

**Approaches to Effective Pedagogy Coaching
In Diverse Settings: Challenges and Opportunities**

**A paper presented at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence
(CREDE) Conference, San Francisco, CA
May 28-29, 2009**

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Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Professional development models that promote teacher use of research-based practices for diverse learners is a growing concern, especially among school populations that are increasingly diverse in terms of language, cultural, and economic status. This paper describes how the Standards for Effective Pedagogy, promoted by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE), are being used as the focus of coaching with public school teachers in various national and international settings. Two case studies are detailed, highlighting different contexts, aims, and models for coaching. Implications are presented based on the successes and challenges associated with these coaching models for improving teacher use of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy.

Approaches to Effective Pedagogy Coaching in Diverse Settings: Challenges and Opportunities

Professional development that promotes teacher use of research-based practices for diverse learners is an issue of ongoing interest (Knight & Wiseman, 2005), especially among schools and districts that are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of language, cultural, and economic status. When student populations change, teachers are required to examine, and when needed re-tool teaching practices, to meet student needs. Coaching has emerged as a promising model for working with inservice teachers when the focus is on classroom implementation of new practices (e.g., Cornett & Knight, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Knight, 2009; Sparks & Hirsch, 1997; Speck & Knipe, 2001).

This paper describes national and international initiatives to use coaching as a professional development strategy for supporting teacher implementation of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Five Standards) Instructional Model (Dalton, 1998; Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000). First, key aspects of the Five Standards Instructional Model, along with its observation rubric and phasing in process, are defined. Second, four coaching initiatives are briefly introduced, followed by two of the four initiatives being described in more detail. The contexts, aims, and models of coaching employed in these two initiatives are highlighted. Finally, implications are presented based on common successes and challenges across initiatives.

Defining The Five Standards Instructional Model

Throughout this paper, reference will be made to the Five Standards Instructional Model (Tharp et al., 2000). The model has two components: a) pedagogy and b) classroom organization. Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, and Tharp (2003) and Doherty and

Hilberg (2007) have demonstrated the significance of teacher attention to both pedagogy and classroom organization on student achievement. Teachers who implement use of both the Five Standards (i.e., the pedagogy) and small group activity centers (i.e., the classroom organization) positively and significantly increase student achievement as measured by standardized tests. These studies demonstrate that it is possible for teachers to use the pedagogy, but not the classroom organization, or to use small group classroom organization without effectively using the pedagogy. It is only in combination (i.e., pedagogy + classroom organization = increased student achievement) that diverse learners experience higher than expected achievement gains.

Coaching, therefore, focused on the Five Standards Instructional Model attends to both pedagogy and classroom organization. Effective pedagogy is defined by attention to the following: a) Joint Productive Activity (i.e., teachers producing artifacts of learning collaboratively with students); b) Language and Literacy Development (i.e., sustained reading, writing, and speaking by students with teacher assistance); c) Contextualization (i.e., new learning is connected and integrated into students' lives); d) Challenging Activities (i.e., focus on higher order thinking skills, with assistance and feedback); and e) Instructional Conversation (i.e., teachers and students engage in goal-directed conversation in small groups, with student talk exceeding teacher talk) (e.g., Dalton, 1998; Tharp et al., 2000). The goal is to have teachers design learning tasks/activities that employ, at minimum, three of these standards of effective pedagogy at the same time.

When effectively designed learning activities also take place in multiple, simultaneous, and diversified small group activity centers, the teacher has then attended to classroom organization as well. Five phases of implementation have been described to

assist teachers in transitioning from whole class lecture formats to small group instruction (Hilberg, Chang, & Epaloose, 2003). These phases are a) use of whole class or simple pair work; b) use of intact small groups, where students rotate and collaboratively work together at a series of activity centers; c) use of dynamic groupings, with group composition changing with each rotations to a new activity; d) use of dynamic groupings as well as diversified content/activities; and e) teacher use of the instructional conversation as one of many independent activity centers. Only in phase five does the teacher sit down to work with homogeneously grouped students for each new rotation. For all other phases, the teacher floats to provide assistance and feedback to individual students and groups.

Teacher fidelity to the Five Standards Instructional Model can be measured during classroom observations using the Standards Performance Continuum (SPC) (Doherty, Hilberg, Epaloose, & Tharp, 2002; Hilberg, Doherty, Epaloose, & Tharp, 2004). The SPC allows teachers, coaches, or evaluators to measure to what degree teachers are attending to each of the Five Standards. As teachers move up the scale from the standard being “Not Observed” to succeeding cells on the rubric (i.e., emerging, developing, enacting, or integrating), they are embracing not only higher implementation of the pedagogy but the desired small group classroom organization. (For more information about the SPC, go to <http://www-gse.berkeley.edu/research/crede/research/tier/spc.html>).

In summary, the pedagogy and classroom organization comprise the Five Standards Instructional Model. The SPC captures fidelity to the model. The SPC is also the common classroom observation tool used in workshops and coaching sessions to

support teacher understanding of their progress in implementing the model. Each coaching initiative described in the next section attends to these defining elements of the Five Standards Instructional Model to varying degrees.

Coaching Initiatives

Four initiatives were featured on the coaching panel during the May 28-29, 2009 CREDE Conference (Motzfeldt, Tyra, Vogt, & Kuwahara, 2009). While each initiative was varied in its goals, methods, and process for coaching, each initiative was firmly committed to some form of instructional coaching (Knight, 2004; Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Instructional coaching focuses specifically on influencing teacher practices in the classroom. A brief overview of the four initiatives follows.

Overview of Initiatives

Kattie Motzfeldt (Motzfeldt, et al., 2009) described a sustained, collaborative international, and ambitious partnership with CREDE intended to reform Greenland's education system from pre-school to higher education. Greenland has nationally adopted and adapted the Standards for Effective Pedagogy to their context and people in an effort to "move away from the old European lecture method" (McKenna, 2004, p. 4).

Greenland presents unique challenges for implementing a coaching program because teachers live in both large cities and in remote settlements, accessible only by airplane. Greenland also has a shortage of university-prepared educators, especially in the rural settlements. There are approximately 800 teachers in Greenland. Within this core, teachers have a variety of educational and vocational experiences. Some teachers have been prepared in traditional university credential programs. Other teachers may only have a high school equivalency education or may have left other careers to become teachers.

Coaches must also address the needs of teachers who may be monolingual or multilingual speakers of Danish, Greenlandic, and/or English.

Greenland has hosted intensive workshops and university coursework to introduce its public school teachers to the Five Standards Instructional Model. Greenland has also invited U.S. experts in the Standards for Effective Pedagogy to provide workshops and individual coaching sessions for groups of public school teachers. To date, these coaching efforts have been broad in reach but limited in number. English speaking coaches, assisted by Greenlandic speaking local coaches, provide one follow up coaching session to teachers who have participated in workshops or coursework. Video coaching and telephone coaching have also been implemented. As Motzfeldt (Motzfeldt, et al., 2009) observed, building community, expertise, and local responsibility for teacher improvement are difficult challenges given the remoteness of many school sites.

Under the direction of Lois Yamauchi, The University of Hawai'i (UH) has two projects using the Five Standards Instructional Model (Yamauchi, 2009). One focuses on K-12 teachers of Native Hawaiians. (See Initiative One below for a description.) The second focuses on preschool education at the university-based early childhood center. The early childhood project focuses on seven rather than five Standards for Effective Pedagogy; that is, the additional standards of modeling and self-directed learning are used. These two standards were initially developed for use with Native American populations.

One of the goals of this project is to ensure that the SPC rubric appropriately captures use of the standards by teachers of young children. The UH projects also uses a

wide array of activities to evaluate teacher growth, including video tapes of teaching, interactive journal writing, mini-papers, surveys, focus groups, and the SPC rubric.

Finally, CREDE at the University of California, Berkeley received a three-year Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (P336C050023) to improve pre-service teacher readiness to serve diverse learners. One innovated strategy of the grant was to institutionalize use of the Five Standards Instructional Model at both the university level and with its public school partner districts (Teemant, Tyra, & Wink, 2009). Across three years, 66 elementary teachers were coached in the implementation of the Five Standards Instructional Model in order to create high quality clinical placement sites for new teachers. For the UC Berkeley project, evidence of teacher growth from coaching was captured through SPC observations, coaching notes, and end of intervention focus group sessions. (See Initiative Two below for a description.)

Two of these four coaching initiatives are described in the following sections to provide a contrast in what, how, and why instructional coaching has been pursued under the umbrella of Five Standards coaching. The context/teachers, aims, model, and some successes and challenges are highlighted.

Initiative One: Molokai Style Coaching

1. Context/Teachers. The K-12 project at the UH, during the 2008-2009 school year, consisted of two cohorts of teachers located on four different Hawaiian islands. Participants in the cohorts were self-selected and enrolled concurrently in UH Educational Psychology courses. The first cohort consisted of five teachers (Cohort 1) in their second year of participation. The primary focus of Cohort 1 teachers was to plan and implement a yearlong action research project.

The second group of teachers (Cohort 2) consisted of 15 teachers who were just beginning to implement the Five Standards Instructional Model in their diverse classrooms. Teachers represented all grade levels from elementary to high school. Subjects taught included high school art, mathematics, Hawaiian language immersion, and all subjects as taught in elementary classrooms.

In addition to these twenty teachers from both cohorts, facilitators of the project consisted of two UH instructors and four coaches. Both groups of teachers were observed and coached as part of their course work, which was a new experience for Cohort 1 teachers. Cohort 1 teachers had relied on videotapes to promote reflection during their first year. This description focuses on some common experiences for all of the teachers enrolled in the UH classes.

2. Project Aims. The teaching and learning interactions in the Five Standards learning community, although varied, were intended to directly support teacher use of the Five Standards. Several different types of activities constituted and facilitated opportunities for teacher coaching. UH coursework for Cohort 2, for example, defined the obligations associated with coaching interactions in the following ways: Teachers were obligated to participate in:

- a) Three retreats at UH at Manoa in August, February, and May. The first and last retreats combined both cohorts, while there were separate retreats for each cohort at the mid-year meeting.
- b) Three coaching weeks spread throughout the year in August, March and May. Some teachers were observed for one full day during the coaching week, while other teachers were observed for a single class period over two or three days.

- c) Seven study group classes with the UH instructor, three of which coincided with a coaching week.
- d) Videotaping four teaching sessions across the year. These were shared during class time, and teachers used two videos as demonstrations during our mid-year and final retreats.
- e) Producing four mini-papers shaped by focused prompts.
- f) Writing weekly journals, which were emailed to the UH instructor.

It is important to note that the teachers' work with UH was independent of any school-based initiatives or directives. Only principal permission was required for the teachers to be involved. In addition, the CREDE coaches had no role in evaluating the teachers' UH coursework performance. Therefore, coaches were a presence in the classroom, given the opportunity to mentor, but without ties to high-stake consequences. Because of this, the first priority for coaches was to establish credibility and trust while exploring and developing the relationship between the coach and teacher.

3. Description of Coaching Model. The coaching relationship with the teacher began at the first retreat in August of 2008. To establish credibility, coaches shared their own histories as Five Standards teachers and facilitated workshop activities during the two-day retreat. The workshop itself was set up to use and model the Five Standards Instructional Model: Making meaning together through a series of joint productive activities, repeatedly employing the language and literacy associated with the Five Standards. Teachers were guided in small-groups through collaborative review and application exercises focused on each of the Five Standards.

Teachers and facilitators observed and rated video taped lessons from Cohort 1 teachers using the SPC observational rubric (Hilberg, et al., 2004). Teachers were asked to use the rubric to indicate which elements of the standards were in use in their own teaching. During the workshop, teachers were also assisted in developing lesson plans that incorporated the Five Standards, preparing them for initial classroom observations from their coach.

Across the school year, teachers were observed and coached three times. Some teachers were observed for one full day during three coaching weeks, with one week in August, March and May. Other teachers were observed for a single class period over two or three days. The goal was to follow these observations with post-observation conferences between the coach and teacher to discuss and learn from efforts to implement use of the Five Standards Instructional Model.

4. Successes and Challenges. The quality and depth of Five Standards implementation varied greatly across teachers. While each teacher made important progress in using the Five Standards, they also faced unique challenges based on their subject areas and personal readiness and/or perceptions. For example, the Hawaiian immersion world history class had only eight students, so the teacher often used two intact groups. The teacher alternated which group worked independently and which worked with the teacher in an instructional conversation. In this way, both groups participated in the instructional conversation with the teacher. In addition, the teacher provided many fully contextualized and collaborative learning opportunities in the larger Molokai community through the immersion program's performance and service

activities, thus facilitating the teacher's use of the standards beyond his history class period.

In the beginning art class, the teacher was unclear how much class time should be devoted to talking about art in small groups using the instructional conversation over actually having students individually do art. Students often sat in table groups as they drew or painted while the teacher roamed the classroom, modeled technique, and offered corrective feedback. The teacher used the language of art in a natural context, but did not necessarily require students to use that language in elaborated conversation. Time on task was high with misbehavior rarely seen.

The coach, therefore, struggled with whether to push for different and multiple activity settings or use of the IC. Observations indicated nothing was broken per se. It seemed to the coach that the subject matter might dictate a different pedagogy than dictated by the Five Standards. Later in the year this art teacher did experiment with collaborative groups in his advanced drawing and painting class, where he felt each student's own technique could be better understood and improved with time spent focused on terms of analysis and critique.

Another teacher, the high school math teacher, was motivated and able to set up small group activity centers. This greatly improved classroom management and student participation. Due to constraints in time and equipment, the teacher and coach created a model that had four centers and a daily schedule that included a large-group warm-up followed by rotations to two centers a day in a six-day cycle.

From these examples, it is clear coaching was shaped by individual teacher needs and the unique demands of the disciplines. Coaches and teachers needed to be flexible. At

times, it was necessary to alter expectations about what it meant to implement Five Standards pedagogy and classroom organization. Together teachers and coaches had to invent ways to a) work around problems, b) interpret success, and c) learn from what was being observed and experienced. A lockstep march from phases one to five did not happen, but videotaped lessons nevertheless documented progress made toward implementing the Five Standards Instructional Model. The teachers' reflection journals, mini papers, and group presentations at retreats also showed growth in teacher understandings of the foundation and values of the Five Standards. The coaching relationship was reported by teachers to be an important motivator and facilitator for their progress in understanding and implementing the Five Standards as well.

Several challenges were also evident. From the beginning, coaches moved toward defining and developing relationship roles. A true mentor is a rare thing in the daily lives of most teachers, and this kind of interaction was not automatically comfortable for the teachers or coaches. Upon first entering teacher classrooms, coaches observed that teachers had a measure of reactivity to the presence of an observer. During post-observation conferences it was also clear that teachers perceived the coach more as an evaluator than a coach. After the first coaching session and upon reflection on teacher feedback, the four coaches felt that use of the SPC rubric felt evaluative rather than formative, doing little to foster collaborative interactions. The rubric was dropped from use with teachers during observations, which the coaches felt positively improved teacher perceptions of the coach as mentor. The SPC, however, continued to be used during class and workshop activities to support learning.

A second roadblock to developing a solid mentoring relationship was sufficient contact time in light of the August, March and May coaching schedule. The five-month gap between the first and second contact made the coaching relationship challenging to establish. The teachers agreed to copy and send their weekly emailed reflection journals to coaches. Often these reflections became mini dialogue journals between the teachers and coaches. This gave the coach an opportunity to follow their progress on a regular basis, and to offer support and advice based on issues identified by the teachers themselves as they struggled with daily life in the classroom and implementation of the Five Standards. As the coaching relationships evolved, and especially when teachers specifically asked for advice, there became a sense of shared commitment to desired outcomes.

Another aspect of time that posed a problem was that during the coaching week, teachers' school schedules made it difficult to sit with the teachers to debrief after observations. Often teachers received an emailed narrative account of observations rather than a face-to-face debriefing session. The teachers responded to feedback, indicating they were grateful for the interaction and ideas offered. The emailed narratives by coaches proved to be a satisfying tool. There was much value in providing a "freeze-frame" acknowledgment of a teacher's efforts to improve. Written feedback also provided a model of objective reflection.

Other challenges to full implementation of the Five Standards Instructional Model arose due to matters beyond the teachers' control. For example, one elementary teacher was not allowed by her principal to deviate from the scripted language arts and mathematics programs, which were adopted by the school in their restructuring mandate

for use most of the school day. In response, the teacher and coach experimented within the social studies block to experience the value of centers and small group collaboration, and while it was a success, this could only occur for an hour three times a week.

Several immediate steps for improving the Five Standards professional development were raised from the experiences with these cohorts of teachers. For the coming school year, teachers enrolled in the UH courses will have more coaching sessions: eight for second year participants (Cohort 2) and ten for those new to the program (Cohort 3). All students will also take the National Education Association on-line course focused on the Five Standards: Effective Teaching in Diverse Classrooms. (Read more about this course at <http://sites.nea.org/academy/onlinecourses/effective-teaching.html>) This course provides models of implementation the teacher can access repeatedly to foster understanding. Cohort 2 teachers will also be asked to participate in small group e-conferences with the coach and UH instructor as they conduct yearlong action research projects.

Initiative Two: Instructional Coaching with California Elementary Teachers

1. Context/Teachers. The teachers, who participated in instructional coaching as part of the University of California, Berkeley Teacher Quality Grant, were from three school districts in central California. Two of the school districts were large urban districts with high percentages of English Language Learners (ELL) and students of poverty. The third district was a rural district with a small ELL population.

Within the three districts eight schools participated in the coaching. All schools in the project were elementary schools with students in kindergarten to sixth grade. The

schools ranged from large multi-track schools with 1200 students to a small dual immersion charter school of 340 students.

Sixty-six teachers participated in the instructional coaching process. Teachers' years of teaching experience varied from less than one year to 31 years of teaching. Coached teachers represented all grade levels from kindergarten through sixth grade, and there were special education, inclusion, sheltered, pullout, and bilingual teachers in the project.

2. Project Aims. The purpose of instructional coaching for this project was to offer teachers a pedagogy which addressed the academic needs of a) children learning English, b) children of poverty, and c) children who typically have not been successful in academic settings. This pedagogy was defined for teachers as use of the Five Standards Instructional Model.

Teachers agreed to participate in two phases of professional development. First, teachers participated in a 30-hour intensive workshop. Second, teachers were offered seven individualized coaching sessions across the school year, starting in August and ending in June. By introducing teachers to the Five Standards and providing each teacher with individual coaching sessions, it was expected that teachers would successfully implement both the model's pedagogy and classroom organization. Success was measured using the SPC, with the aim of demonstrating a significantly higher level of implementation by teachers from their first to final coaching session.

3. Description of Coaching Model. Instructional coaching is learning focused and driven by teacher need, expectations, and personal learning goals in the context of instruction (e.g., Knight, 2009). Instructional coaching relies on setting specific goals that

further skill and knowledge development over an extended period of time. For this project, instructional coaching took place following the 30-hour workshop.

Each of the seven coaching sessions consisted of an individualized 30-minute pre-conference, a 45-minute classroom observation of teaching, and an individualized 30-minute post-conference (Hilberg, Doherty, & Reveles, 2004). During the pre-conference the teacher and instructional coach met to discuss, jointly plan, and refine the teacher's lesson plan for the scheduled observation. The pre-conference allowed teachers to express their concerns, ask questions, and work jointly with the instructional coach to create a lesson grounded in the Five Standards Instructional Model. The teacher also self-selected the type and nature of feedback, critique, or comments provided by the coach on specific aspects of classroom instruction.

The instructional coach visited the teacher's classroom as scheduled and stayed in the classroom for 45 minutes. Because the teacher and the instructional coach worked together on the lesson to be observed, the instructional coach typically understood the academic goal, the teacher's concerns, and the specific students or elements of instruction the teacher wanted the instructional coach to attend to and provide feedback on.

While observing, the instructional coach attempted to capture as much evidence as possible as to the nature of instruction in the classroom. Coaches scripted conversations, classified questions asked and answers given, tallied participation of students, captured use of academic vocabulary, drew a map of the classroom, listed time allocation, identified patterns and themes in the lesson, or any other information that might be helpful to document the nature of teaching and learning. Additionally, the instructional coach used the SPC rubric to document the teacher's level of

implementation of the Five Standards Instructional Model for each observation. The SPC scores provided a quantifiable measure as to the level of implementation across time.

After the observation, the teacher and coach met for 30 minutes. During this individual post-conference, the teacher expressed his/her thoughts about the successes and challenges encountered during the lesson. Together, the instructional coach and the teacher discussed their observations, and reflected on the evidence gathered by the instructional coach. The scores from the SPC were also used in the post-conference and provided both the teacher and coach with a concrete measure of implementation during the observation. Based on the teacher's desires, reflections, willingness to implement, and the instructional coach's suggestions, the teacher self-selected goals for improvement before the next meeting and observation with the instructional coach.

In this model of instructional coaching, an expert outside of the school system was brought into the school setting as the coach. The expert coach provided feedback, support, academic advice, and evidence as to the efficacy of the implementation of the Five Standards. Coaches encouraged teachers to take risks, try new ideas, and implement new strategies without any concern of evaluation or feedback to administrative personnel.

4. Successes and Challenges. At the conclusion of the seven coaching sessions, all teachers showed increased understanding and increased implementation of the Five Standards Instructional Model (Teemant, Tyra, & Wink, 2009; Teemant, Wink, & Tyra, 2009). All teachers successfully moved from predominate use of a whole class lecture format to small group instruction with multiple activity centers. The SPC ratings demonstrated teachers had increased use of dialogic instruction (i.e., use of Joint Productive Activity, Language and Literacy Across the Curriculum, and Instructional

Conversation), contextualization, and cognitive challenge. One teacher described these changes this way:

I think the IC was the biggest change. Centers were a change, but not like I did with the IC. Really learning to let the kids speak and me taking less of a direct role. . . . I really did see a big change in the kids. . . . They started interacting with each other. I would give them some kind of a lead-type question. And then, as the weeks went by, I noticed that, more and more, they were coming up with their prior experiences, and that was leading into someone else giving their experiences, then we were looking at the text, and pretty soon, toward the end, we were just having a conversation. All of us were having a conversation. And that was really exciting to do.

Teachers also increased their use of thematic instruction and used more strategies to differentiated instruction. For example, one teacher commented:

It helped me reorganize my classroom, so I was seeing more kids... more often throughout the day, throughout the week. So that way I can understand the nuances about each child and figure out what makes them tick, what really motivates them, where they need that help, what they already know.

All teachers valued their own learning and personal growth as educators.

Coaching provided a professional opportunity to have scheduled time for reflection. One teacher said of her time to reflect:

Everything is fast in your classroom, and you don't really have time to sit down and say, "Okay, what worked and what didn't work?" And just by talking to the coach, you yourself reflected. I personally came up with, "Oh, I didn't do this

right.” I was just coming up with all these things, “What did I do right? What did I do wrong? What can I do to improve?”

Overall, teachers found the coaching experience professionally satisfying. One teacher commented that the coaching allowed her to “see kids in a different light.” She continued, “I totally saw all their strengths; every kid has their strengths. It was very impressive. I was shocked. I didn’t think I was going to like it [Five Standards use] as well as I did.” Another teacher commented:

The feedback I received definitely enhanced my teaching. It is something I’ve been starving for, so I can see how to improve things. I’ve done centers in the past. They weren’t very meaningful. When my coach came in to help me, it wasn’t just a revamping of what I was doing. The children were more on task. They were more engaged and their creativity just exploded.

Throughout the instructional coaching process, teachers expressed several concerns as well. The primary challenge faced by teachers was the increased amount of time required for planning effective activity centers. Teachers also commented on the difficulty of adhering to strict district assessment schedules and scripted curriculum demands. Some teachers felt district mandates impeded full implementation of the Five Standards and its change to small group classroom organization. There were also concerns about how to sustain implementation of the Five Standards at school sites and at the district level once coaching was finished. Teachers felt instructional coaching had provided them with a professional support system that they had not had at their school sites previously. Teachers were concerned that, without coaching, they would “be all

alone” again. Coached teachers wanted the instructional coaching opportunities to continue for a second year.

Teacher and coach feedback suggested that teachers would benefit from a month-to-month written document to guide them through the phase in process. They also wanted written and even more varied examples of how other teachers at all grade levels have designed and implemented activity centers in their classrooms. They liked the use of videos in the workshops, but they also wanted more extensive video clips, showing the entire classroom and each center in use in a given unit. They suggested inviting coached teachers to future workshops to share how they implemented the pedagogy and activity centers into their practices. Teachers also felt district administrators needed to be made more aware of the goals, outcomes, and value of instructional coaching.

Implications

The coaching initiatives described in this paper focused on improving teacher pedagogy and classroom organization to meet the educational needs of diverse learners. Each initiative relied on instructional coaching although the goals, methods, and process varied across initiatives. Several implications for coaching practice, educational policy, and research emerge from examination of these initiatives.

In terms of practice, instructional coaches must come to terms with establishing relationships with a broad variety of teachers with different starting points and dispositions for learning. Relationships of trust are essential because coaches ask for admission into teachers’ most personal teaching space—the classroom, with tangible physical, social, emotional, and professional boundaries and contours.

In each of the highlighted initiatives, coaches external to the teacher's school and district were employed to support teacher innovation and change. Coaches were viewed very positively as was the coaching process itself. Teachers also volunteered to participate rather than being mandated to participate. Five Standards instructional coaching was a welcomed feature in the teaching lives of participants. Teachers were free to develop at their own speed and to their own level of quality with no high stakes consequences attached to their participation or decisions.

The practical decisions associated with determining who to employ as coaches, which teachers to coach, with what content, for what purpose, and with what consequences must be undertaken thoughtfully. It is common sense to acknowledge that when coaches report back to school administrators the integrity of the coach-teacher relationship is threatened; nevertheless, many school districts are adopting just such coaching models. Can school systems afford to employ expert coaches external to the system to increase the likelihood of success? How can peer/colleague coaching models be adapted to improve the likelihood of success by mitigating the threat of the coach internal to the system? The challenge is building affordable coaching capacity without sacrificing the conditions needed for relationships of trust to exist between the coach and teacher.

Another practical decision associated with instructional coaching is determining how success will be measured. The SPC rubric allows for quantitative evaluation of the degree of Five Standards implementation by teachers (Doherty et al., 2002). While each project used the SPC during workshops to promote teacher understanding of the model, the rubric was not uniformly used to measure coaching success. For example, in the K-12 UH Project, the SPC was seen as an obstacle in establishing trust, and subsequently its

use was discontinued. In the UC Berkeley initiative, the SPC was used to create a performance-based coaching process, with SPC scores being used by teachers for self-evaluation and by evaluators to judge the quality of coaching outcomes. How rigorously coaching outcomes are measured depend on the investment of various stakeholders in using coaching as a professional development strategy. Documenting the impact of instructional coaching on teacher performance and student achievement would be important in today's era of limited financial resources and increased accountability in education (e.g., Linn, 2000).

Several implications for policy also stand out. First, teachers felt that school or district policies limited their ability to implement new methods. Scripted programs and curriculums worked against innovation. Often districts welcome externally funded initiatives and the conditions of such grants without genuinely or deeply aligning new projects with existing mandates or granting teachers the needed freedom or flexibility to take on new practices. In many cases, only the teachers—not the university researchers or the district administrators—live the contradictory policies that emerge as mandates or opportunities.

Second, these initiatives suggest that instructional coaching ought to become a more common feature in the professional lives of teachers. Research has demonstrated that ongoing, collaborative, school-based professional development works best (Hawley & Valli, 1999). Coaching typifies such effective professional development (Knight, 2009). Teachers valued the coaching experience and wanted coaching to continue. What policies would encourage multiple and layered approaches to coaching as standard practice? Benefits to schools could accrue from strategic and varied approaches to

coaching. How could modes of coaching (i.e., external coaches, peer coaches, group coaching, and/or grade-level coaching) be successfully combined with different foci across multiple years to result in sustained, meaningful, and measurable improvements in student achievement?

The four coaching initiatives also highlight multiple research needs. For example, the described initiatives relied on as few as one coaching session to as many as seven, with future plans targeting as many as ten coaching sessions. How many coaching sessions are enough? What patterns of coaching yield significant achievement outcomes? Which patterns yield sustained teaching outcomes? Future studies should document the quality of teacher change resulting from periodic/quarterly, monthly, or bi-monthly coaching as well as across one and two years of support.

Conclusion

The coaching initiatives described in this paper highlight national and international efforts to prepare teachers to educate diverse learners more effectively. These initiatives shed light on the decisions, content, processes, and evidence to consider in defining a coaching model that attends to CREDE's Five Standards of Instructional Model. Such initiatives also lay the groundwork for articulating research-based coaching models capable of producing valid and reliable results across contexts, which would make an important contribution to professional development for teachers of diverse student populations.

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