

THE PASSKEY

HELPING TEACHERS HELP STUDENTS

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Coaching Initiative

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COACHING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

by Beverly L. Barksdale, Literacy Coach, Germantown High School, School District of Philadelphia

How does a literacy coach approach the colleague whose class is out of control? How does a literacy coach direct the colleague who has given students forty minutes to complete a Do Now? How does a literacy coach address a colleague whose students are running around the classroom, throwing paper, and shouting profanity? Although the literacy coach works to support teachers in numerous instructional capacities, another fundamental component of coaching is being able to provide teachers with the needed support and assistance to manage classes. Classroom management is a challenge that requires careful planning, prepa-

“Potentially effective lessons may go haywire if one is not mindful of the issues surrounding the management of classes.”

ration, skill, training and support. This support includes assisting teachers with obtaining and interpreting student data and then utilizing the data to plan effective lessons. The role of a coach also involves being an adviser, resource provider, learning facilitator, school leader, classroom supporter, and catalyst for change.

In order for coaching support in classroom management to be effective, the classroom teacher must be committed and amenable to change. Many of the teachers who receive instructional coaching are new to the field of teaching and

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TEACHER TRAINING AS FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

Governor Edward G. Rendell wants to improve Pennsylvania's education system by targeting funding to intensive teacher training programs and other initiatives proven to enhance student achievement. The Governor's proposed budget, unveiled February 5, puts students in a better position to succeed by making professional development part of the equation for raising test scores.

PAHSCI commends Governor Rendell for his show of support for one-on-one instructional coaching, mentoring, and teacher training programs that improve classroom dynamics.

We know all too well how important these programs are in changing the way teachers teach and students learn. Data from the last two years show marked progress in math and reading student achievement scores in schools supported by PAHSCI. Eighteen of 21 schools with data for 2004 and 2007 exceeded the state percentage change in the proportion of students reaching "advanced" or "proficient" in math, and 15 of 21 schools exceeded the same in reading.

Further testament to PAHSCI's success: The governor's proposed budget provides a \$20 million increase for intensive teacher training to expand the administration's "Classrooms for the Future" initiative. The Department of Education, a PAHSCI partner, has adopted the Initiative's coaching standards and uses PAHSCI's services to facilitate professional development for its statewide coaching programs, including "Classrooms for the Future."

Over the last few months, the PAHSCI executive team has been meeting with the General Assembly and the administration's top staff to preserve and expand its coaching model, whether through state or federal funding, foundation support, or some public-private partnership. The governor's budget is a clear show of support for PAHSCI and programs like it.

The state budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year must be enacted by June 30. Find out how you can help to institutionalize one-on-one instructional coaching, mentoring, and sustained professional development in Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.pacoaching.org.

LETTER FROM: PAHSCI'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Classroom management and classroom discipline are two critical components essential to teaching and learning and are the focus of many study groups facilitated by coaches.

Teachers need to be strategic managers and leaders in their classrooms. They need to take action when classroom climate and student conduct impede the planned lesson.

Many times, however, we equate effective classroom management with quiet and orderly students and ineffective classroom management with movement and activity. These descriptions are not always accurate.

Teachers and students need to co-construct an environment that is conducive to learning and to structure classrooms that build on the students' strengths. Together, they need to create an atmosphere where students work collaboratively to problem solve, communicate appropriately to avoid conflicts, and demonstrate mutual respect for one another. Classroom interactions must be positive and supportive. Coaches help teachers establish those conditions and promote active learning.

Students need to know that there is a school wide em-

phasis on teaching and learning; teachers need to know that they are supported by their colleagues and their administrators. Communicating high expectations to all stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members—is vital for successful teaching and learning. Students must know what is expected of them and accept re-

“Students must know what is expected of them and accept responsibility for their learning.”

sponsibility for their learning. They must behave appropriately in class. Teachers must be organized and their classes structured. They must accept the responsibility for their teaching and decide which strategies are effective in meeting their students' needs. Teachers and

students need to recognize that when structures are explained clearly, practiced regularly, and reinforced continually, discipline and classroom management issues become secondary and curriculum and instruction take center stage.

Sincerely,



Ellen B. Eisenberg

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING, MENTORING, AND SUSTAINED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: HELPING TO IMPROVE TEACHING PRACTICES

by *Carla L. Claycomb, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA)*

For years, classroom teaching was solitary work undertaken behind a closed door, with children, rather than fellow adults, as professional company. What happened between teachers and students was viewed as an “art” that defied clear description, so it is no wonder that there were few supports for educators to share their professional knowledge and expertise. Adult interaction was often viewed as something that happened altogether outside teaching.

Now we know that teaching is not all “art.” It is hard intellectual work; effective educators apply a wide range of professional knowledge and skills to engage often reluctant students in meaningful learning. Effective teaching links stu-

dent learning across years; across content areas; and across home, school, and community environments. Effective teaching extends student learning beyond memorization to critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and communication. Effective teaching is a very complex professional activity that is based in specific sets of knowledge and skill.

Like other professionals, teachers grow their knowledge and skill when they are able to work with other accomplished professionals and engage in constructive dialogue about teaching; teachers improve when they feel empowered to make good choices about their work.

This is what high-quality instructional coaching is all about: empowering teachers to make good, research-based choices concerning teaching and learning. Effective instructional coaches help teachers be more effective by demonstrating how and why certain strategies will make a difference in student learning, and then working alongside teachers to develop the knowledge and skills they need to put those strategies into practice.

Across the state, PSEA members are benefiting from effective instructional coaching through the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative (PAHSCI). However, in most schools the role of “coach” is new and different; a

~ STAFF ~

Ellen B. Eisenberg Executive Director, PAHSCI

Peggi J. Trusty Communications Manager and Editor

Lesley Stone-Hyman Communications Assistant and Assistant Editor

Leslie Rumble-Davenport Administrative Assistant

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often welcome coaches with open arms. On the other hand, there are some teachers who are seasoned and claimed experts in their respective content areas. Nevertheless, seasoned teachers often struggle with managing classes as well. When classroom management is out of control, student learning is lost. Potentially effective lessons may go haywire if one is not mindful of the issues surrounding the management of classes. As seasoned teachers and new teachers learn research-based literacy strategies that are proven to help students learn, they must also learn effective, research-based classroom management strategies to support them.

Randy Sprick offers the CHAMPs approach that provides a conceptual framework for teaching classroom expectations and STOIC intervention planning that provides aspects of an essential classroom management plan (Sprick, Knight, Reinke, McKale, 2006). These are two effective behavior management plans that address expectations, prevention, monitoring, encouragement and correction. Sprick does not offer a prescribed, pre-packaged model. Teachers are

“Although the literacy coach works to support teachers in numerous instructional capacities, another fundamental component of coaching is being able to provide teachers with the needed support and assistance to manage classes.”

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coach is not exactly a classroom teacher, and a coach is certainly not a supervisor or an administrator. Educators are not accustomed to working with colleagues to improve their instructional practices; nor are they used to talking about their classroom practice in the way that effective coaching requires. Highly-skilled coaches understand that they are engaged in nothing short of cultural change in schools, and

“Effective teaching extends student learning beyond memorization to critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and communication.”

this work can be slow and difficult. Building trust and collegiality across a traditionally isolated profession takes time.

But building a shared culture of trust and collegiality among educators, creating what has come to be known as “professional learning communities” within schools, is one

of the most powerful ways we know to support good teaching and learning. Teachers learn best from other educators, and they benefit from ongoing support and encouragement as they apply new knowledge and skills in their classrooms. Research into effective teaching demonstrates what Helen Keller told us decades ago, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” PAHSCI helps instructional coaches understand the importance of collaboration, and instructional coaches can help remind teachers that it is not only students, but all of us who are enriched by a culture of life-long learning.

encouraged by coaches to use proactive principles of effective classroom management to devise their own plans and to make and implement decisions. Most importantly, Sprick’s model does not compromise the integrity of the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative (PAHSCI) and the *Before, During and After Conferencing Model*; rather it provides support and alignment of research-based best practices.

Sprick’s Safe and Civil Schools model offers direction for addressing behaviors before needing correction, collecting data prior to devising interventions, implementing corrections before adding more complex ones, and creating a respectful climate for all.

Last summer I was trained to coach teachers to use Sprick’s

classroom management strategies, the CHAMP’s approach, and STOIC intervention planning. I successfully use the model with the teachers that I coach at Germantown High School in the School District of Philadelphia. During the first year of PAHSCI, teachers expressed concerns about how to handle discipline and management. At that time, I stressed the importance of effective instruction that encompasses effective classroom management. In other words, one cannot have an effective lesson without considering the expected outcome and how to manage the activities of the lesson. This school year, I am working closely with teachers to help them plan effective lessons that address prevention, teaching expectations, encouragement, and correction. These lessons are sometimes modeled and discussed during pre-planning and debriefing sessions. Coaching classroom management requires the coach to carefully plan with the teacher and discuss what he or she might need to do when making immediate decisions. Since I have begun to coach classroom management, I’ve had to employ effective communication skills, cognitive coaching, and specific motivation strategies.

As we approach the end of year three of PAHSCI, I am confident that the teachers in my school will have gained some skills in avoiding classroom management blunders. In addition to the commitment and amenability of the classroom teacher, administrative support and buy-in are imperative to successfully facilitate implementation of classroom management and research-based literacy strategies. This level of support calls for patience and the understanding that effective classroom management and effective instruction are lifelong processes.

References:

Sprick, R., Knight, J., Reinke, W., and McKale T. 2006. *Coaching classroom management: Strategies and tools for administrators and coaches*. Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

THE STOIC MODEL IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Nora Dolak, Literacy Coach, Central High School, Erie School District

I first learned of the STOIC model last summer from work I did with mentor Chris Kingsbery for a school in my district. The school was newly created for students presenting behavior challenges. STOIC was a great design for this faculty as they began the school year. This is when opportunities for conversations around classroom structure, expectations, management needs, etc., are quite useful. At our October Networking in Hershey, I learned more about STOIC

and how coaches can help teachers with management issues using specific observation tools. When we met with our mentors that month we were each given the source of this information, the text Coaching Classroom Management:

Strategies and Tools for Administrators and Coaches (CCM) by Sprick, Knight, Reinke, and McKale. This has proven to be a very useful tool for professional development around behavior planning.

In my urban district of roughly 1000 teachers, this material is particularly germane. Principals routinely ask coaches to support teachers who deal with behavioral issues among students and develop classroom management strategies. For this reason, Pam Mackowski, the science coach for our district, and I constructed a professional development offering around the STOIC model of behavior intervention. The basic premise of the model is that when teachers plan management strategies for disruptive behavior, the classroom environment will be far more conducive to learning. Our intent was to present a detailed overview of the model and explain specifically how coaches can help in this area.

In our session, we used a power point to describe the

“...when teachers plan management strategies for disruptive behavior, the classroom environment will be far more conducive to learning.”

detailed framework step by step and provided a number of reflection and pair/share opportunities. When our session concluded, several of our teachers continued sharing discussions on classroom management concerns. This demonstrates how much our teachers need the opportunity to share, be supported, and learn some new tools for addressing such concerns. Some were veteran teachers just looking for a fresh perspective; others were teachers feeling frustrated and ineffective in their classrooms.

Pam and I ran a similar session in another building with positive results. Teachers at both sessions were interested in a follow up session and in the observation tools available in CCM. To date, I have used two of the observation forms included in the text. The Academic Engagement Monitoring Form simply uses a ‘+’ or ‘-’ on a seating-type chart to give teachers a snapshot of who is on or off task in the room for a short period of time. The second tool is the Opportunities to Respond Monitoring Form. This gives a glimpse at how many opportunities students have to respond to academic questions during a given time period. It is done with simple tally marks and I used it to record tallies for ‘I’ (individual students) and ‘C’ (whole class response opportunity). Both forms provide a non-threatening way to provide feedback in post conferencing, while leaving the teacher with a tool for reflection.

Pam and I asked our attendees for suggestions or special areas of need so we can plan our follow up sessions accordingly. I have been impressed by the positive response and high utility of CCM in professional development.

Please visit us on the web at www.pacoaching.org

PENNSYLVANIA HIGH SCHOOL COACHING INITIATIVE

Instructional coaching has emerged as a promising strategy for increasing student achievement and affecting education reform nationwide. In 2005, The Annenberg Foundation joined with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to implement the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative (PAHSCI). Funded by The Annenberg Foundation, PAHSCI is a three-year, \$31 million instructional coaching initiative. Four additional partner organizations provide support for program implementation: Foundations, Inc., Penn Literacy Network from the University of Pennsylvania, Research for Action, and The Philadelphia Foundation. Research support is also provided by the Success for All Foun-

ation from the Johns Hopkins University, MPR Associates, Inc., and the Academy of Educational Development.

The PAHSCI model is designed to provide trained teacher-leaders, or coaches, to schools and school districts. The Initiative places one literacy and one math coach for every 600 students in 24 high-need high schools located in 15 school districts across Pennsylvania, with a total enrollment of over 32,000 students. Instructional coaches sustain ongoing, site-based, job-embedded professional development for teachers and administrators. They also facilitate in-class coaching and modeling, peer collaboration, and teacher training in order to improve learning at participating schools.

PENNSYLVANIA HIGH SCHOOL COACHING INITIATIVE

The Annenberg Foundation
150 North Radnor-Chester Road, Suite A-200
Radnor, PA 19087
Phone: 610.341.9066 Fax: 610.964.8688
eeisenberg@pacoaching.org

Moorestown West Corporate Center
2 Executive Drive, Suite 1
Moorestown, NJ 08057
Phone: 856.533.1608
Fax: 856.533.1651