Wyoming Department of Education
Update
School-Based Instructional Facilitators/Instructional Coaches Grant

Joint Education Interim Committee
December 6, 2007

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School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant

Report to the Wyoming Joint Education Interim Committee

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12/6/2007

This report summarizes the activities funded by the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant for the 2006-2007 school year. It also includes a series of recommendations for future legislative consideration.

School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant

Annual Report

The purpose of this document is to report the status of the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant. This grant was established in HB0139, Section 4, Enrolled Act No. 23, House of Representatives, on March 10, 2006 by the fifty-eighth Legislature of the State of Wyoming, 2006 Budget Session, 06LSO-0180.E1.

This action created a program providing funds to school districts outside of the block grant model for school-based instructional facilitators and instructional coaches. The rationale supporting this legislation is that all schools need ongoing high quality, research-based professional development. Having teacher improve their professional skills will lead to higher levels of student achievement. Supporting information for this program was included in the Picus & Odden Final Report, November 30, 2005, pages 40-43 and 105-111.

History: Perspective/Process

In April, 2006, the initial grant applications were sent to the Wyoming school districts. The estimated funding level for each school within the respective district was also included. Based on the information in the grant, and the anticipated allocations, each district made the decision regarding participation in the program. Forty-five of Wyoming's forty-eight districts elected to participate in the program. Based on that response, the Wyoming Department of Education staff determined the final amount of each district's and each school's final allocation. This grant led to the hiring of over 344 Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches to serve teachers in Wyoming schools. Under the guidelines of the grant, these people were to function in either of two general areas: professional development, working directly with teachers to improve their teaching skills and/or technology facilitators with a focus on assisting teachers in effective use of technology in the classroom.

Actions: Data / Participation / Trainings

Because this was a new program, it was unlikely that districts would be able to hire personnel who were fully prepared to assume the duties of the new positions. Responding to this situation, the Wyoming Department of Education organized a professional development plan to provide training to the people in these new positions. Two major initiatives were undertaken by WDE.

The first project involved the hiring of Jan Hansbrock to conduct a series of workshops in Casper, Wyoming. The initial session occurred in late August and follow up sessions took place throughout the school year. The focus of this program was to help the facilitators understand their role in assisting teachers to improve their skills, to become knowledgeable of the andragogy of adult learners (how adults learn), and to develop strategies in teaching adults. The annual reports from school districts indicated that most districts had their facilitators participate in this program.

The second project was built around the School Improvement Conferences that are hosed by NCA and WDE twice each year. For these conferences, WDE staff, identified presentations that focused on the needs of the facilitators. Additionally, a day-long session for the facilitators was held the day after each conference. Based again on the annual reports, most districts had facilitators in attendance at these meetings.

Regional trainings were also hosted by some districts. Notably were a series of workshops conducted by Dr. Jim Knight from University of Kansas. His work focused on the role of the facilitator and strategies for working with adult learners.

Most districts also provided professional development to the facilitators through attendance at national conferences and training provided by professional organizations. Most districts also provided training to the facilitators within their district. This was typically offered by an administrator and/or other staff members. These trainings were generally part of weekly, biweekly or monthly facilitator meetings. Finally, the networking of facilitators within and among districts was indentified as an effective opportunity for professional growth. Several districts recommended that providing statewide opportunities for collegial communication would be beneficial to their facilitators.

Financial: Expenditures to Date / Anticipated Other Costs

A total of $16 million was awarded to Wyoming schools August, 2006. Those funds were used to pay salaries and benefits to staff members selected to serve in the newly developed position, Instructional Facilitator or Coach, in designated school buildings. Expenditures also covered training costs since the professional development of those in the new positions was necessary and included in the statute directives.

Due to varying factors, including late approval of the grant, and difficulties of filling partial full time staff members (FTS) that were identified by the grant, $350,236.90 of the awarded funds were returned to the state during the first year. Those funds were added to the appropriation for the 2007-2008 school year, and a recalculation of allocations was made to meet the distribution date in August, 2007. Schools received their allocation amount for Year 2 based on their school enrollment the previous year.

For the districts that returned funds at the end of the first year of the grant, it was not that all their needs were met but rather the inability to use excess funds in one school to cover shortages at another school. For example, one school may have been funded at a level to hire 1.1 FTE's while another may have had 0.9. This caused over-funding in the former and under-funding in the latter. The district had to return the over-funding and supplement from their general fund to cover the under-funding.

Results: Outcomes / Feedback

The evidence from the districts of the effectiveness of the facilitator program was varied and diverse. Most of the reports from the districts explained that the initial focus of the fist year was providing appropriate training for the facilitators and then having them determine how they might best serve the needs of the teachers and administrators in this new program. The facilitators' work with teachers generally fell into two categories: large group (grade level or building) and individual or small group.

The work with large groups normally involved training in a new instructional strategy such as Read 180, CHAMP's (Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation), 7 Keys to Comprehension, Guided Reading, Teaching Reading in the Content Area, and Step Up to Writing or support for a new program adoption in a specific content area. With this approach, the facilitator would give direct instruction to the group and then follow up with modeling, observations, and conferencing with individuals or small groups.

The work with small groups or individuals was more diverse and specific to the needs of the individual teacher. This approach would typically involve a pre-conference to identify the need, research by the facilitator to determine possible interventions, more conferencing to develop a plan of action, and the implementation of that plan with training and resources provided by the facilitator.

The collection of data to determine the effectiveness of either of the approaches was limited due to the sizes of the affected groups. As such, any statistical significance of success or failure attributable to the facilitator could not be determined. It is important to note however, that in many schools, information was collected either in the form of student assessment results or staff and/or student surveys. These results did show a positive impact from the work of the facilitators. In the case of staff surveys, there was general acceptance of the facilitators by the teachers. However, there was also some evidence of a lack of understanding of the facilitators' role in the school and in some responses, a lack of support for the program. In no district did the negative attitude reach a magnitude that would cause consideration for discontinuing the program.

Recommendations: Next Steps

Based on the annual reports from the school districts and input from the Wyoming Department of Education staff and consultants, the following are offered as recommendations for the consideration of the Joint Education Interim Committee:

Continuation

It is recommended that the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant be continued.

> There has been universal support for the continuation of the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant. Many of the district reports noted that this program was essential to the improvement of instruction which will lead directly to improved student achievement. As a bonus, the academic success of our student population will have a favorable impact on school environment, attendance, and the graduation rate.

> It should be noted in the Picus & Odden Final Report, November 30, 2005, page 76, that the effect size of having professional development with classroom instructional coaches is between 1.25 and 2.70. Program interventions with effect sizes greater than 0.50 are considered substantial. This program had the greatest effect size of any of those included in the report.

Professional Standards for Instructional Facilitators

It is recommended that a set of professional standards for the Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches be provided by the Wyoming Department of Education to the school districts.

> A number of districts indicated a need for guidance in defining the role of the facilitators. WDE should provide a set of professional standards that describe the functions of facilitators. Districts would be free to adopt those standards or others that would define similar expectations.

> Worthy of consideration is the set of standards for instructional coaches that have been developed by the National Staff Development Council (Taking the Lead – New roles for teachers and school-based coaches, Killion and Harrison, National Staff Development Council, 2006). These standards define the areas that should be considered in the professional development program: learning communities, leadership, resources, data-driven, evaluation, research-based, design, learning, collaboration, equity, quality teaching, and family involvement. Components for each area are provided along with a leveled scale to determine the quality of the local program. Having facilitators work within standards such as these would increase the likelihood of a successful professional development program.

Professional Development for Instructional Facilitators

It is recommended that a comprehensive program of professional development be provided for the instructional facilitators. The scope of the program should include content and andragogy, be tailored to meet the needs of experience and inexperienced instructional facilitators, provide for collegial dialogue, and be aligned to the standards for instructional facilitators.

> Many of the district reports included a recommendation for professional development for the instructional facilitators. Just like classroom teachers need professional development to improve their knowledge and skills in the classroom, the facilitators also need training to increase their effectiveness in working with the teachers.

Reporting and Accountability

Instructional Facilitator/Coaches and Coordinators from across the state served on a Task Force under the coordination of Dr. Joy Mockelmann, WDE Program Manager for the School-Based Instructional Facilitator/Coach Grant. The members were dedicated to represent state-wide districts who implemented this program to the best of their knowledge and abilities.

Funding Structure

While the funding amounts should continue to be determined based on school needs, the funds should be allocated at the district level. This change would provide the flexibility to more efficiently utilize those funds in hiring staff, providing facilitator training, and acquiring supporting materials and resources. The focus should be the providing of appropriate equitable services.

> Most districts reported problems in meeting the needs of the schools because of the limiting requirements that were placed on the funds. The hiring of fractional FTE's to fill the positions was a common problem in districts of all sizes. Having teachers function as half-time facilitators is possible however portions less than one-half caused problems with training, hiring, and retention of staff. The level of training required for the facilitators makes their retention critical to the success of the program. Equally challenging is trying to fill positions of slightly less than one FTE (i.e. 0.90 FTE).

> Districts also need flexibility in using the grant funds for expenses in support of the program. Training expenses for the facilitators need to be allowable for the grant. Additionally, the facilitators need to have funds available to them to purchase materials and resources for themselves and the teachers they serve.

> For the districts that returned funds at the end of the first year of the grant, it was not that all their needs were met but rather the inability to use excess funds in one school to cover shortages at another school. For example, one school may have been funded at a level to hire 1.1 FTE's while another may have had 0.9. This caused over-funding in the former and under-funding in the latter. The district had to return the over-funding and supplement from their general fund to cover the under-funding.

Funding Level

It is recommended that the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant be fully funded based on the Picus & Odden Final Report, November 30, 2005.

> In many districts it was necessary to use general funds to supplement the instructional facilitator program. While this reallocation of funds shows positive support for the program, it also puts stress on other programs that are cut in order to provide that support.

> It was noted in several district reports that the individual teachers who applied for the facilitator positions were some of their most educated and experienced staff members. Because these people were from their highest salary group, it limited the number of FTE's that could be hired. Full funding will address this problem.

Report Summary

Based on the research provided by Picus and Odden and the reports from the Wyoming school districts after only one year of implementation, it can be argued that the enactment of the School-Based Instructional Facilitators / Instructional Coaches Grant has the potential to be one of the most significant positive influences on student achievement in recent history. This is a bold statement given the impact of other recent activities of the Wyoming legislature related to public education. This program however goes directly to the key function of formal education--the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom. The groundwork for this program has now been established. The recommendations put forth in this report will lead to a more comprehensive, effective, and efficient program. While the focus of this program is teacher quality, the rewards of this program will be reaped by the children of Wyoming.

Wyoming Department of Education
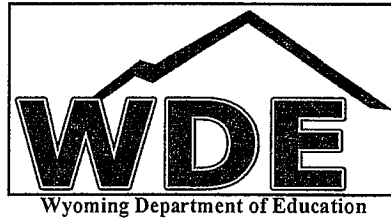
Pilot Year 1 Report

School-Based Instructional Facilitators/Coaches Grant

State Report by December 1, 2007

- To Joint Education Interim Committee (JEIC)
- Expenditures of amounts distributed
- Instructional facilitation strategies
- Impact on student performance
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies employed by the district
- Recommendations for future funding
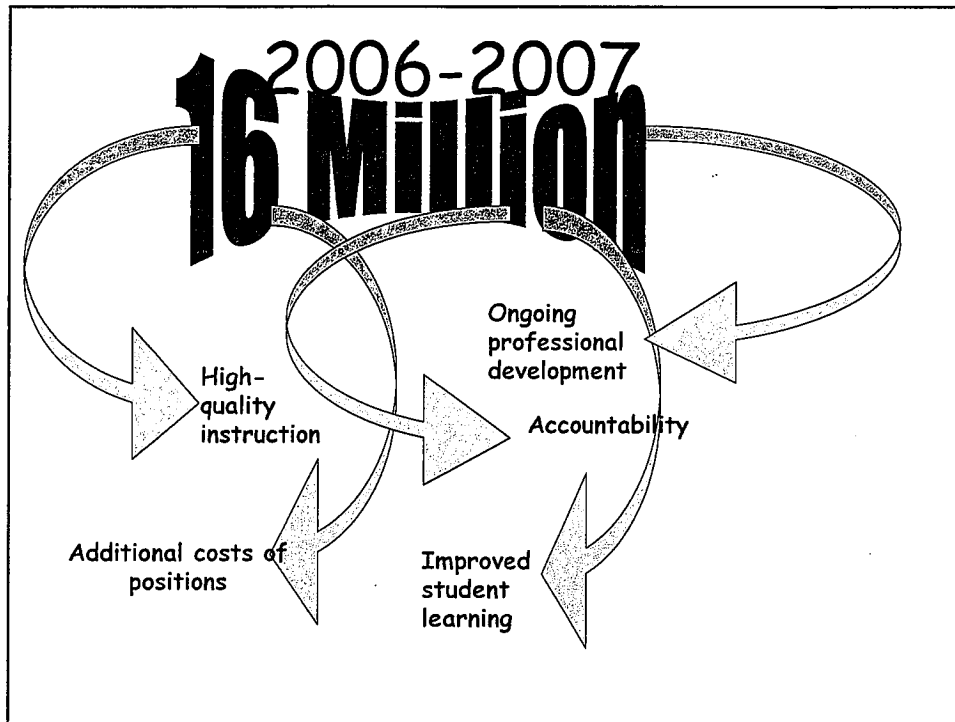
History: Perspective/Process

- March 10, 2006 – Grant established
- April – Initial grant applications
- May – Initial award notices
- Summer – Staff hired and program defined
  - 270 FTE's = 344 people
- Fall & Winter – Professional Development

Instructional Facilitator Professional Development

- Wyoming Department of Education
- District
- Consortia
- Professional Associations

District Reports – Spring, 2007

- Staffing and Funding, by School
- Criteria for Hiring
- Supervision and Oversight
- Training Opportunities
- Justification of Continuation
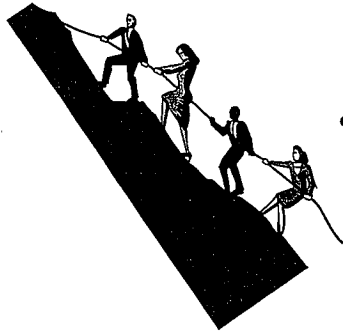- Recommendations for Improvement

Instructional Facilitator Reports

- Projected Impact on teaching/learning
- Measures
- Evaluation of Effectiveness

What is an Instructional Coach?

- on site
- professional developer
- partners with educators
- identify and assist with implementation of proven teaching methods

An Instructional Coach …

- **Partners**
  - With individual teachers
  - With collaborative teams of teachers

- **Facilitates in the analysis of data**
  - To identify student learning needs
  - To base instruction on the needs of each student.

An Instructional Coach

- **Behavior**
  - Knows how to build relationships that lead to trust and respect
  - Repertoire of classroom management skills

- **Content Knowledge**
 - Expertise in the art of instruction in specified content areas of the curriculum

- **Instruction**
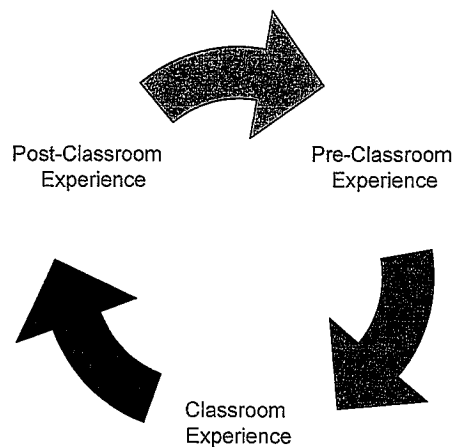 - Focus on student learning and achievement

- **Formative Assessment**
  - Measuring student learning frequently to ensure proficiencies are being met by all students.

What
does an
instructional
coach
do?

Coaching Cycle

Post-Classroom
Experience

Pre-Classroom
Experience
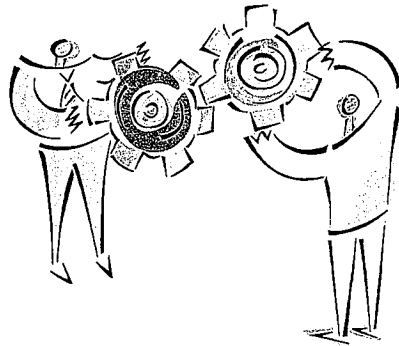
Classroom
Experience

Insert video clip of pre-conference

Discussion, questions, requests

Pre-Classroom Experience Conversation

Instructional Coach

- Breaks down the instructor's materials
- Lays out the step-by-step procedures
- Suggests what teacher should watch for during the model lessons
- Does everything possible to make it easier for the teacher to implement
- Asks about and addresses collaborating teacher's concerns
- Co-constructs observation form with teachers

The Classroom Experience

- Modeling
  - To show a teacher exactly how to implement a particular intervention.

- Observation
  - Coach uses the observation form to watch for data related to:
    - Critical teaching behaviors
    - Fidelity to scientifically proven practices
    - Student behavior and performance
    - Teacher behavior

- Team Teaching
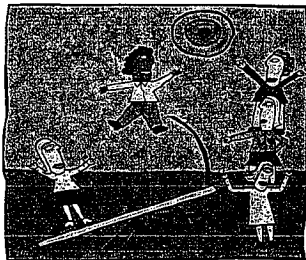
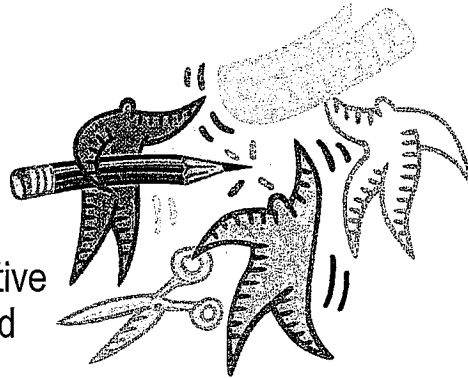# Post-Classroom Experience Conversation

- What was supposed to happen?
- What happened?
- What accounts for the difference?
- What will I do differently next time?

Thinking together...

Coaching Is Collaboration

- Each relationship is differentiated to fit the unique needs of each teacher

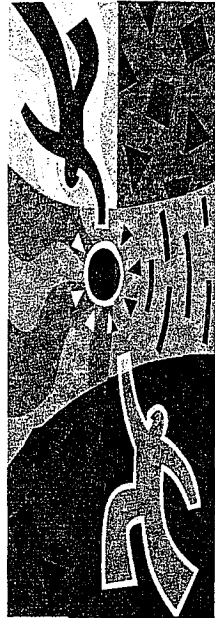- Process of modeling, observation, collaborative exploration of data, and dialogue

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A dialogue or conversation among individuals ...

must be based on mutual respect, equality,

a willingness to listen

and

to risk one's prejudices and opinions.

-Bernstein

Reciprocity

- Everyone benefits when one person learns

- Coaches learn from the teachers as much as the teachers learn from the coaches

- Every learning situation is a chance for learning

Nyana Sims & Mike McManamen from Torrington

Goshen County Mentor Program

- Major focus of Instructional Facilitators
- Contributed to staff development
- Student Impact on achievement
- Differentiation of strategies
- Change

Technology Facilitator

Role of Technology in Instructional Facilitation

Why Technology is an incremental piece of delivering instruction

Instructional Facilitator Technology

- New ideas and resources embedded in instructional delivery
  - Smart Boards
  - Podcasts
  - Keypads for instant assessment
  - Tools for data collection

Natrona County School District Accountability Measures Baseline Data

- 35 FTE
- 48 Instructional Facilitators
- Grades K - 12

Self-Reporting Survey Results

Baseline Data Gathered
December, 2006

How were IFs spending their time?

- 51% with teachers
- 20% in planning, researching, analyzing data
- 18% in training
- 12% with other (meeting with principals, helping to determine and write NCA/Title I plans, preparing to train teachers, goal setting)

How were IFs supporting teachers?

- Visiting classrooms and providing oral and written feedback
- Modeling lessons and effective instruction
- Providing training in instructional strategies with an emphasis on high implementation fidelity
- Leading professional development experiences
- Assessing, collecting, reading, analyzing, and interpreting student achievement data to guide instruction
- Embedding the PAWS assessment descriptors into the curriculum

Who were IFs serving?

- Classroom teachers
  - 81% of NCSD classroom teachers had worked with an IF at least one time by December, 2006
- Special education teachers
- Tutors
- Teachers of gifted students
- Teachers of English Language Learners

What content areas were served by IFs?

- Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies
- Foreign Language
- Art, Music, PE/Health
- Career/Vocational Education

Impact of Instructional Facilitators on Teachers & Students in NCSD:
An Initial Evaluation Report

Prepared by Dr. Leslie Rush and
Dr. Suzanne Young, UW professors
January, 2007

Part I: Changes in Teacher Practice

Teachers:
- Take advantage of opportunities to work together
- View policies and practices as encouraging collaboration
- Were familiar with school improvement plans and implementing strategies
- Used assessment data and student work to drive instructional decisions
- Were familiar with using technology
- Used common vocabulary
- Had a clear sense of goals related to their work with an IF to improve student achievement

Part II: Changes in Student Performance

- Student use of problem-solving skills and strategies was viewed as very important by teachers; however, their perception was that student use of such strategies had room for improvement.
- Same pattern was true in terms of students' use of common vocabulary

Student Engagement

- *Elementary* students are more engaged than secondary students and differentiate by subject matter in terms of interest.
- *Secondary* students differentiate by an increasing involvement with peers, family members, extra-curricular activities and sports.
- *Secondary* students noted the importance of hands-on projects – as opposed to book work and worksheets – and learning information that was applicable to their lives and futures.

Evaluation Report Recommendations

IFs should continue to assist teachers in:
- Using assessment data to make instructional decisions
- Technology integration
- Identifying problem-solving strategies and common vocabulary and ways to instruct students in their use
- Developing constructivist or other interactive, hands-on types of lessons
- Facilitating conversations with students about their assessment activities (goal setting)

NOTE:
IF positions are valued and the District should continue to clarify their roles as non-evaluative

Stretch Goal for 2007-08

- 75% of IF time spent coaching individuals and working with small and large groups of teachers to implement District and school improvement plans aimed at increasing student achievement

IF Professional Development

- Innovation Configuration Map: roadmap to guide and reflect upon professional practice
  - Culture of coaching
  - Analyzing and using data
  - Research and resources
  - The facilitator's professional development
  - Developing relationships
- Cohort Study Groups
  - Types and roles of coaching
  - Implementing research based coaching strategies
- Essential Curriculum
- Goal Setting

PAWS

2006	2007
Gr 4 Reading – 64%	Gr 4 Reading – 77%
Gr 4 Math - 73%	Gr 4 Math - 87%
Gr 8 Reading – 62%	Gr 8 Reading – 71%
Gr 8 Math - 54%	Gr 8 Math - 61%
Gr 11 Reading –63%	Gr 11 Reading –74%
Gr 11 Math - 58%	Gr 11 Math - 65%

Recommendations

- Professional Standards for Facilitators
- Professional Development for Facilitators
- Reporting and Accountability
- Funding Structure
- Funding Level

Estimated Effect Sizes of Major Recommendations

Recommended Program	Effect Size
Full Day Kindergarten	0.77
Class Size of 15/16 in Grades K-3	
Overall	0.25
Low income and Minority Students	0.50
Multi-age classrooms	
Multi-grade Classrooms	-0.1 to 0.0
Multi-age Classrooms	0.0 to 0.50
Professional Development with Classroom Instructional Coaches	1.25 to 2.70
Tutoring, 1-1	0.4 to 2.5
English-Language Learners	0.45
Extended-Day Programs	
Structured Academic Focused Summer school	0.45
Embedded Technology	0.30 to 0.38
Gifted and Talented	
Accelerated Instruction or Grade Skipping	0.5 to 1.0
Enrichment Programs	0.4 to 0.7

Lawrence O. Picus and Associates, An Evidence-Based Approach to Recalibrating Wyoming's Block Grant School Funding Formula, Final Report, November 30, 2005. Page 76