A Coach and Principal Summer Conversation

Each summer I post a blog encouraging instructional coaches to request a conversation with their principals. Scheduling the time, especially uninterrupted, for the necessary coach/principal conversations is often difficult. Summer may provide the perfect opportunity for the instructional coach to call the principal and request a coffee hour to catch up and/or establish a plan for the start of the new year.

It is critical that coach and principal function as a team and are seen by staff as being "on the same page." A teacher should discover that as she implements changes discussed with a coach, her principal notices and reinforces those efforts. It should be obvious to the staff that issues addressed in their faculty meetings align with topics of PLC and coaching conversations sparked by the coach. This does not mean there isn't confidentiality in coaching conversations. It does mean that the common focus on student achievement and the thoughts about the necessary student learning production behaviors to produce that achievement are in place.

Here are some questions arranged for differing scenarios concerning the coach's and principal's time at the school. I added a section specifically looking at experiences during the pandemic. Mix, match, and add the questions that best generate reflection and understanding.

Coach and principal both returning, having worked together last year.

- What do you identify as our greatest success last year in student learning?
- What did you notice in teaching/learning observations that would have led you to predict that success?
- What do you see as our focus for student growth this year?
- What changes will teachers need to make to gain the student learning behaviors we need?
- What would you see and hear students doing that would tell you the teacher changes are in place?
- How would my work support the changes we need?
- What do you believe you will need to do?
- How should we plan to communicate the plan to the staff?

Principal returning and coach is new to the school.

- What are some of the strongest student achievement results the school is getting?
- What do you believe are the staff efforts that are getting those results?
- Where are you envisioning the next desired increase in student achievement?
- What will we need to get students to do to reach that result?
- What will that require teachers to do?
- How should I begin my work to support those efforts?

“A principal’s support or lack of support can make or break a coaching program.”

-Jim Knight

Coach returning and the principal is new.

- What have your experiences been coaching, being coached, and working with school-based coaches?
- How does the role of a coach fit into promoting the school culture you will want to develop?
- What questions do you have for me?
- How can my work assist you as you begin knowing and guiding student achievement success?

Coach and principal are new to the school.

- What have your experiences been coaching, being coached, and working with school-based coaches?
- How does the role of a coach fit into promoting the school culture you will want to develop?
- What do you know about the school that will focus our beginning work? What do we need to find out?
- What are some of the initial impressions and messages you want the staff to receive?
- How can I best support the start of that work?

Post Pandemic

In many cases, the pandemic shone a light on problems, weaknesses, and strengths that were already present in our teaching/learning processes.

- What are some that you recognized?

- What new behaviors/actions did you implement during the past year that you want to keep as leadership practices?
- What are some of the most important things students and teachers need to experience as the new school year begins?

If you are a principal and your coach does not request a summer conversation, consider sending an invitation. Then forward this blog. I believe there is real value in the coach hearing your responses. I'd love to hear the experiences of anyone experimenting with these questions. Good luck in building your partnerships.

Podcast: Coach and Principal Partnership, Part 2

In this week's episode of the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast, Steve is joined by principal, Amy Zilbar and instructional coach, Lora Leneve from Pride Elementary in Hillsborough County, Florida to discuss the coach and principal partnership.

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Subscribe to the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast on iTunes or visit BarkleyPD.com to find new episodes.

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Announcer : 00:00 Steve Barkley ponders out loud is brought to you by Academy for educators online professional development for teachers and leaders, online courses, modules and micro credential programs for teachers to enhance their skill sets. Now featuring the instructional coaching micro credential, including five online modules framed around the work of Steve Barkley. Learn grow inspire Academy for educators.org

Steve [Intro]: 00:25 Hello and welcome to the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast. For over three decades I've had the opportunity to learn with educators at all levels, both nationally and internationally. I invite you to listen as I explore my thoughts and learning on a variety of topics connected to teaching, learning, and leading with some of the best and brightest educators from around the globe. Thanks for listening in.

Steve: 00:53 Coach/Principal partnership conversation number two. Today, I'm excited to have a coach and principal from Hillsborough County, Florida join us for our podcast. This is an extension of the work that I've been doing over the years with the reading coaches in Hillsborough County. Joining us today is Laura Leneve, the instructional coach and the principal at her school, Amy Zilbar. They are at the pride elementary school in Hillsborough County. Ladies, thanks for joining us.

Lora : 01:29 Thank you.

Amy: 01:29 Thank you. Glad to be here.

Steve: 01:31 I'm wondering if you would both give a – just a little short introduction to your your background with with coaching and teaching in administration. So Lora, could you start us off?

Lora: 01:45 Oh, sure. Yes. This is my seventh year of coaching. My second year here at pride with Ms. Zilbar. And before I started coaching I taught for 18 years. Grades 1-6.

Amy: 01:59 This is my 30th year in Hillsborough County public schools and I've enjoyed working with new coaches, [inaudible] my sites in order to support teacher practice in the classroom. And this is my second year working with Ms. Leneve.

Steve: 02:15 I understand Amy, that you also have some experience working as a coach.

Amy: 02:21 Yes, I do. I have worked as a principal coach in two different areas in Hillsborough County and currently I am assisting coaching principals in area three.

Steve: 02:34 That's terrific. And Amy, could you give us just a little background on the makeup of Pride Elementary?

Amy: 02:42 Pride elementary is a very diverse community and student population. Currently, we have 750 students, K- 5. We have 23 different languages currently being spoken and our population is growing as we are in a very growing suburban area.

Steve: 03:04 So one of the elements of a coach principal partnership is the decision about how you define the role of the instructional coach to the staff. And I'm wondering if both of you might speak to how you've handled that.

Lora: 03:25 When I first started at pride, I during the faculty meeting I introduced myself, but I also went around to teachers and I made sure to read to every class just to kind of get that personal relationship built. And I'm very

fortunate to have miss Silvar because she values coaching. So I'm used in the actual role of being a coach rather than being a substitute or doing other duties.

Steve: 03:52 And Amy, as you respond to that, what expectations do you kind of present to the staff as to how they work with the coach?

Amy: 04:00 It's very important for our faculty to see Lora as a support partner for them. So those expectations were set from day one. We have a very unique setup for our PLCs, professional teams, since we work together as a team, not a group. And Lora is supporting our PLCs during that planning time, during that planning of instruction, looking at standards, breaking them down, looking at data. So her role is multifaceted with each grade level in the language arts component, but it is strictly as a support for planning for instruction, executing instruction, going coaching cycles. So that was set up from day one.

Steve: 05:00 Lora, I'm wondering how do you how do you define a thought partner?

Lora : 05:05 I define a thought partner as being a good listener and listening to people's ideas. And then I'm going to provide support and resources based on the needs of students.

Steve: 05:20 A question I have is to what degree is Lora's role as instructional coach connected to your school goals?

Amy: 05:31 Our school goal this year is standards based planning, and this is the third year of that goal. Our first year was standards-based planning which is learning targets. What do we want students to learn. Our second year was standards-based planning using performance scales to be able to break down that standard. And this year, Lora has been instrumental in helping us with standards-based planning and weaving in how do we differentiate our instruction to meet the

needs of every student. So at pride, we have a PLT coach for every PLT. Laura specifically is assigned third grade as a PLT coach, but she also works in planning with second, third and fourth grade as well to break down that standards and say, what resources can we use to make sure that we're meeting the needs of every student so that they do successfully master this standard. She also looks at data to see, are we hitting the mark, is it sticking, is it working. And she also helps facilitate the professional development and that job embedded piece of professional development as we go through a book study on every first Tuesday of every month.

Steve: 06:55 So Lora, as I listened to Amy give that list, it's pretty substantial of the of the role you'd be be playing there. I'm wondering where the observation in a classroom and feedback to individual teachers fits into the rest of that plan?

Lora: 07:20 Most of the things that I do that Amy talked about are things that I do, you know, after school, before school. During school, I spend my time in classrooms with observation, coaching cycles. I do some modeling. I like to always have my model tied to a coaching cycle so the teachers can actually apply what they're learning. And I also do work with students at some grade levels. But the way that I've helped make that into a coaching model is I go into the classroom so that the teacher is aware of what I'm doing with the students. So I'm helping the students and helping the teacher at the same time.

Steve: 07:59 Neat. Neat. Lora, how many principals have you worked with in your time as an instructional coach?

Lora: 08:07 Just two.

Steve: 08:08 Okay. And if I brought you to a workshop with principals and ask you to present to a group of principals some of the most important things to think about when building the coach principal partnership, what do you think you'd put

in there?

Lora: 08:29 I think the most important thing is that the principal has to understand the value of what a coach does and has a clearly defined understanding of the role with the coach and gives the staff the impression that, you know, the most important thing is working with the teachers and having the time built in to do that rather than a lot of the administrative tasks that some coaches end up taking on.

Steve: 08:54 And Amy, if I flip that and I brought you into a group of instructional coaches and I asked you to talk to them about what's important as they look to build their partnership with the principal, what would you put in front of them?

Amy: 09:11 The first most important piece is exactly what I saw Laura do when she first came here to Pride, is building those relationships with the teachers. So they know coaches have the content knowledge, they've gone through extensive training and interview process. So they're coming in and faculties usually know that coaches come in with a good solid knowledge base. But to be able to build those relationships where the teachers feel comfortable to say, "Hey Laura, I don't know what texts to do or is this of the appropriate text complexity? This is what I'm thinking for tomorrow's lesson." Those conversations can only start if she has relationships with those teachers and she's done that beautifully here by being supportive, by not doing the job for the teachers but there to work side by side with them. So that would be the number one key. The number one component that I would say that coaches need to keep at the forefront.

Steve: 10:20 Do the two of you have a process that you've that you've built for communication between the two of you to kind of keep your partnership on the same page?

Lora: 10:34 It wouldn't be a formal type of – we don't have like a sit down on Monday type of meeting, but we text each

other quite often, email, call each other. I can stop by anytime and Amy's door's always open. So it's more informal, but it's just whenever we need to talk to each other and we have a very open communication.

Amy: 10:54 And that's a process that definitely seems to work for us because as things come up or "hey, I have this idea," it's, definitely more frequent than a once a week sit down meeting. Or it may be, "hey, I saw this great lesson, let's showcase it on Tuesday's faculty meeting or this great practice." We do send an email out once a week, it's called the Morning Minute. And we showcase things that are happening in the classroom. So the assistant principal, myself, Laura, we have a constant communication really on a daily basis in a variety of ways. Like Lora said, it could be a text, it could be on the way home. So it is definitely a constant communication.

Steve: 11:41 What I sense I'm hearing is, you've got an agreement about where you're going and what you want to do. And so that agreement opens the door almost a continuous, free flow of information.

Lora: 12:00 Yes, exactly. I think that, you know, at the beginning of the year, actually in the summer we kind of decide on priorities and what we did last year was at the end of the year, we did a survey to ask the teachers what they wanted the instructional priority to be and overwhelmingly they chose differentiation of instruction. So that kind of gave us the path that led us – gave us like a central idea. And then we kind of worked out before preplanning and figured out that we wanted to deliver this once a month book study. And as far as observations and our walkthrough, our look forward, we kind of built everything around that component of differentiation.

Steve: 12:39 I've got one last question and then I'd like to the two of you to feel free to just add anything that you

think would be be helpful for new coaches and principals looking at putting a partnership together. The last question that I had was how do you communicate the elements of coaching between the coach and the teacher that have a necessity to be confidential versus the things that are full flow of information back and forth between principal and coach?

Lora: 13:16 I think it would be – well, we do have a teacher on an assistance plan and I'm part of the team, so that's well known that more communication with the principal regarding that specific teacher's practice will happen. But the teacher is aware of that. As far as the other teachers, I try to keep it very generic. I don't go back and talk about specific teachers, but I might talk about a specific problem that I need help with or a grade level, but I try to keep it very confidential and I think that's where I have the trust of the teachers. They know that I'm not going to go and tell Amy, you know, everything I see in their classroom every day unless it's hurting children.

Steve: 13:57 And how did you communicate that to teachers when you – as you got started?

Lora: 14:03 I don't know that it was a communication. I think it's a building of trust and it took a year for certain people to come on board. I had a kind of a test fifth grade teacher and she actually contacted me over the summer and asked me to meet her for lunch so that we could kind of plan a book study together. And when I told Amy, she was kind of shocked that that teacher actually reached out and wanted to do that. So I think just being supportive and just letting them know that, you know, yes, I was a teacher for a long time too. And I know some of the challenges you face.

Steve: 14:35 Amy, anything you'd add to that?

Amy: 14:38 Yeah I was just going to add, I think it's important for the coach, principal relationship where I don't

probe or ask Lora for what's happening. I have that trust and confidence and and I think it's a two way communication and a two way trust that if there's a problem, I know she'll let me know or if there's something that she feels that is hurting students or there's an issue, she'll let me know. But I know she will do her very best and she will do her job in supporting teachers in order to move that instruction forward. And I think it helps teachers know that and although it never was specifically stated, as we work with our instructional leadership team as well, they know that as we collect data, for example, for our instructional walkthrough, our teachers crafted the look fors from our book study. They created the collection sheet, what it would look like. And they are actually collecting the data among each other for what does differentiation look, what's process, what's product, how is the grouping happening?

Amy: 15:51 So teachers are collecting that because I do not want them to think that it's us or we're writing down what's happening in each classroom. It's really focused on learning and that goes back to our vision as a school. This year, we're growing learners for success and teachers are learners just as students are learners. So we focus on the learning and that's our main focus is, as teachers we're still learning and we have to have that freedom to try new things. And we know that when we try new things, learning is messy and sometimes it doesn't work. And that's okay because kids are our kids. So we just work through those speed bumps together and put things in place. So we try it again. So it really is a process that we all learn together, but they – we really do take deliberate steps to make sure that it's not even our own walkthrough tool. It doesn't say what room. It's all about focus on learning.

Steve: 17:00 I'm hearing your theme of a team kind of flow through your whole delivery. The whole school is a team learning together.

Amy: 17:11 That's a huge focus I think for all of us here, whether it's the administrative team, the instructional learningship team – our PLCs are. all about being a collaborative and being a collaborative environment. And the freedom to make mistakes and just brush off and try it again. And that's what I call collective collaboration. It's collaboration among all grade levels among all teams. It's our specials as well, supporting that instructional priority in the classroom. If they're talking about right angles in math, then our PE teachers can help support that. It's all – it's definitely is a collaborative team effort.

Steve: 18:03 So anything you'd like to add that that didn't come out in the questions that I've posed as things for coaches and principals to be paying attention to as they formed their partnerships?

Lora: 18:19 One thing I might add is not to be afraid to talk to your principal. Last year when we started the walkthroughs, initially it was the leadership team that was doing the walkthroughs. And I told Amy that I wasn't comfortable doing that because I don't want to be put in an evaluative position. And I think the teachers realize that I wasn't doing that and it actually bought me some credibility with them because I purposely removed myself from that process.

Amy: 18:47 And I would just add that one of our norms for being a collaborative team is we use one of Singleton's Courageous Conversation norms and one of them is "speak your truth" and we cannot make forward progress unless we speak your truth. So that's definitely an important component. I know it's hard at times, but we want to make sure that all voices are heard. If we are truly going to work as a collective team, we have to have all voices heard.

Steve: 19:22 Well thank you both. That is just an awesome note for us to close out on here. I appreciate you sharing your thinking with us. Thanks a lot. You helped us all learn.

Lora: 19:33 Thank you.

Amy : 19:34 Thank you so much.

Steve: 19:34 Yep, have a great day. Bye, bye.

Amy: 19:34 You too. Bye, bye.

Steve [Outro]: 19:40 Thanks again for listening. You can subscribe to Steve Barkley ponders out loud on iTunes and Podbean and please remember to rate and review us on iTunes. I also want to hear what you're pondering. You can find me on twitter @stevebarkley or send me your questions and find my videos and blogs at barkleypd.com.

Podcast: The Coach and Principal Partnership – Part 1

In this week's episode of the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast, Steve is joined by instructional coach, Ayana Etienne and principal, Marc Gaillard from the Sulphur Springs K-8 school to discuss the importance of a coach/principal

partnership.

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PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Announcer : 00:00 Academy For Educators. Online, professional development for teachers and leaders. Online courses, modules and micro-credential programs for teachers to enhance their skill-sets. Now featuring the Instructional Coaching Micro-credential, including five online modules framed around the work of Steve Barkley. Learn, grow, inspire. Academyforeducators.Org.

Steve [Intro]: 00:21 Hello and welcome to the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast. For over three decades, I've had the opportunity to learn with educators at all levels, both nationally and internationally. I invite you to listen as I explore my thoughts and learning on a variety of topics connected to teaching, learning and leading with some of the best and brightest educators from around the globe. Thanks for listening in.

Steve: 00:49 Coach/Principal partnership #1. This is going to be the first in a series of interviews that I'm going to conduct with instructional coaches and principals around their partnership. I'd like to collect many examples for the listeners, both as coaches and administrators to consider your partnership and modifications or changes you might want to make based on things you hear that others have done. Exciting that the folks I'm talking to today are part of the reading coach program in Hillsborough County, Florida. And I have personally had the pleasure of working with the reading coach

program from its onset 20 years ago. I've had the chance each summer to be part of of training the cadre there. So joining us today we have Ayana Etienne from Sulphur Springs, she's the coach and Marc Gaillard, the principal. They're both at Sulphur Springs, a K-8 school. So welcome to both of you and would you take a moment or two to give a little short introduction about about your backgrounds and I understand that you had worked together before, you worked at other buildings and you're both new to to being back at Sulphur Springs now. So fill us in on a little bit of your background.

Marc: 02:23 Of course. I'm Marc Gaillard, the principal here at Sulphur Springs K-8. I was a classroom teacher for about seven years, assistant principal for another seven and I pretty much taught fourth and fifth grade math and science. We taught writing as well in math and science departmentalized group. And then about seven years as an assistant principal. And then the last four as a principal. Of course, this is – I moved to Sulphur Springs in April, so I've been here about five or six months. Ms. Etienne and I worked when I was an administrative resource teacher for one year and it was our first year teaching at Just Elementary and then we were at Edison Elementary for some years as me as an assistant principal. And then she left and then came back and when I became principal. So here we are now in my 21st year here at Sulphur Springs K-8 as the principal.

Ayana: 03:25 And just like he said, my first year of teaching was at Just Elementary. I did a career change actually. So I met Mr. Gaillard at Just for a year. Then I finished out my years teaching at Witter and then when he became principal or assistant principal at Edison, I went and I was the reading coach there. And shortly after that, about two years, I later I went to Sulphur Springs when he got appointed principal. And then I had told them, I said, I'd come back and you become principal and I promised, I came back. And when he found out that he was leaving to come to Sulfur Springs, I figured I've

been there before. Why not? When you find a good administrator, you kind of stick with them. So I said, you're not going to leave me. I'm coming after you.

Steve: 04:16 That's great. So we have a partnership with some with some roots is what it sounds like. Marc, I'm wondering if could you fill us in just a little bit of the background of Sulphur Springs K-8 school? A little bit about your your student population and the way the school works with the K-8 setting.

Marc: 04:44 We are predominantly African American – about 85%. About 12, 13% Hispanic, and then about 2% that are Caucasian. The campus is split into two halves. You have the elementary on the South end and the middle school on the North end. I have two APs on the elementary side. I have pretty much two APs on the middle school side as well. All traditional school, it's a neighborhood school, a school that historically, has been very challenging. Probably one of the lowest socioeconomic neighborhoods in Tampa, if not the lowest. And so, you know, we have different challenges that come along with that, but overall, that's the gist of our school. We also have a partnership with YMCA, so they're here on our campus and they provide different support for during school they have [inaudible] and then after school, they have different activities then the afterschool program that is here.

Steve: 06:06 And Ayana, your coaching role is that across the whole school?

Ayana: 06:10 No, so right now we're at a three coach site. So in the middle school side we have the secondary reading coach and then I have a partner coach, the two of us before elementary school.

Steve: 06:22 So one of the questions I'd like to start with is how have the two of you presented the role of the coach to the staff at the school?

Marc: 06:38 Pretty much that every teacher will go through a coaching cycle on the elementary side. The coach is one that is very knowledgeable that you should be ensuring that there's time where the reading coaches plan with the teachers and the expectation is that you will ensure that you have been playing an active role in the planning process and you're growing professionally. And the reading coach is a key component of that.

Ayana: 07:16 And every year at the beginning of the school year, whether our previous site as well as this year, we provide a presentation where the coach, again two coach sites, so myself and the other reading coach team up together. And we provide a provide like, a mini PD where we explain our role as a coach and what that looks like, what that means. We also explain the planning process and what that and how that works, but we can't do the work that we do without his support and with our admin to be able to say this is the expectation. And I know at the end of the school year when everybody signs their intent to return forms coming back to the school for the following school year, on those forms are coaching cycles, knowing that they are going to be a part of that process.

Steve: 08:06 To what extent is your is your work kind of laid out and led by you versus to what extent is that driven by teacher requests to you?

Ayana: 08:21 It evolves over time. Right now, I'm in a scenario where I'm at a new school, so it's pretty much split where I'm kind of seeking out opportunities through data conversations or those informal discussions with teachers to get them interested in being coached or getting them – part of the process. In previous years, again, we're – not being new, you know, having that ongoing routine, it's a lot of the teachers coming and seeking out that support. And just pretty much being there to provide as a sounding board and then coming in as that other layer to collect that data for those teachers.

Steve: 09:02 Marc, I'm wondering if you could talk about about the expectations that you have for – you have several coaches that you're working with. So how do you describe what your expectations are of coaches?

Marc: 09:17 My expectations for the culture that they will be in the classroom, that they will provide professional development during our PD Tuesdays, where the whole staff is together, making sure that they plan with the teachers by grade level and being a facilitator more than dictating everything and ensuring that they push in the classes and periodically assist as well with the growth of students in small groups.

Steve: 09:58 Ayana, I'm wondering, what expectations do you have of the administrator for you to be effective in your role as a coach?

Ayana: 10:09 One is communication. I think is completely vital to this position. Having that regular discussion piece, whether I go and attend my whole group professional development and have that open door where I can come back and converse with them about what it is that we need to do and our agenda with reading, with regards to, I mean we're in the position now that we have state visits and walkthroughs and you name it. And just having the constant dialogue with each other I think is very important. And that openness and the ability to understand what it is that we're doing in the work that we're trying to do to move this school I think is definitely key.

Steve: 10:52 Do you have a fixed time that you connect back with each other to kind of debrief where you are or is it more an open door and on the fly.

Ayana: 11:06 It's more of an open door on the fly because there's so many moving pieces with this school in particular. We try and then it gets cut. But I mean, there's usually not a

day that goes by that we don't communicate in one way, shape or form, whether it's via email, via text, he pops by, he knows the times that we're in there, whether like for our planning times or whether it's lunch and he pops in and has a quick second and we debrief really quickly. But it's constant. I never feel like what we're doing doesn't matter. I never feel like he's not concerned or always checking in. Because that's the one thing that I think that he really values is checking in with his people and making sure everything's all copesthetic and making sure that everybody's needs are met. And I think that really makes it easy for us to not have that, you know, every Friday at 2:00 PM we're going to sit down together. It's just constantly an ongoing. Yes, simple as a text message, Hey, can I chat real quick?" And he'll pop right up, you know?

Marc: 12:13 And I would say that that was the case where we came from. We had a lot there in time that we would be with leadership, but leadership was much smaller there. I only had five or six people on that were resource and here is like double that. So having – being able to have that time is just different this year with so many other moving parts going on, really working on the culture and climate here. But because we were together for so long, we know – I know how she operates and she updates me and she already knows, oh, I know how Mr. Gaillard – what he would decide on this because we work together and communicate so often together and there's never a time that she can't talk to me rather it's after school, during school, it really doesn't matter. But that's when you have a established relationship, a great professional relationship, things can work easier in that manner.

Ayana: 13:19 Well, we do have where we've got all the contents that come together on our leadership – once a week on Mondays. But I know that that's challenging with so many different content areas from K-8. So that's where we have our offline piece too.

Steve: 13:35 So I'm hearing a great deal of trust exist between the two of you, both in your expectations of each other and respect for each other. I'm wondering if you'd have some advice for principals and instructional coaches who are new to to working with each other. What exists early on that allows you to build that that sense of trust and I guess a common message goes out to the staff as well.

Marc: 14:09 Right. Well, and I start with my portion, just making sure that you communicate, have a set time schedule for you to get updates weekly. Because that's what we did early on in our, you know, working together. And because I was an assistant principal, a lot of things came through me. So that's where Ayana and I worked really a lot together and established that strong foundation. And then, having someone who is knowledgeable of their craft and when you know and you see that through the movement of the data, that has worked has created our relationship. And I'll turn it over to Ayana to add to that.

Ayana: 14:59 I think one of the major factors in building that trust with an administrator is doing what you say and meaning what you say. I take pride in my work and if I've got my calendar, my schedule and what I'm going to do, he knows I'm going to be there. There's been multiple times where I'm sitting in the classroom collecting data and then I go to the next classroom, he's following behind me because he's doing his walkthroughs and he sees I'm actively doing my job. There's not a big lag of downtime at all. Like, he can come into planning sessions and know that I'm actively working and I think that's where the trust begins. And also listening to the buzz from the teachers and the teachers being able to say and talk to the work that I'm doing or to the – reinforcing some of the things and the practices that we've put into place together and hearing that buzz allows him to be able to say, okay, I know she's in there doing the work with the teachers alongside them. So I think that builds that trust and that

respect.

Steve: 15:58 So I'm going to end with a quote that I'd appreciate you responding to. I took it from Jim Knight and Jim Knight made this statement, "A principal's support or lack of it can make or break a coaching program." How would you respond to that?

Ayana: 16:24 Yes.

All : 16:24 [laughter].

Steve: 16:24 From the coach's seat?

Ayana: 16:31 I mean, I've worked for a couple of principals that I know for a fact that that relationship really can make or break what you do. And having his support and having his trust to allow me to do the work that needs to be done really helps our teachers grow professionally, but more importantly, help our children succeed. We've seen, I mean, we were at the school and we built that school for – we went from an F to a D to C. Like, we've shown the progress, we've shown the work and that improvment that it can be done, providing we have all of our factors aligned, everybody working together collaboratively and having, again, that rapport and that trust, that support coupled with that allows us to do what we need to do with most students.

Marc: 17:23 And I would just piggy back off of that, going to the, you know, they say the data doesn't lie and every time that Ms Etienne has been a part of [inaudible] have improved and at a steady pace that is reasonable. And that's what I love about it. Nothing like this huge jump and then you drop, but building that professional development, interacting, being prepared when she you know, when she gone to the planning sessions and being – always being present for teachers and the teachers know that she – whatever resource she needs to provide, if she doesn't know resource, she's reaching out to her peers and that is a big part of why I wanted her back when

I became principal. Because I know you need – if you have a quality resource team around you, your children are impacted and more important, the teachers feel supported and see – have a vision and a goal because – through the principal and the reading coach understanding that we are in alignment and she does – hey, she keeps more me more in line than I keep her in line.

Steve: 18:40 Well it's interesting – as quickly as she responded to that fact that the principal can make it or break it, that does put a lot of responsibility back on the principal of a school to to see the coaching program as an investment in your building and therefore you need to support that that investment.

Marc: 19:04 Yes.

Steve: 19:05 Well, I thank the two of you. I really appreciate your time and your words here today. Have a great day.

Ayana: 19:15 Yes, you too.

Marc: 19:16 You too. Thank you.

Steve: 19:17 Bye, bye.

Ayana: 19:17 Bye.

Marc: 19:17 Bye.

Steve [Outro]: 19:19 Thanks again for listening. You can subscribe to Steve Barkley ponders out loud on iTunes and Podbean and please remember to rate and review us on iTunes. I also want to hear what you're pondering. You can find me on twitter @stevebarkley or send me your questions and find my videos and blogs at barkleypd.com.