

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

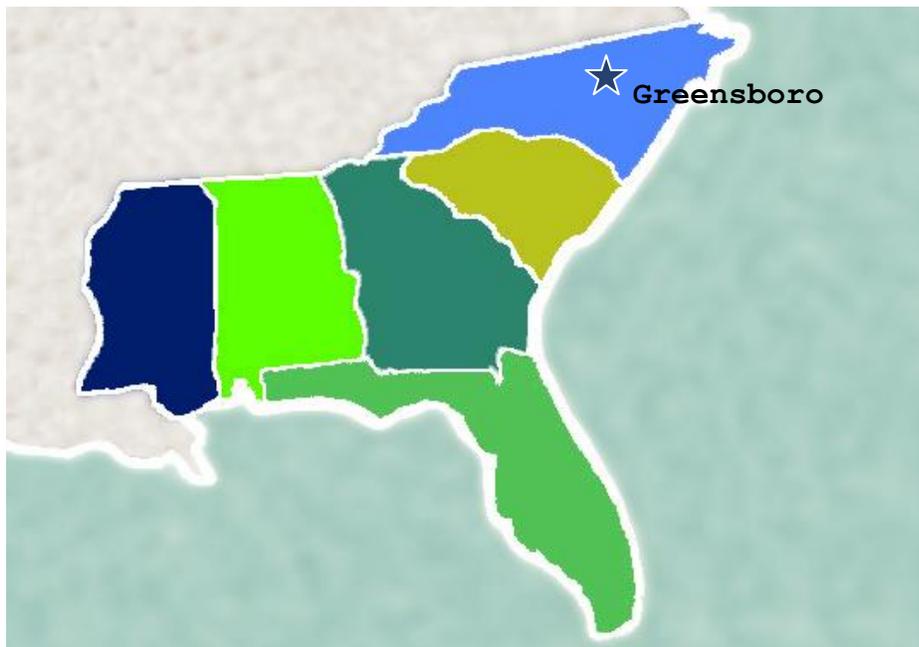
SOUTHEAST ~ SERVECenter

December 2006, EBE # 69

EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION REQUEST DESK

OUR GOAL

To assist educators and policymakers in their efforts to apply the evidence base to decisions about policies, programs, and practices they encounter.



REQUEST:

- Information regarding the impact of literacy coaches on high school student achievement.

RESPONSE

Although there is a great deal of interest in the concept of literacy coaching in the wake of the No Child Left Behind legislation, and a number of programs exist that incorporate this technique, there has been little reliable research done on the impact of literacy coaches on student achievement. Currently, the information that is available related to literacy coaching is anecdotal or descriptive, and it often focuses on elementary school programs. Few, if any, studies of literacy coaching exist, and almost no empirical evidence of literacy coaching's impact on student achievement is available, although a few studies are underway or planned for the near future. Regional Educational Laboratory-Northeast and Islands has begun a study called *Accelerating Literacy in the Middle School*, which is in progress. It can be accessed at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?id=46>. Regional Educational Laboratory-Northwest also has a study underway called *Literacy Coaching in Reading First*. This study can be accessed at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?id=47>. Northern Illinois University also plans a study of the impact of literacy coaching on student achievement, although no information on it has been made available. While it can be said that available information

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supports the usefulness of literacy coaching, this lack of evidence precludes claiming that research validates literacy coaching as a proven technique for improving student achievement. However, there is considerable research that supports systematic professional development, of which literacy coaching is a type, as a means to improve teacher effectiveness.

The annotated bibliography below contains the results of an extensive search using search terms including:

- Literacy coaching and high school
- Literacy coaching and secondary schools
- Reading coaches and high school
- Reading coaches and secondary schools
- Literacy and high schools
- Academic coaching
- Literacy coaching reports
- Literacy coaching research
- Instructional coaching

The search also incorporated searches of major websites including:

- U.S. Department of Education www.ed.gov
- Alliance for Excellent Education www.all4ed.org
- RAND Corporation www.rand.org
- American Educational Research Association www.aera.net
- National Governors Association www.nga.org
- National Council of Teachers of English www.ncte.org

SERVE staff also searched the online education databases available through the UNCG library, such as EBSCO and ERIC. The annotated bibliography below contains available research reports on literacy coaching, both from the standpoint of student achievement resulting from literacy coaching programs, and from the standpoint of program implementation. The results of this search are divided into resources specific to high schools, more general resources, and web resources. URLs or PDF files are provided where possible.

Literacy Coaches in the High School

Bacevich, A. & Salinger, T. (2006). *Lessons and recommendations from the Alabama Reading Initiative: Sustaining focus on secondary reading*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation.

www.air.org/publications/documents/ARI%20Popular%20Report_final.pdf

This publication documents the impact of the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) in Alabama secondary schools. ARI was initiated by Alabama to improve the literacy skills of students K-12; an important component of the program is literacy coaches.

Brown, D., Reumann-Moore, R., Hugh, R., Plessis, P., & Christman, J. (2006). *Promising inroads: Year One report of the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative.* Philadelphia, PA: Research for Action

<http://www.researchforaction.org/publication/details/242>

This report examines the outcomes of the first year of the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative, a collaboration between the Annenberg Foundation and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (DOE) aimed at addressing the literacy needs of students in high needs Pennsylvania high schools. The initiative built on the Pennsylvania DOE's groundwork, already in place within the state, using instructional coaching to add a professional development component to statewide efforts. The report details the features and content of this model and discusses Year One of the program, including research activities, focusing particularly on early implementation and impact on classroom practice. Findings for Year One are reported, and recommendations for Year Two are included.

International Reading Association. (2006). *Standards for middle and high school literacy coaches.* Newark, DE: Author.

<http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/reports/coaching.html>

High school students, as well as graduates, must face ever increasing literacy demands if they are to compete and be successful. This document begins by describing the lack of essential literacy skills on the part of American students, and goes on to identify the needs of students beyond the elementary years. It suggests that literacy coaches may offer a promising avenue to support struggling students by helping to develop the instructional skills of secondary content area teachers as they strive to help students become proficient readers. The document describes the development process for the standards described in it, pinpoints the intended use of the standards and addresses the content of the standards from both a leadership and a content area standpoint. It concludes with a look at the current knowledge base on literacy standards and suggests next steps that might be appropriate.

Grant, P. (2004). *From struggle to success: One high school's journey to literacy achievement.* Naperville, IL: Learning point Associates.

<http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/literacy/shiprock.pdf>

This brief describes how Shiprock High School in New Mexico used reading specialists as a part of a program to improve literacy among students. It offers data in the form of student scores on standardized tests.

Kemp, C. (2005). A comprehensive approach to adolescent literacy. *Principal Leadership*, 5(6), 22-27.

www.autoskill.com/pdf/Dr_Kemp_Adolescent.pdf

To ensure that all students in Pittsburgh high schools meet graduation requirements, the system has developed a network of literacy supports and implemented them in all high schools. One of these supports is the use of literacy coaches. This article discusses the role that the literacy coaches play in the high schools, which is primarily to provide professional development to teachers both on an individual and a group basis. The article also describes other resources that are in place to support literacy learning at the high school level.

Riddle-Buly, M., Coskie, T., Robinson, L., & Egawa, K. (2006). Literacy coaching: Coming out of the corner. *Voices from the Middle*, 13(4), 24-28.

<http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/library/resources/riddlebulymarshatraciecoskieleannerobinsonandkathyeгава2006literacycoachingcomingoutofthecornervoicesfromthemiddle1324-28.attachment/attachment/LitCoachingOutofCorner.pdf>

This brief article discusses the role of the coach and offers information on effective coaching, differentiating between what is appropriate at the elementary level and the middle and high school level. It discusses concerns that may emerge related to coaching, focusing on the need for support and the need for documentation of results as issues that need to be addressed as coaching becomes an important academic improvement strategy.

Schen, M., Rao, S., & Dobles, R. (2005). *Coaches in the high school classroom: Studies in implementing high school reform*. Providence, RI: Brown University, Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/publications/SNSCoaches.html>

This document describes the activities of six instructional coaches, located in Boston, MA or Houston, TX, in terms of “processes, choices and challenges” involved in their work. It offers information on using the insights from these instructional portraits and also examines relevant issues.

Strutevant, E. (2003). *The literacy coach: A key to improving teaching and learning in secondary schools*. Washington, D.C: Alliance for Excellent Education.

www.all4ed.org/publications/LiteracyCoach.pdf

This publication describes the critical need for students to develop effective literacy skills that allow them to comprehend and use complex material, and focuses on the role of the literacy coach in developing programs that will help teachers meet the varying needs of their students. In addition, it details the functions that literacy coaches may fill and touches on evidence of positive results achieved through literacy coaching programs that is beginning to emerge as schools and systems make use of this approach.

More General Resources on Literacy Coaching

Annenberg Institute for School Reform (n.d.). *Instructional coaching: Professional development strategies that improve instruction*. Providence, RI: Brown University, Author.

www.annenberginstitute.org/images/InstructionalCoaching.pdf

This publication focuses on coaching as “school based, job-embedded professional development” and offers insights on effective coaching based on developing research. It includes discussion of issues that should be addressed as a coaching program is implemented and briefly touches on strategies for resolution.

Alverman, D. (2001). *Effective literacy instruction for adolescents*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia.

www.nrconline.org/publications/alverwhite2.pdf

This paper, commissioned by the National Reading Conference (NRC), emphasizes the breadth of what is termed literacy education and highlights the need to address, in classroom instruction, the multiple literacies available to adolescents. The paper goes on to detail the NRC’s position on designing effective literacy instruction for adolescents in a series of statements that may be useful as programs are developed. The NRC can be accessed on the web at <http://www.nrconline.org/>.

Blachowicz, C., Obrochta, C., & Fogleberg, E. (2005). *Literacy coaching for change. Educational Leadership, 62(6)*.

This article describes the implementation of a variety of literacy coaching models in the Chicago public schools, detailing six coaching strategies, and the student achievement that resulted. It also touches on literacy coaching as professional development.

Bursack, W., Smith, T., Munk, D., Damer, M., Mehling, L., & Perry, J. (2004). Evaluating the impact of a prevention based model on children who are at risk. *Remedial and Special Education, 25*(5), 303-313.

This article presents beginning literacy outcomes for instructional methods used in Project PRIDE (Preventing and Remediating Reading Problems through Early Identification and Direct Teaching of Early Literacy). Project PRIDE is a literacy intervention that incorporates practices supported by research on reading, such as specific instruction on phonics and phonemic awareness, a multi-tiered teaching approach, data based decision making and professional development that includes instruction coaching. Results from two years of implementation in three inner city high schools are offered, and implications are discussed.

Edwards, J., & Green, K. (1999). *Growth in coaching skills over a three year period: Progress toward mastery*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/10/c2/ec.pdf

This paper discusses the results of a three year, grant-funded cognitive coaching program. It is based on information generated through conferences with project participants over the duration of the program. Results contained in the paper indicate that cognitive coaching can be a useful tool in helping teachers improve instructional planning.

Gilstrap, S. (2002). *Evaluation of the implementation of federal class size reduction in the Los Angeles unified school district*. (Report No. LAUSD-PARD-127). Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Unified School District, Program Evaluation and Research Branch.

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/28/1a/50.pdf

This report looks at an evaluation of the implementation of the Federal Class Size Reduction Plan, one aspect of which was an increase in reading coaches. Data was collected from several sources and indicated that coaches had a positive impact on student achievement.

Guiney, E. (2001). Coaching isn't just for athletes: The role of teacher leaders. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(10), 740-743.

<http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/k0106gui.htm>

Examines the role of coaches in Boston's public schools, highlighting experiences in one high school and one middle school, and looking at "what happens next" based on past experiences with coaching.

Hall, B. (2004). Literacy coaches: An evolving role. *Carnegie Reporter, 3*(1).

<http://www.carnegie.org/reporter/09/literacy/index4.html>

This report defines literacy coaching as it exists in various settings, traces the evolution of the reading coach through an examination of the literature and considers issues and successes related to literacy coaching through the lens of programs in various parts of the country.

Lyon, C., & Pinnell, G. (2001). *Systems for change in literacy education: A guide to professional development*. Westport, CT: Heineman.

This book on the teaching of reading and writing offers specific information on planning and implementing a professional development program and emphasizes the effective use of literacy coaches as a part of that effort.

Mason, B. (2005). *Achievement effects of five comprehensive school reform designs implemented in Los Angeles unified school district*. Available at: <http://www.cgu.edu/PDFFiles/dr.smith/schoolreform.pdf>

This dissertation examines achievement effects measured by the Stanford 9 for students in grades one through eleven who participated in five comprehensive school reform designs, some of which incorporated literacy coaches as a part of their program, between 1999 and 2002.

May, H., Supovitz, J. & Lesnick, J. (2004). *The impact of America's Choice on writing performance in Georgia: First year results*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, Consortium for Policy research in Education. www.cpre.org/Publications/AC-09.pdf

This evaluation of America's Choice focuses on student writing performance in 109 Georgia elementary schools and 50 Georgia middle schools. Results from the evaluation were positive. The study includes an examination of more general indicators of achievement, particularly the relationship between America's Choice and student learning.

May, H., Supovitz, J. & Perda, D. (2004). *A longitudinal study of the impact of America's Choice on Student performance in Rochester, New York, 1998-2003*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, Consortium for Policy Research in Education. www.cpre.org/Publications/AC-10.pdf

This is an additional study of the impact of the America's Choice model over an extended period of time in New York.

Neufeld, B. & Roper, D. (2003). *Coaching: A strategy for developing instructional capacity: Promises and practicalities*. Cambridge, MA: Education Matters, Inc.
www.annenberginstitute.org/images/coaching.pdf

This publication looks at the design and implementation of coaching as a part of instructionally focused whole school reform, and the impact it may have. It examines the promise of coaching based on existing literature, and describes the work of the coach. It also includes information on implementation and provides some information on improvements that may result from a coaching model.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (2006). *Teaming up with literacy coaches*. *Northwest Education*, 12(1).
<http://www.nwrel.org/nwedu/>

This issue of Northwest Education offers a range of articles related to facets of coaching. It includes several articles with a secondary focus, as well as an interview on literacy coaching with Michael Kamil.

Poglinco, S., Bach, A., Hovde, K., Rosenblum, S., Saunders, M., & Supovitz, J. (2003). *The heart of the matter: The coaching model in America's Choice schools*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, Consortium for Policy Research in Education.
<http://www.cpre.org/Publications/AC-06.pdf>

America's Choice is a school reform model that incorporates literacy coaching as an important component. This document is part of an on-going evaluation of the model. Through surveys, site visits, telephone interviews, document review, observation and collection of student performance measures, the evaluators have worked to answer three research questions:

- Is America's Choice being appropriately implemented?
- Are Instructional practices changing in a positive way due to America's Choice?
- To what degree can improved student achievement be attributed to this model?

This document focuses on the role of the coach as a part of the model, offering evaluation intended as formative feedback and evidence of impacts based on high research standards, detailed information on the implementation of the coaching model in schools and conclusions and recommendations related to literacy coaching.

Russo, A. (2004, July/August). *School based coaching: A revolution in professional development—or just the latest fad?* *Harvard Education Letter*.
<http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/2004-ja/coaching.shtml>

This article offers an overview of coaching, including brief looks at a few well-established programs, offers some pros and cons, and looks at where coaching may be going as an alternative for schools.

Taylor, B., Pearson, D., Peterson, D., & Rodriguez, M. (2005). The CIERA school change framework: An evidence based approach to professional development and school reading improvement. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40(1), 40-69.

<http://www.reading.org/Library/Retrieve.cfm?D=10.1598/RRQ.40.1.3&F=RRQ-40-1-Taylor.pdf>

This article reviews the CIERA School Change Framework, a program designed to help schools improve reading achievement by translating research to practice. The reviewers summarize the research on effective schools, which was incorporated into the program as it was developed, and also examine the research on effective reading instruction. The program is based on strong staff collaboration and on-going professional development, leading to the growth of learning communities within the participating schools. The project described in this review aimed to determine the effects of the program and to identify classroom and school level factors that account for improved reading and writing achievement in schools working toward improved reading instruction.

Toll, C. (2007). *Lenses on literacy coaching: Conceptualizations, functions and outcomes*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.

This book offers information on many aspects of literacy coaching, from its history and theories impacting it, to practical aspects and political perspectives on coaching.

Web Resources

Advancing Literacy – Carnegie Corporation of New York

<http://www.carnegie.org/literacy/>

This website is focused on literacy in secondary schools and offers many resources related to policy, practice and research in this area.

Florida Literacy Coaches Association (FLCA)

<http://www.justreadflorida.com/flca/>

This website is intended to offer resources to literacy coaches, teachers, and others interested in improving students' literacy skills. The FLCA was formed in 2006, and the website currently contains little information, but has the potential to be a valuable resource as it develops.

Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative

<http://www.pacoaching.org/>

The Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative is a component of Leading for Learning, Pennsylvania's plan to improve student literacy achievement. The Initiative aims to put one literacy coach and one math coach for every 600 students in some high needs high schools within Pennsylvania. This website offers information on the Initiative as well as information on the role of the coach, and access to research.

University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning

www.instructionalcoach.org

This website offers a research base and practical information on instructional coaching as professional development.

The Learning Network

<http://www.rcowen.com/TLNpgs.htm>

The Learning Network is an organization of schools with a common set of beliefs about teaching and learning that include teacher professional development and collegiality as important components. It is, according to the website

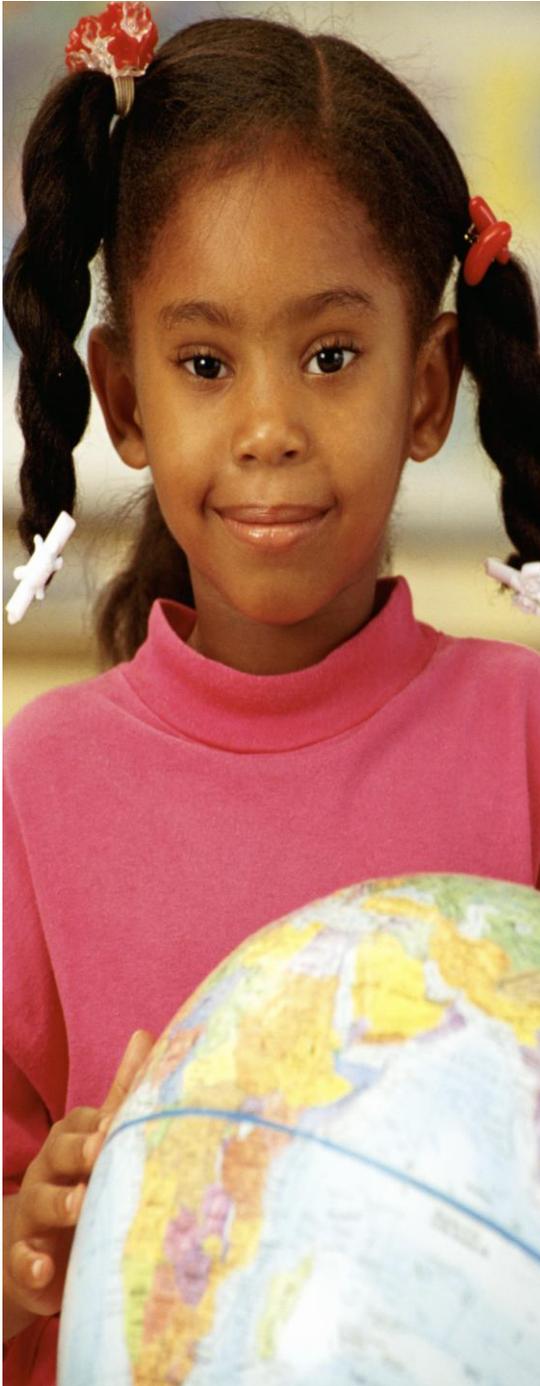
- site based
- theory driven
- on-going
- comprehensive

The Learning Network aims to develop teacher capacity and interdependence, among other goals, and works across curricular areas and age groups.

Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse

www.literacycoachingonline.org

The Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse is a new resource from the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association that provides information on factors that support the success of literacy coaching programs across the country, to stakeholders at all levels. It includes forums, events of interest, a resource listing, and information on programs.



We provide research based information on educational initiatives happening nationally and regionally. The EBE Request Desk is currently taking requests for:

- Research on a particular topic
- Information on the evidence base for curriculum interventions or professional development programs
- Information on large, sponsored research projects
- Information on southeastern state policies and programs

For more information or to make a request, contact:

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