

Early Childhood Teacher Coaching Project

Coaching in a Metropolitan Area School District

Buffett Early Childhood Fund and Educare: Gladys Haynes, Ph.D.

UNMC: Megan Borer, M.S. & Lisa St. Clair, Ed.D.



Overview

- There was a broad early childhood teacher coaching project implemented across multiple centers and school buildings in the Metro Area
- Occurred over the past year and a half
- This presentation will describe the overall project and then focus on a group of teachers from a Metropolitan school district

Total Project Participants

Coaches (12)

- MS degree or enrolled in a graduate program
- Years of experience ranged from 6-25+
- Coaches were also the teacher's supervisors with one exception

Teachers (36)

- BS/MS degrees in Education with EC endorsement
- Year of experience ranged from 1-25+

Paraprofessionals

- 31 classrooms were staffed with an Associate Teacher (AA degree in EC or BS degree in related field) and Teacher Aide (Rule 11 requirements)
- 5 classrooms had only a Teacher Aide who met Rule 11 requirements

Total Project Participants (cont.)

Children (449)

- 136 children were EHS (0-3-year old children)
- 313 were HS (3- and 4-year old children)
- All children attended a full day EC program

English Language Learners

- Approximately 50% of the children were ELL

"Focus" Participants

- A limitation of this study is that participants **self-selected** into the coaching project
- 5 teaching teams from a Metropolitan area school district volunteered
 - Comprised of a teacher and a teacher aide
 - Hadn't received this level of coaching previously
 - The classroom quality measure used for this study had not previously been used with their classroom
- This presentation will focus on what occurred with those teaching teams because we wanted to know more about how classrooms with less access to coaching and external evaluation would be impacted by the project

Project Goals

- Implement positive behavior support techniques to reduce the incidence of behavioral challenges
- Implement strategies designed for English language learners (ELL students)
- Use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS, Pianta et al) pre and post coaching to
 - Focus coaching on quality improvement
 - To measure the impact of coaching

Project Design: Responsibilities

- Teacher Responsibilities**
 - Teachers identified goals
 - Teachers participated in joint problem solving with their Coach
- Coach Responsibilities**
 - 6-8 hours a month of face to face contact (observing, co-teaching, joint problem solving, review of videotape)
 - 2-4 hours a month of indirect contact (gathering information, reviewing videotape)
 - Meet monthly with cooperating program director for individual supervision
 - Meet monthly with ALL participating coaches as a learning community

Coaches' Training

In addition to the responsibilities listed previously, Coaches also received training in the following areas:

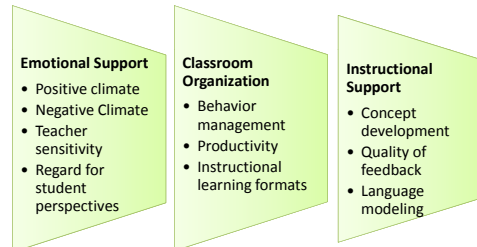
- *Positive Behavior Support (PBS)
- *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- *GOLD Curriculum
- *Content Areas
- *English Language Learners (ELL)
- *Team Building
- *Coaching

Evaluation

- All classrooms were assessed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS, Pianta et al) Observation Tool
 - Pre-K CLASS completed pre-post (approximately one year apart)
 - Completed by **reliable** observers from UNMC
- Teaching teams and coaches were **debriefed** on the results within a short time period of the observation
 - Strengths and areas for improvement identified by tool
 - Coaches and teaching teams **jointly developed strategies for continuous improvement**

What is the CLASS?

- "An observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on what matters-the classroom interactions that boost student learning"



What is the CLASS showing us?

Average Ratings of Interactions in Pre-K - 3rd Classrooms



(University of Virginia, Curry School of Education-Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning)

What's the CLASS Research Showing?

- Higher levels of instructional support are related to preschoolers' gains in pre-reading and math skills (Mashburn, Pianta, Hamre, Downer et al, 2008)
- High levels of emotional support contribute to preschoolers' social competence in the kindergarten year (Curby, Locasale-Crouch, Konold, Pianta, Howes, Burchinal et al, 2007)
- High levels of emotional support are associated with growth in reading and math achievement from kindergarten through fifth grade (Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, Morrison, & NICHD-ECCRN, 2005)
- High levels of classroom organization are associated with gains in first graders' literacy (Ponitz, Rimm-Kaufman, Brock, & Nathanson, 2009)

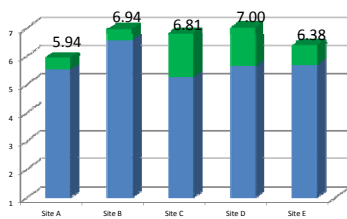
How did the CLASS scores change in our study?

Emotional Support

- Positive climate
- Negative Climate
- Teacher sensitivity
- Regard for student's perspectives

Emotional Support

- Pre scores ranged from 5.25 - 6.56
- Post scores ranged from 5.94 – 7.00
- Gains between 0.4 – 1.5 points

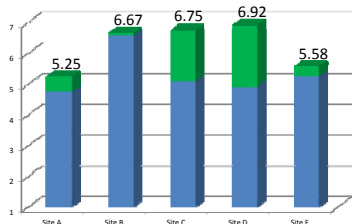


Classroom Organization

- Behavior management
- Productivity
- Instructional learning formats

Classroom Organization

- Pre scores ranged from 4.75 - 6.58
- Post scores ranged from 5.25 – 6.92
- Gains ranged from .09 – 2 points

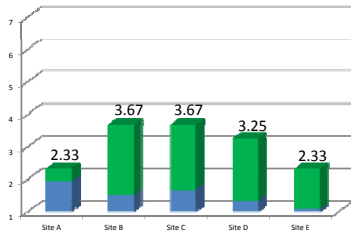


Instructional Support

- Concept development
- Quality of feedback
- Language modeling

Instructional Support

- Pre scores ranged from 1.08 – 1.92
- Post scores ranged from 2.33 – 3.67
- Gains ranged from 0.41 – 2.17 points



Perceptions of Relationships

1=Almost Never to 5=Almost Always

	Teachers	Coaches
We trust each other	4.50	4.50
We cooperate with each other	4.60	4.70
I respect this teacher/coach	4.70	4.60
This teacher/coach respects me	4.80	4.60
We are sensitive to each other's feelings	4.50	4.40
I ask this teacher/coach for suggestions	4.10	4.30
Communication is difficult for us	1.80	1.50

Implications

- The amount of time spent in coaching with these five sites was less than the goal for the project; yet, there were demonstrable improvements.
- How would coaching and/or the results change if the project were mandatory or randomly assigned (not self-selected)?

Take-Away Messages

1. Relationships are key: both between coach and teaching team and among the teaching team (teachers with paraprofessionals).
2. Self-selection into coaching was accompanied by strong levels of participation and motivation for improvement.
3. Utilize a joint strategy planning approach toward continuous improvement, rather than "telling" teachers what to do.

Questions?

If you'd like to follow up with any questions later, feel free to contact:

- Gladys Haynes gh@buffettearly.org
- Megan Borer mborer@unmc.edu
- Lisa St Clair Lstclair@unmc.edu

References

- Ponitz, C., Rimm-Kaufman, S., Brock, L., & Nathanson, L. (2009). Contributions of gender, early school adjustment, and classroom organizational climate to first grade outcomes. *Elementary School Journal*, in-press.
- Curby, T., Locasale-Crouch, J., Konold, T., Pianta, R., Howes, C., Burchinal, M. et al. (2009). The Relations of Observed Pre-K Classrooms Quality Profiles to Children's Academic Achievement and Social Competence. *Early Education and Development*, 19, pages 643-666.
- Hamre, B. & Pianta, R. Can Instructional and Emotional Support in First Grade Classrooms Make a Difference for Children At Risk of School Failure? *Child Development*, 76, pages 949-967.
- LaParo, K. M., Pianta, R. C., & Stuhlman, M. (2004). The Classroom Assessment Scoring System: Findings from the Prekindergarten Year. *The Elementary School Journal*, 104(5), 409.
- Locasale-Crouch, J., Konold, T., Pianta, R., Howes, C., Burchinal, M., Bryant, D., Clifford, R., Early, D., & Barbarin, O. (2007). Observed Classroom Quality Profiles in State-Funded Pre-Kindergarten Programs and Associations with Teacher, Program, and Classroom Characteristics. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22 (1), pages 3-17.
- Mashburn, Pianta, Hamre, Downer et al. (2008). *Child Development*, 79, pages 732-749.
- NICHD ECCRN. A Day in Third Grade: A Large-Scale Study of Classroom Quality and Teacher and Student Behavior. (2005). *Elementary School Journal*, 105, pages 305-323.
- Pianta, R., Belsky, J., Vandergrift, N., Houts, R., Morrison, F., & NICHD-ECCRN. (2005). Classroom Effects on Children's Achievement Trajectories in Elementary School. *American Education Research Journal*, 49, pages 365-397.
- Pianta, R., LaParo, K., & Hamre, B. (2008). *Classroom assessment scoring system (CLASS)*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.
- Rimm-Kaufman, S., Curby, T., Grimm, K., Nathanson, L., & Brock, L. (2009). The Contribution of Children's Self-Regulation and Classroom Quality to Children's Adaptive Behavior in Kindergarten. *Developmental Psychology*, in-press.