts** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Educator-Initiated Support** | Educators may choose to involve a coach in the formal PGPE process—for example, to refine a goal on assessment literacy, CRP, UDL, or another stretch area they have identified. | • Coach listens for the real need and chooses the right support function (coaching, consulting, collaborating, facilitating).• Coach **never writes or edits** the educator’s PGPE narrative or rating comments.(see documention section ) | *September–October*• “PGPE Goal-Planning Worksheet” (educator owned)• Optional “Coaching Intent Form” (educator → coach) |
| **Flexible Goal Alignment** | Goals can be **short, medium, or long term**: a two-week micro-goal, a semester-long unit redesign, or a multiyear leadership pathway. | • Coach helps map the goal into the **Plan → Implement → Reflect** cycle and select evidence of impact.• If the goal ​shifts mid-year, coach helps the educator adjust metrics without re-starting the PGPE paperwork. | *All year* (Oct–Mar cycles) • Lesson artefacts, student-work clips, reflection notes attached (or not) to PGPE portfolio at the educator’s discretion. |
| **Confidential Partnership** | Conversation content remains **confidential**—unless the educator chooses to share. Psychological safety is protected so the educator can take instructional risks. | • Coach may share only non-identifiable **trends** (e.g., “several teachers are testing retrieval-practice routines”) with leaders.• Coach **does not** disclose session details, challenges, or draft evidence without explicit educator consent. | *Optional sharing*• “PGPE Coaching Reflection Log” (educator decides whether to embed in final PGPE submission). |
| **Balanced System** | Coaching complements—but never replaces—formal evaluation. It’s a growth engine, not an accountability tool. | • Coaches stay outside any rating discussion.• Administrators may offer coaching as a **support option** in ESP/PIP, but the educator still chooses whether and how deeply to engage. | *February–May*• Educator synthesises impact evidence for final PGPE review; coach may supply a high-level summary only if the educator requests it. |

\*\*This table explains how coaches *support educators* through the PGPE cycle.

**Section 8** shifts the lens to **how coaches themselves are evaluated** (co-supervision process, Coach Competency Map, and performance-indicator levels).

## Coach Program Partnership Principles

Coaching at Shanghai American School succeeds because it is built on purposeful partnerships—​linking coaches, school leaders, teacher-leaders, and teams to our One School vision. These relationships align individual growth with institutional priorities and keep professional learning responsive to each context.

### Partnership Principles

1. **Mutual Engagement** - Shared ownership of outcomes - Reciprocal learning relationships **-** Active participation from all partners
2. **Strategic Alignment** - Connection to theory of change - Support for strategic priorities **-** Program coherence
3. **Continuous Growth** - Ongoing partnership development - Responsive to emerging needs - Regular reflection and refinement

Through these partnerships, the coaching program creates a web of support that complements formal leadership structures while fostering the relationships necessary for transformative change.

## Integration With Other Professional Learning Structures

The Coaching Program strategically aligns with other key professional learning structures at SAS, creating a comprehensive support network for educators at all career stages:

| **Professional-Learning Structure** | **How Coaching Connects** | **Typical Touch-points & Artifacts** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **New-Teacher Integration** | • Early relationship-building • Accelerated coaching cycles for onboarding | – Meet-and-greet session – 3–4 short cycles in first semester – Orientation workshops co-led with HR/Ed Programs |
| **Mentoring (informal)** | Coaches may step into a mentor stance for context-specific guidance | – “Ask-a-coach” check-ins – Culture-of-school Q & A |
| **Teacher-Leader & Team Collaboration** | • Align team goals with coaching cycles • Embed reflection, data analysis, iteration | – Co-planned agendas – Lesson-study or data-dig protocols – Shared resource folders |
| **Whole-School Initiatives (UDL, CRP, Generative AI)** | • Translate initiative goals into classroom practice • Provide just-in-time consulting & modeling | – Strategy “menus” matched to initiative – Classroom co-teaching / modeling sessions |
| **Ongoing PL Workshops** | • Pre-workshop goal-setting & post-workshop follow-up cycles | – “Before & after” reflection prompts – Action-plan templates |

## Investing in Our Coaches: Structures for Ongoing Professional Learning

At SAS, we recognise that coaching expertise develops through intentional practice, reflection, and collaboration. Guided by the Coach Competency Map, every coach progresses along a living **Growth Continuum — Investing → Implementing → Deepening → Generative —** moving at different rates across specific competencies.

To support that journey, SAS supplies a coherent mix of structures and resources that foster continuous, evidence-informed improvement in coaching practice. *(For performance-indicator levels and the co-supervision evaluation process, see* ***Section 8: Evaluation & Professional Growth****.)*

#### Professional Learning Investments

In addition to the professional-learning funds available to all faculty, SAS coaches engage each year in targeted experiences that strengthen Competency-Map skills and advance Coaching-Program priorities. Two complementary mechanisms keep this learning focused and actionable:

1. **Dual-Purpose Collaborative Structures** — recurring forums that simultaneously move programme work forward and deepen coaching expertise;
2. **Investment Streams** — budgeted and cost-neutral options tied directly to current initiatives.

The tables below show how each mechanism operates, which support functions dominate, the core practices rehearsed, and how evidence feeds into the impact-evaluation system (Section 9).

#### Dual-Purpose Collaborative Structures

| **Structure** | **Frequency & Format** | **Key Support Function(s)** | **Coach-Growth Focus (Core Practice)** | **Programme-Implementation Focus** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cross-River Retreats** | 4× yr, full day (alt. campuses) | Facilitating · Collaborating | Equity-Focused Questioning Sprint | Align annual priorities; re-calibrate metrics |
| **Monthly Campus Gatherings** | 90 min / campus | Facilitating · Consulting | Data-Conversation Flowchart | Operational updates; initiative checkpoint |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inter-Campus Collab Calls** | 30 min bi-weekly (virtual) | Collaborating | Reflective-Cycle Micro-Sprint | Troubleshoot live projects; share resources |
| **Strategic PL Opportunities** (CRP / UDL / GenAI) | As scheduled | Consulting · Facilitating | High-Leverage Strategy Menu | Reinforce classroom pilots; gather data |

#### Peer Learning & Coaching Community

Coaches extend their own learning through intentionally layered, job-embedded structures that model the same reflective, evidence-driven practice they foster with teachers

| **Growth Structure** | **Purpose & Learning Moves** | **Typical Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shadowing & reciprocal coaching**(with educator consent) | Observe one another’s practice in real time, exchange descriptive feedback, and co-craft next steps. | “Keep / Try” notes, joint reflection log |
| **Video-analysis circles** | Slow-study recorded sessions to examine questioning, stance, and impact on teacher thinking. | Time-stamped insight log |
| **Mentor pairings & case studies** | Provide just-in-time problem solving and sustained developmental support across the growth continuum. | Case studies with action steps |
| **Learning walks** | Calibrate shared “look-fors,” gather evidence of initiative penetration, and surface new coaching entry points. | Division-level tallies, trend brief |

#### How the pieces connect

* **Rehearsal of core practice** – Every structure spotlights a high-leverage technique from the Coach Toolkit or Instructional Playbook, ensuring ongoing skill refinement linked to the four support functions.
* **Live evidence capture** – Artifacts generated (strategy briefs, reflection logs, calibrated tallies) flow straight into monthly, quarterly, and annual reviews, fuelling continuous improvement without duplicate paperwork.
* **System alignment** – Built-in checks guarantee that each minute and dollar invested advances a defined coaching competency **and** an active school initiative, keeping resources tightly focused on student outcomes.

### Coaching-Specific Capacity Building

* **Annual whole-team learning** centre coaches on collective practice, reflection, and rehearsal.
* **Growth documentation** captures evidence from practice, peer feedback, and self-assessment, charting movement along the Growth Continuum.
* **Individual learning plans** break ambitious goals into micro-actions that embed new habits.

These layered supports make professional learning purposeful, adaptive, and fully aligned with both personal growth goals and programme priorities—empowering coaches while advancing SAS’s coaching vision.

# 6. Operational Systems

Well-built operational systems turn the Coaching Program’s vision into dependable daily practice while still letting coaches adapt to real-time needs. The subsections below outline *what* must be consistent across campuses and *where* purposeful flexibility lives.

## Strategic Planning

A shared planning cadence keeps coaching synchronised with SAS’s mission *and* classroom realities.

## Implementation Structures

To translate coaching vision into daily practice, intentional scheduling and coordination are essential.

| **Phase** | **Timing** | **Key Actions** | **Typical Artefacts** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategic-Alignment Summit** | Aug. (pre-service) | • Calibrate annual coaching goals to CRP, UDL, Gen AI, etc.• Finalise coach caseloads | Annual “coaching-goals grid” |
| **Quarterly Pulse Check** | Oct / Jan / Apr | • Re-centre on instructional cycle data• Tweak priorities as needs surface | One-page pulse brief |
| **Year-End Reflection & Continuity** | May | • Analyse evidence of impact• Draft hand-over notes for the next cycle | Division summary + coach hand-off sheet |

### Implementation Structures

| **Element** | **System Guard-Rail** | **Flexible Space** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Coaching-Engagement Protocols** | • “Protected blocks” scheduled during planning time• Plan → Implement → Reflect session frame | Coach & educator choose frequency / evidence artefacts |
| **Coordination & Integration** | • Coaching calendar synced with PLC / PL calendar | Adjust interval (weekly, monthly, project-based) to educator need |
| **Role Clarity** | • Instructional focus stays with coaches; pure tech logistics = IT team | Tech-integration coaches may *model* tools when tied to pedagogy |

## Areas for Role Clarification and Partnership Parameters

At Shanghai American School, our **One School philosophy** guides all aspects of our work, including how coaching intersects with other school functions. The parameters outlined below represent our current understanding of how coaches might best support the broader educational mission while maintaining the integrity of the coaching program.

**We view these as starting points for ongoing collaboration and welcome dialogue from all stakeholders as our collective understanding evolves.**

### MAP Testing Considerations

While coaches may support educators in analyzing MAP data to inform instructional strategies, the coordination of standardized testing logistics (scheduling, administration) typically falls to designated campus or testing coordinators. This allows coaches to focus on helping educators apply assessment insights to classroom practice.

### Professional Learning Facilitation

As members of our professional learning community, coaches contribute their facilitation expertise to targeted professional learning sessions aligned with school goals. Through collaborative planning, coaches and leadership identify which PL initiatives would benefit most from coaching involvement. This collaborative approach helps ensure balance between coaches’ involvement in group professional learning and their capacity for individual and team coaching.

### External Consultant Partnerships

When external consultants partner with SAS, coaches may serve as valuable collaborators in ways that evolve based on context and timing. In some cases, coaches co**-**design learning outcomes that align with our school’s context, while in other situations, these outcomes may be established in advance through **Educational Programs**. Coaches collaborate with consultants on professional learning design and support implementation in ways that leverage their instructional expertise, while more extensive logistical coordination typically involves additional organizational support. Additional guidance is available in the “Consultant Collaboration Protocol” in Appendix X.

### Working Group and Committee Engagement

Given their expertise in facilitation and collaborative processes, coaches may participate in or occasionally facilitate working groups and committees when their involvement advances both coaching program goals and broader school initiatives. This participation emerges through thoughtful dialogue between coaches and leadership, honoring the primacy of coaching conversations while recognizing coaches’ valuable contributions to our collective work. Our shared decision-making approach ensures strategic alignment while sustaining the core functions that make coaching most impactful for educators and students.

### Beginning-of-Year Activities

To establish strong foundations for coaching partnerships, coaches engage in strategic activities inspired by Joellen Killion’s “14 Things to Do to Launch Coaching Effectively” (detailed in Appendix). These purposeful actions help create conditions for productive partnerships throughout the year.

### Planning and Adaptivity

While thoughtful planning at the beginning of the year helps establish priorities and parameters, we recognize that opportunities and needs emerge throughout the academic cycle. Our approach embraces ongoing dialogue and flexible decision**-**making that honors both strategic foresight and responsive adaptation to evolving school needs. This reflects our commitment to being both intentional and adaptive in how we deploy coaching expertise across the school.

## Resource Management & Budget

Strategic, multi-year budgeting keeps the Coaching Program sustainable, equitable, and nimble as SAS priorities evolve.

| **Annual Budget Cycle** | **What Happens** | **Timeline & Leads** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Needs assessment** | • Analyse prior-year impact data  • Forecast new initiative costs | Sept – Oct · Coach team + ALT |
| **Collaborative budgeting** | Draft → iterate → finalise divisional & Ed Programs lines | Nov – Jan · Head of Ed Programs |
| **Three-year projection** | Roll forward forecast; flag large staffing/resource shifts | Feb · ADEP maintains |
| **Allocation & equity check** | Balance funds across campuses; adjust for local context | March approval |
| **Quarterly monitoring** | Review spend vs. impact; reallocate if needed | Q1–Q4 · ADEP + Finance |

*Core funds are supplemented by PL and strategic-initiative grants to keep innovation rolling.*

## Communication & Engagement

| **Audience / Channel** | **Cadence** | **Purpose** | **Typical Artefact** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Divisional leader check-ins** | Weekly / bi-weekly | Surface trends; adjust priorities | 30-min agenda + action log |
| **ALT spotlight** | Monthly | Align cross-campus direction | 3-slide data pulse |
| **Faculty digest (SharePoint / email)** | Monthly | Share wins, new resources, survey links | 150-word brief, link-bank |
| **Cross-campus forums** | Termly | Exchange practice; gather feedback | Jamboard summary |

*Visibility strategies* — success stories, anonymised impact snippets, and “coach menus” are woven into faculty meetings and digital channels to normalise coaching as core PL.

### Stakeholder Engagement

* **Feedback Loops:** Educators and leaders are invited to share feedback to guide program evolution
* **Cross-Campus Forums:** Pudong and Puxi stakeholders come together to align and share practices
* **Two-Way Communication:** Stakeholders contribute insights, ensuring coaching remains responsive and collaborative

### Engagement Pathways

* **Educator-Initiated Engagement:** Educators request support for professional growth, instructional challenges, or inquiry
* **Collaborative Referrals:** Leaders may connect educators to coaching when aligned with goals or opportunities
* **Strategic Initiative Connection:** Coaches proactively offer support when educators engage with schoolwide priorities

### Educator Access & Support Framework

* **Equitable Access:** Coaches are available across divisions, roles, and subject areas, with transparent engagement processes
* **Responsive Support:** Coaching intensity and duration vary based on educator goals and context
* **Relationship Continuity:** A balance of maintaining trusted partnerships while welcoming new coaching relationships

Support then differentiates by *duration* (one-off to semester), *format* (1-to-1 or team), and *intensity* (light consult to embedded cycle). Detailed flow-charts live in the Appendix.

## Documentation Guidance

## Purpose

Documentation practices at SAS reflect and reinforce our core coaching principles - maintaining trust, honoring confidentiality, and supporting growth-focused partnerships. Our approach to documentation embodies our commitment to non-evaluative coaching relationships and program integrity, going beyond simply tracking progress. By thoughtfully considering what we document, how we share information, and which principles guide these decisions, we ensure that every aspect of our documentation practice reinforces the trust and psychological safety essential to effective coaching.

## Core Documentation Practices

* Maintain minimal yet meaningful records that capture essential information without creating burdensome paperwork
* Ensure all documentation reflects a non-evaluative tone that supports growth and learning
* Compile aggregate data that informs program effectiveness while preserving individual confidentiality

## What Each Coach Records

| **What** | **Details** | **Storage** | **Primary Use** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Coaching Conversations & Cycles** | **Minimal:**   * Number of Coaching Cycles * Focus area/topic * Completion status   **Consider:**   * Number of Coaching Conversations * Start/end dates * Goals * Key takeaways * Next steps | Personal (coach-chosen tool) | Track progress & prompt reflection |
| **Program Activity Data** | * Number of active cycles * Number of Coaching Conversations * Support Function Trends * Common themes * General trends | Shared program documentation | Support Program impact (See Section 9) |

Coaches select the digital or analog tool that best fits their workflow, so long as these essentials are captured.

## Information Sharing by Stakeholder

### Core Principles

* Default to teacher agency in sharing individual information
* Maintain clear distinction between coaching and evaluation
* All documentation should use growth-oriented, non-evaluative language
* Focus on patterns and trends for program-level reporting

### Information Flow Hierarchy

| **Audience** | **Appropriate Detail Level** | **Examples of What Might be Shared** | **Purpose** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Educator (Coaching Counterpart)** | Detailed & Specific | • Individual goals • Action steps • Resources • Evidence of impact • Reflection notes | Promote ownership and agency in professional growth |
| **Coach to Coach and Coaching Team** | Professional Practice Focus | • General coaching strategies and approaches • Anonymous case studies for learning • Resources and tools • Problem-solving coaching dilemmas • Patterns and trends • Professional growth insights | Support coach development and collective expertise |
| **Divisional Principals** | Divisional Trends & Context | • Engagement metrics within division Division-specific themes and focus areas • Initiative-specific implementation patterns • Resource allocation considerations • Areas of strength and opportunity (no individual identification) | Inform divisional planning and support coach supervision within context |
| **Academic Leadership Team (ALT)** | Aggregate Cross-Divisional | • Number of active cycles • Number of Coaching Conversations • Support Function Trends • Cross-divisional themes • Resource needs • Strategic priority alignment | Guide program-level decisions and resource allocation |
| **Educational Programs** | System-wide Trends | • All of the above • Total engagement rates • Impact patterns • Program needs • Cross-campus comparisons • Strategic implications | Support broader strategic alignment and program evolution |

### Conditions for Sharing Specific Details

Specific details are shared collaboratively, respecting teacher consent, and intended to support growth rather than for evaluation. Appropriate only when:

* Teacher has given explicit consent
* Teacher initiates or leads the sharing
* Information serves a clear developmental purpose

## Multiple Coach Interactions

While coaches may work in the same division or with the same teachers, they should not share details about their coaching interactions with other coaches without teacher consent. This isn't about limiting teacher access to coaching support, but rather about:

* Maintaining the integrity of each coaching relationship
* Ensuring teachers feel safe to engage authentically with any coach
* Preventing unintended comparison or competition
* Respecting teacher agency in their coaching journey

If a teacher is working with multiple coaches:

* Let the teacher guide what information is shared
* Focus discussions on supporting teacher goals rather than sharing session details
* Consider team coaching approaches if the teacher initiates this request
* Maintain separate documentation for each coaching relationship

## Documentation Principles & Rationale

| **Principle** | **Means** | **Protects / Enables** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Non-evaluative** | Descriptive, growth-oriented notes | Trust & psychological safety |
| **Confidential** | Privacy of individual conversation content | Honest risk-taking |
| **Purpose-driven** | Log only what informs coaching or program improvement | Time & relevance |
| **Data-informed** | Use aggregated patterns to steer decisions | Systemic growth |

Embedding these safeguards turns record-keeping from an administrative chore into a catalyst for reflection, adaptation, and continuous improvement—without eroding the trust and autonomy at the heart of SAS coaching.

## Program Sustainability

The Coaching Program is designed for day-to-day impact **and** for long-term resilience. Its sustainability strategy rests on four mutually reinforcing pillars.

| **Pillar** | **Core Routines** | **Why It Matters** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Continuity Planning** | **Leadership succession** checklist for every coaching role • Living “playbook” that captures effective practices, metrics, and lessons learned • “Surge protocols” that scale support up or down when enrolment or staffing shifts | Preserves program quality through transitions and protects institutional memory. |
| **2. Strategic Advocacy** | • Quarterly **impact narratives** that pair data with classroom stories • Mapping coaching outcomes to Core Commitments in board and community reports • Family-facing overviews that clarify how coaching elevates learning | Keeps stakeholders informed, secures buy-in, and anchors coaching to SAS’s mission. |
| **3. Future-Focused Integration** | • Rapid-response design sprints to weave new initiatives (UDL, Gen AI, etc.) into coaching menus without diluting core values • Annual research scans to refresh tools and uphold evidence-based practice • Cross-campus calibration sessions that safeguard One-School coherence | Ensures the program evolves with the educational landscape while staying mission-aligned. |
| **4. Financial Sustainability** | **Tiered-funding model** • *Core* – recurring divisional & Ed Programs lines  • *Supplemental* – strategic or expansion grants  • *Growth* – innovation & capacity-building funds  **Planning cycle** • Rolling 3-year forecasts  • Annual cost-effectiveness review  • Quarterly re-allocation toward high-impact work | Protects the coaching infrastructure, funds innovation, and directs money where it moves student learning the most. |

**Bottom line:** sustained vision, compelling storytelling, agile integration, and disciplined finance keep SAS coaching *well-resourced, future-ready, and unmistakably valuable* for years to come.

## Communication & Marketing the Coaching Program

Effective communication keeps coaching visible, valued, and tightly woven into the One-School culture. It raises awareness, deepens understanding of impact, and celebrates shared growth.

| **Communication Strand** | **Cadence / Channel** | **Core Purpose** | **Typical Artefacts / Signals** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purposeful Launches** | Start of each semester; faculty meetings · newsletters · SharePoint banner | (Visibility) Announce new initiatives and refresh core messages | Slide deck, launch video, “Meet your coach” bio cards |
| **Ongoing Updates** | Monthly digest + bulletin blurbs | (Two-way flow) Flag workshops, new resources; invite questions | 150-word email + quick survey link |
| **Success Narratives** | At least 1 story per month; spotlight in meeting or newsletter | (Celebration) Share anonymised impact stories; model reflective practice | 3-slide vignette, 90-sec hallway video |
| **Strategic Showcases** | When new initiative milestones hit (CRP, UDL, Gen AI) | (Alignment) Map coaching menus to initiative needs; show progress cross-campus | Initiative “menu” PDF; demo-lesson clip |
| **Feedback Loops** | Mid- & end-year survey; quarterly open forum (virtual or in-person) | (Improve) Gauge clarity, usefulness, accessibility; surface new needs | Survey dashboard; forum summary notes |

*Implementation resources—templates, protocols, and ready-made slide decks—are housed in the* ***Coach Toolkit*** *and Appendix D.*

# 7. Program Integrity

## 7.1 Foundations of Trust & Psychological Safety

Trust is the cornerstone of effective coaching at SAS. Educators engage most meaningfully when they feel psychologically safe to explore, reflect, and take risks without fear of judgment. This foundation directly aligns with our first coaching competency and is essential for creating the conditions where transformative professional growth can occur.

Trust grows from consistent behaviors—**reliability, care, competence, and integrity**—demonstrated by both coaches and educators. We cultivate psychological safety, as defined by Amy Edmondson, where teams feel secure to speak openly, acknowledge mistakes, and take interpersonal risks. This climate encourages innovation and deep, honest professional learning.

| **Dimension** | **Core Principle** | **Why it Matters for Coaching** | **Observable Behaviors** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Trust-worthiness** | Reliability | Sustains confidence in the partnership | Meets when promised; closes the loop on actions |
|  | Integrity | Aligns words and deeds | Speaks candidly; honors confidentiality |
|  | Care | Signals genuine investment in the educator's growth | Empathic listening; strength-based feedback |
|  | Competence | Grounds support in sound pedagogy | References research; models effective practice |
| **Psychological Safety** | Open inquiry | Encourages questions, doubt, experimentation | Asks "What if...?"; welcomes dissent |
|  | Authorized dialogue | Normalizes talking about mis-steps | Shares coach's own learning moments; frames error as data |
| **Collaborative Problem-Solving** | Shared reflection | Surfaces multiple perspectives | Jointly analyze evidence; use reflective prompts |
|  | Collective ownership | All voices shape the solution | Co-create action plan; rotate facilitation roles |

### Essential Coaching Relationship Elements

Effective coaching relationships at SAS are anchored in five interconnected elements:

1. **Mutual Vulnerability**: Willingness to explore uncertainty and reflect honestly
2. **Reflective Inquiry**: Coaches model curiosity, listening, and intentional questioning
3. **Shared Accountability**: Coach and educator track progress and outcomes together
4. **Reciprocal Learning**: Expertise flows both ways—research meets practice
5. **Iterative Growth**: Each session builds from the last, sustaining momentum

This intentional approach strengthens alignment, supports sustained innovation, and fosters collective growth in pursuit of SAS's One School mission.

## 7.2 Ethics and Professional Standards

### Confidentiality vs. Secrecy: A Collaborative Approach

Confidentiality is a cornerstone of psychological safety in coaching. It creates a trusted space where educators can explore their thinking, share candid reflections, and take instructional risks without fear of unintended consequences. However, confidentiality is not secrecy.

| **Confidentiality** | **Secrecy** |
| --- | --- |
| Protects educator privacy to support growth and reflective dialogue | Inhibits transparency and may block essential collaboration |
| Supports trust and openness within the coaching relationship | May limit school-wide learning or delay critical interventions |

To balance these needs, our coaches do not operate in isolation. While coaching conversations remain confidential, non-identifiable trends (e.g., "a growing number of educators are exploring inquiry-based learning") may be shared with leadership to inform strategic planning and schoolwide alignment—without compromising individual trust.

### Core Ethical Principles and Boundaries

| **Key Idea** | **Meaning in SAS Coaching** | **Guard-rails & Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Confidential ≠ Secret** | Details stay in the partnership; patterns can inform the system. | Coach might tell ALT "several staff are trialing inquiry routines" but never name a teacher or disclose struggles without consent. |
| **Professional Boundaries** | Coaching supports instructional growth, not personal counseling. | Coach listens with empathy yet redirects non-instructional issues to appropriate services. |
| **Educator-led Disclosure** | Educator decides what, when, and how to share outside the partnership. | Teacher may attach coaching artifacts to PGPE—or not. Coach never adds them uninvited. |
| **Institutional Alignment** | Aggregate, non-identifiable data guide school decisions. | Quarterly dashboard shows cycle counts, support-function mix, trend themes. |
| **Legal/Safety Obligation** | Safety trumps confidentiality when risk emerges. | Coach follows SAS escalation protocol and informs educator of the next steps whenever possible. |

### Professional Boundaries

* Coaching is focused on instructional growth, not personal counseling
* Coaches help educators navigate teaching practices and student learning—not personal crises
* Where personal issues intersect with professional growth, coaches maintain boundaries while offering empathy and directing to appropriate support services

### Institutional Alignment

* Coaches operate within the One School philosophy, balancing educator autonomy with system coherence
* Aggregate, non-identifiable trends are shared to inform broader decision-making while maintaining confidentiality
* This balance reflects our commitment to both individual transformation and collective improvement

### Educator-Led Disclosure

* Educators choose what information is shared beyond the coaching relationship
* This autonomy reinforces the non-evaluative nature of coaching
* Disclosure may be used to gain support, resources, or strategic alignment with division goals

### Clarity of Purpose

* **Intent of Confidentiality**: To create a reflective, non-evaluative space for instructional risk-taking
* **Ensuring Coherence**: Coaches share system-level insights—such as instructional trends or shared challenges—to help SAS respond to community needs without identifying individuals

This dual focus—personal growth and institutional learning—ensures coaching remains both transformative and aligned with our strategic priorities.

## 7.3 Legal, Safety, and Policy Concerns

### Balancing Confidentiality and Obligation

When a safety, legal, or compliance issue arises, coaches are ethically and professionally required to act. This reflects our commitment to the well-being of our students and community.

### Escalation Protocol

| **Concern Category** | **Examples** | **Coach Response** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Protection** | Suspected abuse, self-harm risk, concerning behavioral changes | Immediate consultation with designated safeguarding lead; follow child protection policy |
| **Workplace Safety** | Unsafe physical conditions, harassment, threats | Consult with appropriate administrator; document concerns per protocol |
| **Legal Compliance** | Policy violations, ethical breaches, regulatory issues | Report to supervisor; maintain records as required by school policy |

### Maintaining Trust While Meeting Obligations

| **Trust-Preserving Approach** | **Implementation Strategy** | **Benefit to Relationship** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Transparent Communication** | Explain obligations to educator when appropriate; clarify what will and won't be shared | Maintains role clarity and prevents sense of betrayal |
| **Dignity Preservation** | Focus on behavior/issue, not personal judgment; emphasize next steps and solutions | Preserves professional respect even during difficult situations |
| **Content Separation** | Distinguish between safety reporting requirements and coaching content | Allows coaching relationship to continue alongside necessary reporting |
| **Follow-Up Support** | Check in after incidents; reestablish coaching focus when appropriate | Demonstrates ongoing commitment to educator's growth |

## 7.4 Integrity in Action: Practical Applications

The following scenarios illustrate how our integrity principles operate in real-world contexts:

| **Scenario** | **Situation** | **Integrity Approach** | **Principles Applied** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Voluntary PGPE Goal** | Teacher invites coach to explore Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) | • Coach and teacher agree on evidence metrics  • Coach logs session notes privately  • Teacher decides what goes into PGPE | • Educator-led disclosure  • Professional boundaries  • Non-evaluative stance |
| **Schoolwide Trend** | Three departments seek help with retrieval practice strategies | • Coaching team reports trend to Academic Leadership Team  • No individual teachers named  • Specific challenges remain confidential | • Confidential ≠ Secret  • Institutional alignment  • Aggregate data sharing |
| **Safety Concern** | Coach notices possible child-safeguarding issue during observation | • Coach pauses coaching agenda  • Consults designated safeguarding lead  • Documents per policy while maintaining coaching confidentiality | • Legal/safety obligation  • Established protocol  • Balance of responsibilities |
| **Cross-Divisional Learning** | High school math teachers develop effective differentiation strategies with coach | • Coach obtains explicit permission  • Shares strategies but not struggles  • Facilitates cross-divisional learning | • Educator-led disclosure  • One School philosophy  • System-level improvement |

## 7.5 Continuous Growth in Ethical Practice

Integrity in coaching is not static but evolves through intentional practices and regular reflection. The table below outlines our approach to continuous growth in ethical practice:

| **Growth Mechanism** | **Implementation Approach** | **Expected Outcome** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Team Case Studies** | Quarterly review of anonymized ethical dilemmas; collaborative problem-solving | Builds collective wisdom; establishes consistent approaches to complex situations |
| **Protocol Review** | Annual evaluation of confidentiality protocols and policy alignment | Ensures practices remain current with educational research and school policies |
| **Educator Feedback** | Targeted survey questions on trust and confidentiality; focus group discussions | Provides direct insight into how integrity principles are experienced by participants |
| **Professional Learning** | Readings, webinars, and discussions on ethical dimensions of coaching | Deepens coaches' understanding of nuanced ethical considerations |
| **Cross-divisional Calibration** | Joint meetings to align ethical approaches across campuses | Ensures One School consistency while honoring contextual differences |

Maintaining Integrity in High-Stakes Contexts

At Shanghai American School (SAS), our Professional Growth and Professional Evaluation (PGPE) framework provides ongoing opportunities for reflective practice, goal-setting, and meaningful feedback. While most professional learning interactions are supportive and growth-oriented, there are occasions when educators require more targeted or formalized support, leading to processes such as Phase One: ESP or Phase Two: Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Though Phase One: ESP is a structured process, it does not inherently carry the high stakes associated with Phase Two: PIP, which directly addresses significant performance concerns. In these more structured support contexts, maintaining the distinction between coaching and evaluation becomes especially critical.

## Clearly differentiating coaching from evaluation is essential at SAS. Evaluations measure performance against established criteria and can influence critical employment decisions. Coaching, however, is expressly non-evaluative, growth-focused, and teacher-driven. Maintaining this separation ensures psychological safety and encourages genuine professional growth rather than compliance driven by fear of negative consequences. By preserving this distinction, SAS safeguards coaching as a trusted, voluntary support mechanism, empowering educators to openly reflect, take risks, and continually improve without the fear associated with evaluation outcomes.

## Core Principles

### Thoughtful Introduction of Coaching Support

| **Area** | **Principles** |
| --- | --- |
| **Administrators' Role** | • Introduce coaching as one of several support options within the TESS/PIP process. |
| **Teacher Agency** | • Teachers retain discretion in deciding whether to engage with coaching support. • Ensures coaching is voluntary rather than mandated. |
| **Teacher-Led Disclosure** | • If teachers choose to participate, they determine which aspects of their improvement goals to share with the coach. • Preserves relevance to the teacher's personal growth objectives and fosters ownership. |

### Distinct Yet Complementary Roles

| **Role** | **Responsibilities** |
| --- | --- |
| **Administrator's Role** | • Manage the formal TESS/PIP process, setting performance objectives in collaboration with the teacher. • Maintain transparent communication regarding expectations, timelines, and criteria for success. |
| **Teacher's Role** | • Collaborate with the administrator to define goals that address areas of concern in ESP/PIP. • Decide if or how coaching fits into their improvement plan based on personal growth objectives. |
| **Coach's Role** | • When engaged, focus on reflective dialogue and instructional enhancement, helping teachers explore and refine their practice. • Does not set or revise official TESS/PIP goals; rather, the coach supports the teacher's chosen priorities within those established objectives. |
| **Boundary Clarity** | • While administrators evaluate progress toward TESS/PIP milestones, coaches maintain a non-evaluative stance. • Both roles contribute to teacher growth while respecting the clear boundary between formal evaluation and coaching. |

### Communication Guidelines

| **Principle** | **Implementation** |
| --- | --- |
| **Teacher-Led Communication** | • Teachers decide what information from coaching conversations, if any, is shared with administrators. • Reinforces confidentiality and a sense of safety in coaching. |
| **With Teacher Consent** | • If a teacher agrees, coaches may share broad patterns of engagement (e.g., "Teacher is exploring student-centered strategies") with administrators. (See section) • Specific details remain private unless explicitly requested by the teacher. |
| **Non-Evaluative Stance** | • In all cases, coaching remains distinct from formal performance assessments. • The goal is to foster growth, not to evaluate performance or recommend employment actions. |

### Program Integrity

| **Safeguard** | **Implementation** |
| --- | --- |
| **Balanced Coach Assignments** | • SAS strives to ensure that coaches do not work exclusively with teachers in TESS or PIP, which could unintentionally brand coaching as purely "remedial." • A balanced approach reinforces coaching as a universal growth-oriented resource for all educators. |
| **Intentional Engagement** | • Leadership and coaches thoughtfully determine whether coaching participation in a PIP context is suitable for each teacher's needs. • Helps preserve the teacher-driven nature of coaching and mitigates any perception of compulsion. |
| **Shared Accountability** | • Both administrators and coaches maintain clear, purposeful communication around roles, boundaries, and expectations. • Coaches clarify boundary concerns if asked to perform tasks that appear evaluative, thus safeguarding the non-evaluative coaching stance. |

Documentation and Communication Protocols

For further clarity on the roles, responsibilities, and protocols for documentation and communication, please refer to:

* Appendix: PIP/TESS Coaching Procedures
  + Step-by-step guidelines for introducing coaching in TESS/PIP contexts
  + Communication templates that reinforce the non-evaluative stance
  + Approaches to document teacher engagement without infringing on confidentiality

By adhering to these principles and protocols, SAS ensures that both ESP and PIP remain focused on professional support and accountability, while coaching continues to function as a trusted, teacher-centered avenue for growth—free from unintended perceptions or evaluative entanglements.

## 7.6 Conclusion

Ethical integrity is the backbone of the SAS Coaching Program. By distinguishing confidentiality from secrecy, defining clear boundaries, and ensuring institutional alignment, we foster a climate where coaching is safe, reflective, and high-impact.

This clarity strengthens both individual professional growth and school-wide strategic coherence, positioning coaching as a core pillar of our commitment to excellence. By maintaining these ethical foundations across all contexts—from typical coaching partnerships to high-stakes improvement scenarios—we create the conditions for transformative professional learning that advances our One School philosophy and ultimately enhances student learning experiences across divisions and campuses.

# 8. Evaluation and Professional Growth

## Evaluation of Coaches

This section focuses specifically on how coaches themselves are evaluated and supported in their professional growth, consistent with the same principles of reflective practice and continuous improvement that guide all professional learning at SAS.

Coaches at SAS are evaluated within the school’s **Professional Growth and Professional Evaluation (PGPE)** framework. This ensures coherence, fairness, and alignment with SAS’s **One School vision**.

### Integrated Evaluation Framework

* **Shared Process:** Coaches engage in the PGPE process like all educators, reinforcing that every faculty member contributes to educational excellence
* **SAS Coach Competency Map:** Defines key competencies and developmental indicators for impactful coaching

### Co-Supervision Evaluation Process

In alignment with SAS's co-supervision model, coaches receive a balanced, comprehensive evaluation through the annual PGPE cycle:

* **Annual Goal-Setting**: Coaches collaborate with two supervisors to establish measurable goals that reflect the SAS Coach Competency Map, individual growth needs, and division- or school-wide priorities.
* **Mid-Year Check-Ins**: Co-supervisors provide complementary formative feedback, ensuring coaches receive insights from both local (divisional) and broader (program-wide) perspectives.
* **Summative Evaluation**: Co-supervisors jointly assess each coach's progress at year-end, identifying strengths, areas for growth, and next steps. This summative feedback confirms alignment with SAS's established PGPE process and informs future professional development.

### Performance Support

All coaches are expected to demonstrate practice at least at the "Investing" level across competency areas. Should performance challenges arise, coaches follow the school-wide Educator Support Plan (ESP) or, if warranted, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). These structured supports ensure:

* Clear performance expectations and targets
* Targeted resources and interventions
* Ongoing feedback and monitored progress
* Growth-oriented accountability within a fair framework

#### Key Benefits of Our Evaluation Approach

* **Balanced Perspective**: The co-supervision model offers multiple viewpoints, enhancing the depth and relevance of feedback.
* **Holistic Development**: Summative evaluations incorporate input from various stakeholders, encouraging comprehensive professional growth aligned with program goals.
* **System Coherence**: Utilizing the established PGPE framework underscores SAS's One School approach, unifying professionals under shared standards while acknowledging the unique context of coaching.

While the evaluation process offers formal accountability and reflection, the following section details the ongoing professional growth pathways available to coaches as they progress along the four-level continuum—Investing, Implementing, Deepening, and Generative.

## Professional Growth of Coaches

At SAS, coaching is viewed as a developmental journey. Coaches grow along a flexible continuum—**Investing, Implementing, Deepening, Generative**—and choose personalized pathways grounded in adult learning theory, reflective practice, and self-directed professional growth. This approach aligns with our integrated coaching framework that draws from multiple evidence-based coaching methodologies while honoring each coach's unique developmental trajectory.

### The SAS Coach Growth Cycle

**ENGAGE → PLAN → LEARN → DEMONSTRATE**

| Phase | Focus |
| --- | --- |
| ENGAGE (Starting Your Journey) | * Review the competency areas to identify your current strengths and growth opportunities * Determine which competency domains would most benefit your practice and align with SAS priorities * Self-assess your position on the Investing-Generative continuum for each competency * Select 1-2 focus areas that support both your individual growth and school-wide initiatives |
| PLAN (Mapping Your Path) | * Use the competency indicators to create a personalized growth pathway * Identify the specific shifts in practice needed to move along the continuum in your chosen areas * Break down larger goals into micro-actions and tiny habits that build momentum * Align your learning goals with division priorities and the SAS coaching program framework |
| LEARN (Building Your Expertise) | * Access resources specific to each competency domain * Choose between self-directed learning pathways or more structured professional development * Engage in peer observations, coaching rounds, and collaborative learning * Make adjustments based on ongoing feedback and emerging insights |
| DEMONSTRATE (Sharing Your Growth) | * Choose personalized approaches to showcase your professional journey * Create meaningful documentation that authentically captures your development * Share your learning in ways that align with your professional style and goals * Contribute to the coaching community in ways that reflect your strengths and interest |

### 

### Coaching Growth Continuum

| Stage | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Investing | * Building foundational knowledge through theory-based learning and exploration * Demonstrating an intentional commitment to developing coaching principles * Actively seeking guidance and feedback to strengthen basic coaching practices |
| Implementing | * Putting foundational knowledge into action, often through structured approaches (e.g., coaching routines, protocols) * Building confidence with key coaching skills and beginning to use data for reflective practice * Applying coaching strategies with increasing consistency across familiar contexts |
| Deepening | * Using evidence to refine and adapt coaching methods more strategically * Engaging in sophisticated analysis of coaching effectiveness across varied contexts * Synthesizing multiple approaches to address complex coaching scenarios * Collaborating with peers to share insights and continuously improve practice |
| Generative | * Creating innovative frameworks and approaches that foster educator self-direction * Establishing conditions where educators increasingly manage, monitor, and modify their own practice * Influencing systemic practices and professional norms beyond immediate coaching contexts * Mentoring colleagues, leading change, and contributing to the broader SAS coaching community |

**Key Principle**: Coaches may be "Investing" in one competency (e.g., data analysis) while "Generative" in another (e.g., relationship-building). The continuum is a flexible framework, not a rigid hierarchy. This domain-specific development is normal and expected, reflecting the complex nature of coaching expertise.

## Evidence-Informed Growth

Coaches use multiple data points to guide their development:

| **Evidence Type** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Self-Assessment** | Ongoing reflection using the Coach Competency Map |
| **Peer Collaboration** | Coaching rounds, case studies, and team learning |
| **Educator Impact Data** | Anonymous feedback and engagement patterns |
| **Supervisor Input** | Formative and summative guidance |
| **Artifacts** | Documentation of coaching cycles, created resources, and reflections |

## Multiple Pathways for Demonstrating Growth

At SAS, we value coach agency in how professional growth is demonstrated. Coaches are encouraged to choose methods that align with their professional styles, growth goals, and strengths:

| **Pathway** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Personalized Portfolios** | Create collections of evidence showcasing your journey along the competency continuum |
| **Impact Documentation** | Gather data that demonstrates how your coaching has influenced teacher practice and student learning |
| **Peer Sharing** | Present insights and learnings through faculty meetings, professional learning communities, or coaching team gatherings |
| **Collaborative Inquiry** | Engage in action research or study groups focused on specific coaching competencies |
| **Resource Development** | Create tools, protocols, or guidance documents that support other coaches and educators |
| **Mentorship** | Support colleagues through formal or informal coaching relationships that build capacity |
| **Leadership Contributions** | Influence school-wide practices, policies, or culture through committee work or initiative leadership |

The emphasis is on authentic demonstration that serves both individual reflection and collective growth rather than standardized reporting requirements.

## From Goals to Habits: Harnessing Small Steps for Big Impact

Because growth in coaching involves changing both mindset and practice, SAS encourages coaches to break down larger professional goals into tiny habits or micro-actions—the small yet meaningful steps that over time result in significant improvement. Inspired by approaches such as Atomic Habits and Tiny Habits, we believe that:

| **Principle** | **Explanation** |
| --- | --- |
| **Incremental Changes Compound** | Rather than overhauling practice overnight, coaches focus on one or two small, daily (or weekly) behaviors that support their goals and movement along the competency continuum. |
| **Simplicity Fuels Consistency** | Clear, manageable steps build momentum. When changes are too complex, they often remain aspirational rather than actionable. |
| **Reflection Reinforces Growth** | Ongoing self-assessment and feedback loops help coaches see progress, adjust habits where needed, and celebrate incremental successes. |

By making small, strategic adjustments to daily routines—such as adding a brief reflection at the end of each coaching session or dedicating five minutes each morning to data review—coaches can sustain motivation and continually refine their practice.

### Personalized Growth Cycle: Aligned with PGPE

| Timeframe | | | Activities | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Start of Year | * Coaches reflect on the SAS Coach Competency Map and identify where they align on the continuum * They establish personalized growth goals in consultation with supervisors, ensuring alignment with SAS's strategic vision * **Micro-Action Planning**: Coaches identify small, consistent behaviors that will help them progress toward these goals | |
| Mid-Year | * Progress is reviewed and feedback gathered * Goals and approaches are refined or adjusted based on new insights, data, and shifting priorities * **Habit Analysis**: Coaches examine which micro-actions are working well, which may need revision, and how they can maintain momentum | |
| Throughout | * Ongoing dialogue with peers and supervisors provides timely support and "just-in-time" learning opportunities * **Tiny Adjustments**: Coaches use feedback to make iterative changes to their habits, sustaining growth over time | |
| End of Year | * Coaches synthesize their learning, reassess their position on the continuum, and document outcomes * Insights from this reflection inform next steps and future goals * **Celebrating Small Wins**: Recognizing the cumulative impact of tiny habits reinforces a growth mindset and prepares coaches for continued improvement | |
| Next Year Prep | * Supervisors and coaches collaborate to design next year's professional learning pathways, leveraging evidence collected throughout the year * **Scaling Effective Habits**: Successful micro-actions from the previous cycle can be expanded or adapted for new contexts and goals | |

### 

# Aligning Individual Growth with Organizational Priorities

While honoring each coach's unique developmental journey, our framework intentionally connects personal growth to SAS's strategic priorities, creating mutual benefit and coherence.

| **Strategic Element** | **Implementation Approach** | **Organizational Benefit** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategic Focus** | Coaches select competencies that advance division-wide initiatives (e.g., UDL, CRP) | Accelerates implementation of key initiatives |
| **Shared Goals** | Growth plans explicitly connect to school/division strategic priorities | Reinforces One School vision through aligned effort |
| **Adaptive Capacity** | Regular reflection cycles allow for mid-year adjustments | Ensures responsiveness to emerging needs |

## Personalized Pathways

The Coach Development Continuum provides structure while honoring individual journeys through:

1. **Self-Direction with Purpose**
   * Coaches and supervisors identify growth priorities serving both personal and organizational needs
   * Co-supervision ensures both divisional context and cross-campus coherence inform development
2. **Non-Linear Growth**
   * Development accelerates differently across competencies
   * Coaches may revisit earlier stages when contexts change
3. **Inclusive Entry Points**
   * Multiple pathways honor varied backgrounds and strengths
   * Prior experience integrated into personalized growth plans

## Building Sustainable Growth Habits

We translate development goals into practice through:

* **Micro-Actions**: Breaking larger competency development into daily/weekly habits
* **Evidence-Informed Reflection**: Regular self-assessment against competency indicators
* **Just-in-Time Learning**: Accessing resources at point of need

This approach to aligning individual coach development with organizational priorities creates a powerful synergy at SAS. By focusing on consistent, incremental improvement connected to our broader mission, coaches not only enhance their own practice but also strengthen our collective impact. The Coach Competency Map provides the structure, while our intentional alignment processes ensure that individual growth contributes meaningfully to our strategic vision.

When coaches develop within this integrated framework, they simultaneously advance their professional journey, enhance support for educators, and embody the growth mindset central to our One School philosophy.

# 9. Program Impact and Evaluation

## 9.1 Program Impact and Evaluation Framework

Effective coaching programs require robust, ongoing assessment to ensure they achieve desired outcomes and continuously improve. At Shanghai American School (SAS), we have developed a comprehensive approach to measuring and evaluating our coaching program's impact—one that aligns with our coaching philosophy while providing meaningful insights for program refinement. Informed by research-based evaluation approaches, including Joellen Killion's work on assessing professional learning impact, our framework balances rigor with practicality, focusing on meaningful outcomes rather than merely measuring activities.

### Impact and Evaluation Design

Our impact measurement system is designed to capture both the direct effects of coaching on teaching practice and the broader influence on student learning outcomes. We assess coaching outcomes across five interdependent domains:

1. **Educator Growth & Practice**: Changes in teacher knowledge, skills, beliefs, and instructional practices
2. **Student Learning Experience**: Effects on student engagement, learning behaviors, and achievement outcomes
3. **Coaching Implementation**: Quality, fidelity, and reach of coaching activities and processes
4. **School Culture & Community**: Shifts in collaborative practices, reflective inquiry, and collective efficacy
5. **Program Value**: The benefits created in relation to resources invested

Each domain includes specific indicators tied to our coaching program's theory of change, ensuring that we measure what truly matters rather than what is merely convenient to assess.

### Data Collection Framework

Our framework employs multiple data sources to create a robust, triangulated understanding of coaching impact:

| **Data Source** | **Examples** |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct Measures** | Observation data, student work samples, assessment results |
| **Perceptual Data** | Teacher surveys, focus groups, reflective dialogues |
| **Process Data** | Coaching logs, goal achievement records, implementation metrics |
| **Contextual Data** | School climate measures, collaborative practice assessments |

For each data source, we have established clear collection protocols, timelines, and responsibilities, ensuring consistent implementation while minimizing disruption to teaching and coaching activities.

### Analysis Protocols

Rigorous yet practical analysis procedures transform raw data into meaningful insights:

* **Mixed-Methods Review**: Combines quantitative patterns with qualitative insights to understand both what is happening and why
* **Cross-Divisional Comparison**: Surfaces trends across time, campus, and initiative to identify significant patterns
* **Contribution Analysis**: Links coaching to outcomes while acknowledging multiple influencing factors

These protocols help us move beyond simplistic cause-effect assumptions to develop nuanced understanding of how coaching contributes to our educational ecosystem.

### Reporting Structure

Our reporting approach balances transparency with appropriate confidentiality:

* **Annual Impact Report**: Comprehensive overview of program outcomes, challenges, and successes
* **Stakeholder-Specific Briefs**: Tailored summaries for various audiences (ALT, Board, Faculty) highlighting relevant insights
* **Educator-Focused Reports**: Sharing actionable insights relevant to classroom implementation
* **Implementation Updates**: Regular sharing of key metrics and emerging trends

All communication upholds SAS's values of confidentiality and non-evaluation, ensuring consistency with our coaching philosophy.

## 9.2 Program Assessment Model

Our program assessment model examines both implementation quality and outcome achievement, recognizing that both are essential for understanding coaching effectiveness.

### Success Metrics and Indicators

Our metrics balance quantitative measures with qualitative indicators across several dimensions:

| **Area** | **Sample Indicators** |
| --- | --- |
| **Reach** | % of staff engaged, distribution across divisions, frequency of interaction |
| **Implementation** | Fidelity to support functions, quality of interactions, alignment with priorities |
| **Educator Growth** | Evidence of instructional change, professional capacity, reflective practice |
| **Student Experience** | Learning behavior shifts, engagement patterns, achievement outcomes |
| **Systemic Impact** | Changes in culture, collaboration practices, collective efficacy |

These metrics are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain aligned with SAS's evolving strategic priorities and coaching program goals.

### Evaluation Frameworks

Our evaluation approach incorporates multiple perspectives to create a comprehensive assessment:

* **Developmental Evaluation**: Ongoing refinement of the program during implementation
* **Goal-Based Assessment**: Measurement of progress toward specific, predetermined objectives
* **Process & Outcome Evaluation**: Examination of implementation quality and resultant changes
* **Organizational Impact Assessment**: Analysis of how coaching influences school culture and systems

This multi-faceted approach acknowledges that simple input-output evaluation models are insufficient for complex educational initiatives like coaching.

### Impact Measurement Tools

We employ a carefully selected toolkit of measurement instruments and protocols:

* **Validated Instruments** and custom protocols aligned with our coaching philosophy
* **Digital Platforms** for secure survey administration and data aggregation
* **Documentation Templates** for standardized recording of coaching activities
* **Sampling Methods** that balance comprehensiveness with practicality

Each tool is selected based on alignment with our coaching philosophy, practicality for regular use, and ability to yield meaningful insights.

## 9.3 Continuous Improvement Cycle

Evaluation directly drives ongoing program refinement through structured improvement processes.

### Review Cycles

Regular, purposeful examination of program data follows a consistent calendar:

| **Frequency** | **Focus** |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly** | Quick-response review to address immediate implementation challenges |
| **Quarterly** | Pattern and trend analysis to identify emerging insights |
| **Annually** | Comprehensive program reflection and strategic planning |
| **Every 3 Years** | Strategic program review and redesign for long-term direction |

Each review cycle has distinct protocols, participants, and expected outcomes, creating a layered approach to program improvement.

### Stakeholder Feedback & Monitoring

Multiple channels capture diverse perspectives on program effectiveness:

* **Educator Feedback**: Surveys, forums, and structured dialogues
* **Coach Reflection**: Team analysis sessions and individual reflection protocols
* **Leadership Insight**: Structured input connecting coaching to strategic priorities
* **Student Perspective**: Age-appropriate methods for understanding impact on learning

All feedback informs iterative program refinements, which are monitored for implementation and effectiveness through systematic tracking processes.

### Evaluation Leadership

We have established clear structures for overseeing the evaluation process:

* **Evaluation Oversight Team**: A cross-functional group including coaches, Educational Programs representatives, division leaders, and educator representatives
* **Strategic Partnerships**: Collaboration with external evaluation expertise when needed
* **Internal Capacity Building**: Ongoing development of evaluation expertise within the coaching team

This approach provides the benefits of both deep contextual understanding and objective assessment.

## 9.4 Integration with Accreditation

The SAS Coaching Program serves as a significant asset in the school's accreditation processes, demonstrating our institutional commitment to continuous improvement and professional growth.

### Key Connections to Accreditation

* **Coaching as evidence** of systematic professional learning
* **Evaluation data** supporting accreditation-required improvement cycles
* **Alignment** between coaching goals and accreditation-identified priorities
* **Documentation** of faculty engagement in reflective practice and collaboration

While individual coaching conversations remain confidential, aggregated trends and evaluation data provide meaningful insight into SAS's culture of learning.

### Strategic Planning Alignment

Coaching leadership collaborates with SAS's accreditation team to ensure:

* Coaching data supports narratives of instructional growth
* All contributions are made without compromising coaching principles
* Integration highlights how coaching supports SAS's mission, excellence, and innovation

Through this thoughtful integration, the coaching program not only advances teaching and learning directly but also strengthens SAS's ability to demonstrate institutional effectiveness to external accrediting bodies—reinforcing our One School approach to continuous improvement and educational excellence.

By implementing this comprehensive impact and evaluation approach, SAS ensures that our coaching program remains evidence-informed, continuously improving, and focused on meaningful outcomes for teachers and students. This framework supports both accountability and growth—reinforcing coaching's value while providing clear pathways for ongoing development.

# 10. Conclusion

## Walking the Path of One School

The SAS Coaching Framework represents our steadfast commitment to cultivating a culture of trust, reflection, and continuous professional growth across all divisions and campuses. Rooted in research and refined through practice, this framework articulates a clear, coherent vision for how coaching enhances instructional excellence, supports strategic initiatives, and empowers educators to lead their own learning journeys.

By prioritizing **psychological safety**, **ethical integrity**, and **meaningful partnership**, we ensure coaching remains a dynamic, educator**-**centered process—one that honors individual agency while advancing schoolwide goals.

More than a set of practices, the coaching program at Shanghai American School is a **catalyst for transformation**. It fosters a vibrant professional learning ecosystem where coaching is not confined to a role or a protocol, but embedded in how we collaborate, innovate, and grow together.

Through our **four support functions**—coaching, consulting, collaborating, and facilitating—we create multiple pathways for educator growth that honor diverse needs and contexts. Our **Plan-Implement**-**Reflect** cycle provides a flexible yet consistent structure that keeps our work focused on student learning and measurable impact.

As we continue to refine and expand this work, our shared purpose remains clear: to empower every educator to thrive—and in doing so, ensure every student benefits from deeper, more personalized, and more impactful learning.

The strength of our program lies in its balance of structure and flexibility, its grounding in research and responsiveness to context, and most importantly, its unwavering focus on the growth of both educators and students. Through coaching, we create the conditions for continuous improvement across all levels of the organization—from individual classrooms to divisional teams to our entire school community.

## This is what it means to walk the path of One School—where professional learning transcends divisions, collaboration fuels excellence, and our collective commitment to growth transforms educational experiences for every student we serve.