In Literacy Coaching: A Handbook for School Leaders, authors Dale Moxley and Rosemarye Taylor have written a “practical guide to support development of literacy coach positions, planning for implementation, and follow-up to monitor effectiveness.” Coaching programs and coaches the authors have observed in five school districts inform their discussion, with illustrative scenarios. While literacy coaching is the organizing theme, the material takes a broader perspective, covering such topics as “Building the Literacy Team” and “Monitoring and Communicating Data on Student Achievement.”

Although Moxley and Taylor acknowledge recent and rapid growth of literacy coaching, they encourage schools that are considering implementation to address some basic issues:

- What is a literacy coach?
- What is literacy coaching?
- How does literacy coaching differ for elementary, middle, and high schools?
- Who is coached and how?
- What are the literacy coach’s roles and responsibilities?
- What does the literacy coach need to do before coaching?
- How does the literacy coach ensure effective professional development?
- How can the literacy coach develop relationships with faculty, administrators, staff, and families?
- How will the literacy coach’s impact be evaluated?

Discussing these questions also could be a productive exercise for schools engaged in evaluating and improving a coaching program already in place. A chapter, “Getting Ready to Provide Literacy Coaching Service,” provides additional considerations, several of which need to be addressed by the principal in collaboration with the coach. For example, Moxley and Taylor write about the need for a “class schedule”—a calendar—for the literacy coach and suggest that:

A systematic calendar will probably work best. As an example, on Mondays and Fridays, the literacy coach may be in the office available for individual or team coaching. On Wednesdays, perhaps mini-workshops are offered on planning periods. On Tuesdays, the literacy coach is modeling in classrooms, and on Thursdays coaching teachers in classrooms. Regular meetings with the principal and administrative team, grade-level groups, and departments should also be on the calendar.

Obviously, the calendar also needs to reflect answers to the questions posed earlier. For example, if the literacy coach’s roles and responsibilities in your school include a heavy focus on coaching teachers in classrooms, a one-day-a-week schedule would be inappropriate. Focusing time and attention on issues such as this will help to ensure that a school’s coaching program has supporting elements firmly in place.