

September/  
October 2006

## Mark Your Calendar

- **October 25** — **PAHSCI Partner Meeting**
- **November 1** — **Penn State Administrators' Retreat**
- **November 10** — **Foundations Mentor Meeting**
- **December 11** — **Networking Meeting for PA East Schools**
- **December 14** — **Networking Meeting for PA West Schools**
- **Check your calendar for PLN 1 and PLN 2 Courses!**

### Inside this Issue:

PAHSCI Welcomes New Coaches, Mentors, and Management	2
Foundations and PLN Work with Coaches	2
Research for Action Reports First Year	3
Student Achievement	3
Letter from the Project Director	4

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## Initiative Kicks Off Its Second Year Anew

PAHSCI - The Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative (PAHSCI), an instructional coaching model placed in 26 high schools in 16 districts throughout the State of Pennsylvania to build teacher capacity and student achievement, started its second year this fall.

PAHSCI participants strive to implement the lessons learned from its first year. Coaches are “very ready to begin their work in Year 2” according to evaluations collected by Research for Action (RFA). “On a scale of one to ten with ten being high, the average respondent rated him/herself at 8.2.” This achievement marks significant progress relative to the Initiative’s first year where 51% of coaches were hired by August 2005, and 82% were hired by September (*Promising InRoads: Year One Report*, RFA).

PAHSCI’s continued growth and implementation of lessons learned extends beyond the coaches’ work at schools. PAHSCI management has kicked off the Initiative’s second year with a new logo, as seen above. The logo gives the Initiative an identifiable brand that will bring PAHSCI’s message and mission to a wider audience.

### Did You Know?

- ✍ PAHSCI - The Initiative’s coaches reach thousands of students.
- 96 literacy and math coaches
- 21 average number of teachers coached by each coach during year one
- One coach for every 600 students
- 32,198 total student enrollment

The logo change is only one of PAHSCI management’s second year transitions. A partner re-organization marks new beginnings for Foundations employees. Formerly Foundations’ Director of High School Coaching in charge of Initiative mentors, Ellen Eisenberg has been named the new Project Director for statewide management of the Initiative. Ellen reflects, “Year 1 was truly a learning experience for all. As we move into Year 2 of the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative, our goals are centered around building teacher capacity in schools and improving student achievement. It is my goal that we establish a common language about coaching, student engagement and active learning in our participating school districts.”

Foundations will continue to provide mentors to coaches and administrators, but with new leadership. Tom Sebastian, formerly a PAHSCI Leadership Mentor, replaced Ellen as Director of High School Coaching. Upon changing roles, Tom stated that, “The professionals associated with the PAHSCI repeatedly model collaboration, reflection, and goal orientation.”

- ✍ PAHSCI – Students respond favorably to Penn Literacy Network (PLN) strategies.
- 60% of teachers surveyed used the *Do Now* strategy in their classrooms
- 63% of students had an enthusiastic response to the *Do Now* strategy

(Source: *Promising InRoads: Year One Report*, RFA, September 2006)



Teacher Michele Boor (left) and Coach Deb Hines (right) collaborate.

*“I continue to be amazed at the dedication of many of the coaches and administrators toward successful implementation of this initiative. So many truly go above and beyond our expectations,”*  
 – Gina Calzaferrri,  
 PLN

## PAHSCI Welcomes New Coaches, Mentors, and Management

Welcome to new members of the Initiative!

- Angie Henry, Coach, Reading
- Anne Marie Layhue, Coach, IU 1
- Bill Blair, Math/Spec Ed Coach, Erie
- Cathy Medved, Coach, IU 1
- Dr. Ed Vollbrecht, Special Assistant to The Secretary of Education, PDE
- Ernest Harper, Leadership Mentor
- Jennifer Holmberg, Math Coach, Erie
- Jill Crable, Literacy Coach, Erie
- John Pisula, Coach, IU 1
- Katherine Gori, Leadership Mentor
- Lesley Stone-Hyman, PAHSCI Management Administrative Assistant
- Nora Dolak, Literacy Coach, Erie
- Ophir Busel, PAHSCI Communications Manager
- Randall Kahler, Leadership Mentor

*Not on our list? Please let us know! Write to [obusel@foundationsinc.org](mailto:obusel@foundationsinc.org)*

## Foundations and PLN Work with Coaches

Hershey, PA - Initiative partners, Foundations, Inc. and the Penn Literacy Network (PLN), continue to improve school practices through their collaborative work with coaches and administrators. Both organizations held ongoing meetings and trainings during the month of September.

Foundations mentors are faced with the challenge of bringing all coaches to the same page. This was the highlight of Foundations’ first mentor meeting of the 2006 – 2007 school year held on September 8 in Moorestown, NJ. Tom Sebastian, Foundations’ new Director of High School Coaching, facilitated a mentors’ meeting in determining the core content that will be shared with new coaches. The mentors also planned and prepared for various trainings, such as the Networking and the Administrators’ Retreats.

Partnership and collaboration are essential components of the Initiative, and before, during, and after the mentor meeting, Foundations worked with PLN to support their work with the Centralized Course Training held on September 25 and 26 at the Hershey Lodge.

Learning and improving upon their practice, PLN implemented new strategies into the September Centralized Course Training. According to PLN, course training participants “appeared to be pleased with adjustments” made to the schedule. The day included specialty breakout sessions, study

group text discussions with two of the text authors, and a presentation on the use of Nettekker, a search engine that provides access to educator-selected online resources aligned with state standards.

Participants agree with PLN’s assessment of the training. Research for Action (RFA) attended and evaluated the Centralized Course Training. RFA results state, “Overall, participants record a positive response to the course.” RFA continues, “an overwhelming 98% of respondents strongly agree or agree that the course session met their needs and enhanced their work in the initiative.”

Participants are eager to learn. According to the RFA survey, PAHSCI networking opportunities continue to be extremely helpful to participants. Coaches believe that they can learn from and build on each others’ experiences. Participants did request information in more areas, such as: coaching techniques, supporting special needs, providing sessions related to study groups, and sustaining the initiative.

Gina Calzaferrri, PLN Project Manager, described her recent experience, “I continue to be amazed at the dedication of many of the coaches and administrators toward successful implementation of this initiative. So many truly go above and beyond our expectations.”

## Research for Action Reports First Year Findings

Philadelphia, PA - "PAHSCI is already serving as a catalyst for significant organizational and cultural change," says Research for Action's *Promising InRoads: Year One Report* which evaluates PAHSCI's instructional coaching model brought to the Initiative's 26 participating high need high schools during the 2005 – 2006 school year.

The report highlights the "distinctive features" of the Initiative, noting that this is the only instructional coaching model that is statewide, content-focused, and provides onsite mentors who support administrators and coaches. The implementation of the Penn Literacy Network (PLN) framework and strategies are featured showing that 79% of teachers who work with coaches

### Student Achievement

PAHSCI - Participants have spoken of reflection and implementation of their learnings from the Initiative's first year with the end goal of student achievement. How does the Initiative know that it's reaching its goals?

Research for Action (RFA) plans to publish a mid-Initiative report on student achievement using statistical data analyses of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports, PSSA test results, a student writing assessment, and student attendance, promotion and graduation rates.

RFA has conducted interim studies on how PAHSCI schools fared in reaching 2006 AYP targets. In these studies, RFA found that "the PSSA Math targets were the most missed overall, with 28 total Math targets missed in 2006." The schools scored much higher results in Reading, missing only 6 targets. A significantly lower percentage of Initiative schools made AYP (34.8% met AYP or are Making Progress) relative to

know how to apply PLN strategies and learnings to the classroom, while only 29% of those who don't work with a coach know how to implement the strategies. The report also shows that students respond favorably to use of the PLN strategies by their teachers. "Early evidence shows that students' reactions to PLN instructional strategies are promising. Students overall found the new PLN strategies to be more fun and active and teachers concurred."

The report's findings were first shown and presented to the Initiative's Advisory Board at a meeting in Harrisburg on October 18. The full report and its Executive Summary will soon be available on our website: [www.pacoaching.org](http://www.pacoaching.org).

those that made AYP throughout Pennsylvania schools (82.4% made AYP or are Making Progress). When assessing AYP results, it is imperative to look at the gains and progress made. As RFA states, "The percentage of schools in the Initiative in the 2005 – 2006 school year that made AYP increased by 1.5% from 2005 to 2006."

Graduation data is one item that is calculated for determining schools' AYP status. "The goal for PA schools under No Child Left Behind is to have 80% of students graduating within 4 years of entering in their Freshman year." Graduation data is calculated using the previous year's graduation information. PAHSCI's baseline data shows that "in 2005, 12 [of our current] Initiative schools made this goal, and 10 did not."

The Initiative will study results from Years 2 and 3 to see how instructional coaching has made a difference.

*"My teacher has us write down what we think about what we read...and explain it and express what we wrote to the people next to us so we can learn how to speak out loud—to express our mind about what we read."*

– Student Focus Group



**Teacher and Coach work together with students in Harrisburg.**

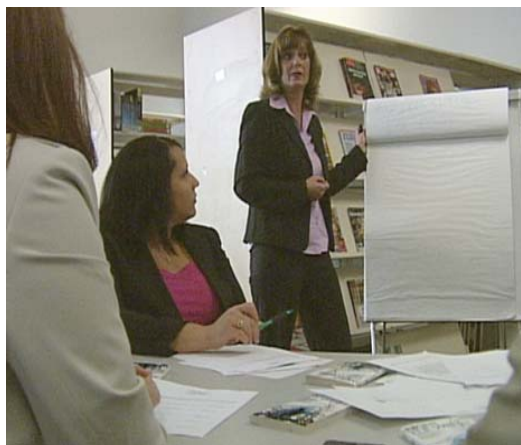


## PASKEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

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Harrisburg Coach Deb Hines works with teachers.

## The Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative

The Annenberg Foundation and The Pennsylvania Department of Education began implementation of a \$31 million three-year high school coaching initiative during the 2005—2006 school year. PAHSCI's vision is to build capacity within districts to more effectively and positively impact instruction, student learning, and attitudes through collaborative whole school reform practices that embrace collegial networking, coaching, and embedded professional development across curricula.

The Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative, otherwise known as PAHSCI, places one literacy and one math coach for every 600 students in 26 high-need high schools located in 16 districts across the State of Pennsylvania. Coaches at the selected sites facilitate in-class coaching and modeling, peer collaboration and teacher training in order to improve teaching and learning at their schools.

To support this extensive effort, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has partnered with the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Literacy Network (PLN) and Foundations, Inc. to provide intensive professional development for coaches and school leadership teams. Other partners include Research for Action, which is documenting and evaluating the results from this work, and The Philadelphia Foundation, which serves as the program's fiscal administrator.

## Letter from the Project Director

Dear Colleagues,

What a difference a year makes! Coaches and mentors are building on the strengths they developed in Year 1. Coaching teams are modeling the collaborative approach to student learning and study groups for teachers and administrators are forming with the focus on student work and changing classroom practices. A strong infrastructure for coaching and implementation of the PLN framework is an integral part of each school's action plan. These supports for improving student achievement will clearly make a difference in the lives of our students.

As we move into Year 2 of the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative, our goals are to build teacher capacity in schools and

improve student achievement. Focusing on the development of peer coaching, peer visitations and cross district visitations will help teachers, coaches and administrators to engage in ongoing reflection of their own practices and meet the changing needs of our students. It is my goal that we establish a common language about coaching, student engagement and active learning in our participating schools and districts.

I look forward to a year of learning, reflecting, and implementing change together.

Sincerely,

Ellen B. Eisenberg  
Project Director, PAHSCI