Goals for Session

1. Identify emergence of literacy coaching as a practice
2. Review research on
   (a) efficacy of literacy coaches and
   (b) effective professional development
3. Identify criteria/standards for selecting literacy coaches
4. Share coaching models (what they may do, and how they may do it)
5. Share coaching resources

Reading First

• *Guidance for the Reading First Program* (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) states that coaching is one of the "practices and strategies for professional development that should be evident in an effective reading program."

• A reading coach is someone "who helps others to recognize their instructional knowledge and strengths, and supports them in their learning and application of new knowledge and instructional practices."

Reading Next

Alliance For Excellent Education, 2004

• Identified 15 key elements of effective adolescent literacy programs

• 15-3=0
  – Summative Assessment
  – Formative Assessment
  – Professional Development

• Coaching is a form of highly targeted professional development
The Emergence of Literacy Coaching

- Coaching is a “promising but often poorly focused school improvement tactic.” Alan Richard, Education Week, as quoted in “School-Based Coaching,” Harvard Education Letter, July/August 2004

- “Coaching alone will not solve the problem of poor literacy.” Alan Richard, Education Week as quoted in “School-Based Coaching,” Harvard Education Letter, July/August 2004

Two Prongs of Literacy Coaching

Bethel’s Literacy Coaching Model

- One “reading instruction” coach
- One “content literacy” coach
- Minimal FTE
- More later……

Research on Coaching

- Research on link of coaching to student achievement is limited
- Evidence of coaching success is mostly anecdotal – teacher surveys and the like
  - Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), as quoted in “School-Based Coaching,” Harvard Education Letter, July/August 2004
- Yet schools using coaching report improvements in student literacy
- If you consider coaching highly targeted professional development, there is research on effective professional development
Research on Effective Professional Development

- “Professional development, delivered as sustained, job-embedded coaching, maximizes the likelihood that teachers will translate newly learned skills and strategies into practice” Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches, International Reading Association, 2006, citing research from (Joyce & Showers, 1996; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).
- Professional development must be “ongoing, deeply embedded in teachers’ classroom work, specific to grade levels or academic content, focused on research-based approaches” School-Based Coaching,” Harvard Education Letter, July/August, 2004

Common Features of Effective Professional Development

Three citations:
1. From Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001:
   - Grounded in inquiry and reflections
   - Participant driven and collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among teachers within communities of practice
   - Sustained, ongoing and intensive
   - Connected to and derived from teachers’ ongoing work with their students

2. From American Educational Research Association, 2005
   - Specifically related to subject matter content
   - Focused on student learning
   - Connected to curriculum teachers use
   - Aligned with district and state standards
   - Coupled with extended opportunities to learn
   - Incorporates systems for evaluation impact on teachers’ practices and student learning

3. From National Staff Development Council (2001)
   - Context Standards
     - Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district (Learning Communities)
     - Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement (Leadership)
     - Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration (Resources)
   - Process Standards
     - Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress and help sustain continuous improvement (Data-Driven)
     - Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact (Evaluation)
     - Prepares educators to apply research to decision making (Research-Based)
     - Uses learning strategies appropriate to intended goal (Design)
     - Applies knowledge about human learning and change (Learning)
     - Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate (Collaboration)
Summary of Common Features of Effective Professional Development

- Learning happens in teams
- Learning occurs over time, not “one shot”
- Learning activities are based on student need

Selecting and Supporting Coaches

- A collaborative effort of IRA, NCTE, NCTM, NCSS and NSTA worked to develop selection criteria/standards to help those “that embrace coaching to do so mindfully.”
  1. Leadership Standards that apply across content areas:
     - skillful collaborator
     - skillful job-embedded coach
     - skillful evaluator of literacy needs
  2. Content Areas Standards particular to reading/writing demands of each content area:
     - skillful instructional strategists for each content
- Takes 2-3 years to develop coaching skills, and in secondary settings, it may take longer because the coach needs both sets of skills.

Selecting and Supporting Coaches - Continued

- IRA also published a brochure in 2004 titled “The Role and Qualifications of the Reading Coach in the United States” which, according to the Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse, set the “gold standard.”
- The Clearinghouse went on to identify four levels of qualifications for coaches in their 2006 article “Qualifications for Literacy Coaches; Achieving the Gold Standard.”
  - The levels range from the Gold Standard, the Great Choice, Good Enough for Now, and Not Good Enough for Now.
  - Neither the IRA nor NCTE recommend hiring Good Enough

Caveats to Coaching

- Securing release time
- Cost considerations
- Cultural challenges (i.e., coaching role is new; the coach is neither administrator nor classroom peer and teachers are not used to talking about their work)
- Training and support for coaches – “professional developers need their own professional development”
What Does an Effective Literacy Coach Do?

The Advisory Board of the Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse suggests six characteristics that define effective literacy coaching:

1. Involves collaborative dialogue for teachers at all levels of knowledge and experience
2. Facilitates development of a school vision about literacy that is site-based and links to district goals
3. Is characterized by data-oriented student and teacher learning
4. Is a form of on-going, job-embedded professional learning that increases teacher capacity to meet students’ needs
5. Involves classroom observations that are cyclical and that build knowledge over time
6. Is supportive rather than evaluative

What Students Need

- Some/many still need reading instruction
- All need or could benefit from content literacy strategies

What Teachers Need

- Teachers need to become teachers of reading within their discipline
- Many understand importance of literacy instruction but don’t see it as their job
  - Resistance to teaching literacy in secondary grades goes back more than 60 years
  - High pressures to cover content (statewide assessments)
  - Teaching literacy takes time away from that mission
- Secondary teachers need to know how to develop content knowledge AND improve literacy at the same time
- In fact, doing so will increase students’ success!

Two Prongs of Literacy Coaching

- Literacy Coaching
- Reading Instruction
- Content Literacy

From Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches, International Reading Association, 2006
Types of Coaching

• **One-on-One**
  – In this type of coaching there are three distinct phases: the foundation, the learning loop and forwarding the action (Crane & Patrick, 2002 as cited in Reading First Coaching: A Guide for Coaches and Reading First Leaders, Learning Point Associates, 2004)

• **Groups**
  – Advantages to this type include: efficiency, synergy, upward momentum, support network and accountability (Reading First Coaching: A Guide for Coaches and Reading First Leaders, Learning Point Associates, 2004, p. 18)

Meaningful Professional Development

• Needs to be “learning centered” based on the need to create collaborative cultures, develop leadership skills, enhance educators’ capacity for data analysis and build communities of learners.

  The National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching &
  The National Staff Development Council
  As cited in Improving Adolescent Reading: Findings from the Research, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005

“Traditional” vs. “Learning Centered” Professional Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Learner Centered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often perceived as fragmented, unfocused; activities based on preference</td>
<td>Focuses on what students are to learn and how to make sure all students do learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little effort to assess student needs or provide consistent feedback to teachers</td>
<td>Systematic inquiry by teachers focused on student work and what students and teachers need to learn</td>
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<td>Little or superficial reference to standards for students or teachers</td>
<td>Student performance standards are well understood and widely shared</td>
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<td>Disconnected from day-to-day experiences of teachers</td>
<td>Embedded into teachers’ daily work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on one-shot workshop offerings with little feedback for teacher in relation to their practices</td>
<td>Continuous professional development that uses feedback and reflection to deepen teachers’ knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on discrete skills</td>
<td>Focus on problem solving among teams and/or whole faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central-office driven</td>
<td>Principal/leadership-team driven</td>
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Bottom Line

• **The Literacy Coach:**
  – Must be supported by district and building level administrators
  – Must have clear role and responsibilities
  – Must have a team with which to work
  – Must have on-going professional development
Literacy Coaching Models: Three Examples in Oregon

- Beaverton School District, Beaverton, OR
  - 15 full time coaches, one at each middle and high school
  - Provide staff development and work collaboratively to implement literacy techniques, curriculum and assessment
  - District reports improved test scores at high school – 67% of 10th graders meeting or exceeding standards – up 12 percentage points
  - Supported by general fund dollars
  - Coaches receive common literacy training at least once per month, and meet regularly with content experts
  - Each school’s plan designed to meet their unique needs

- Springfield School District, Springfield, OR.
  - 2 district level literacy coaches, serving five middle schools
  - In addition, in-building coaches for a few hours per week - usually retired teachers
  - Provide staff development and work with content teachers
  - All coaches meet with outside literacy expert 4 times per year
  - Principals and district level literacy teams meet with expert 4 additional times
  - Supported by one time funds

- Bethel School District, Eugene, OR.
  - 1 district level coach (.25 FTE) serving five middle/K-8, high school staff who teach students with intensive needs
  - 1 school level coach (.2 FTE) serving one middle school to support all general teachers
  - Provide staff development on assessment, grouping, progress monitoring, program implementation; conduct classroom observations
  - Supported by general fund dollars
  - Coaches meet regularly with Director of Student Achievement and/or Director of Special Services
  - Each coach receives on-going professional development of their own

Coaching in Reading Instruction for Students with Intensive Needs

- Initially, Literacy Coach provides two full days of training prior to teaching
  - Training includes:
    - Reviewing all program components
    - Learning the teaching formats
    - Using correction procedures accurately
    - Learning procedures for individual student turns
    - Executing signals
    - Implementing data collection systems (STS, LPC)

- Literacy Coach provides weekly support in small groups, larger groups or 1:1 with staff member
  - Support includes:
    - Reviewing student data (performance on in-program check outs, monthly ORF scores, students’ oral responses during lesson, first time correct responses, frequency of responses, independent work)
    - Troubleshooting problem solving/rehearsing lessons
    - Ensuring fidelity of implementation
    - Assisting with placement and regrouping
    - Identifying behavior management interventions
    - Suggesting alterations to physical arrangement, placement & access to materials
Coaching in Content Literacy

• Currently, one coach at one middle school focuses on content literacy
• In addition, ACCESS strategy training for:
  – All Middle School content teachers
  – All High School Science, Social Studies and English teachers
  – All Alternative High School teachers
• On-going follow up with Coach or Teacher Leaders in each building

Coaching Tools

• The Reading Coach by Jan Hasbrouck & Carolyn Denton, Sopris West, 2005
• Sampling Classroom Instruction Tool by Geoff Colvin, In Press
• National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI)
  – Five-minute Observations, 2002
  – Planning Inservice Sessions with Small Groups of Teachers & Inservice Outline, 2003
  – Hints for Interacting with Peers during Training Sessions, 2002
  – Looking for Appropriate Student Behaviors, 2003
• ACCESS Toolkit by Gleason, Kowalko & Smith, 2006
• Student Owned Strategies by MaryBeth Monroe, Southern Oregon ESD

Resources

• International Reading Association
  www.reading.org
• Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse
  www.literacycoachingonline.org
• National Staff Development Council
  www.nisdrc.org
• Alliance for Excellent Education
  www.all4ed.org
• Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
  www.nwrel.org
• National Institute for Direct Instruction
  www.nifdi.org

Resources - Continued

• Reading First Coaching: A Guide for Coaches and Reading First Leaders
  http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/literacy/coachesguide.pdf
• Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
  www.ascd.org