

Side by Side and Face to Face: A Model for Literacy Coaching

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Developing Early Language and Literacy in Danville (DELL-D)

Early Reading First Funded by the U.S. Department of Education

Early Reading First



Early Reading First (ERF) is a federal grant program housed in the U. S. Department of Education. This program provides funds directly to projects based on a competitive, peer review process. ERF "supports the development of early childhood centers of excellence that focus on all areas of development, especially on the early language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills that prepare children for continued school success and that serve primarily children from low-income families." (www.earlyreadingfirst.gov).

ERF funds must be used to:

- Provide intensive, ongoing professional development
- Ensure a broad early childhood foundation
- Integrate scientifically-based reading research into all aspects of the program, including materials, teaching strategies, and curricula
- Develop literacy-rich classroom environments
- Implement screening and ongoing progress monitoring
- Evaluate effects on classrooms and children

DELL-D



Developing Early Language and Literacy in Danville (DELL-D) is an Early Reading First Project located in a small city in east central Illinois. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has three community partners in Danville:

- East Central Illinois Community Action Agency (Head Start)
 - Danville School District #118
 - Danville Area Community College Child Development Center
- In all, the project serves 19 teachers in 10 classrooms and approximately 240 preschool children.

Professional Development Approaches in DELL-D

Professional development is the foundation for change in classroom practice. In addition to being intensive and ongoing, professional development is responsive to classrooms and offered through multiple, integrated formats.

Year 1:

- Teacher Institutes – 5 ten-hour weekend institutes
- Literacy Coaching – weekly for half-day session

Years 2 and 3:

- Teacher Institutes – 3 ten-hour weekend institutes, 30 hours/year
- Literacy Coaching – weekly for half-day session, 100 hours/year
- Small Group Meetings – 8 two-hour meetings and additional workgroups as requested, 48 hours/year

Year	Teacher Institutes	Monthly Small Group Meetings	In-Classroom Coaching
1	Basics		Basics
2	Building on the Basics	Basics and Building on the Basics	Basics and Building on the Basics
3	Going Beyond the Basics	Building on the Basics and Going Beyond the Basics	Basics, Building on the Basics, and Going Beyond the Basics

Literacy Coaching

Coaching is one of three inter-related approaches to professional development in the DEll-D Project. Coaching **links** the topics and big ideas presented and practiced in teacher institutes and monthly small group meetings and workgroups with the everyday context of classroom practice. In turn, data from coaching and classroom assessment inform not only the selection of topics but also the training strategies, groupings, and locations.

This approach to professional development keeps training fresh, salient, and able to accommodate the needs of teachers who bring to the project a broad range of experiences and educational backgrounds and who work in three different organizational contexts: Head Start, public school, and child care.

Progress toward ERF and DEll-D Project goals is measured by: Pre- and post-scores on the Early Language and Learning Classroom Observation: Pre-K Tool (ELLCO) (Smith, Brady, & Anastasopoulos, 2008)

and



Achievement of benchmarks and levels on the Classroom Recognition and Improvement System (CRIS) in the following areas:

- observational data based teaching skills checklists
- fidelity to curriculum planning and implementation,
- integration of SBRR skill areas into all aspects of the learning environment
- making decisions based on child data

What is Coaching?

"Coaching is an adult learning strategy through which the coach promotes the learner's ability to reflect on his/her own ability to determine their effectiveness and to develop a plan for refinement and use of the actions in the future." (Rush & Sheldon, 2005)

DEll-D Coaching Model:



A coach is a "vehicle" that carries a valued person from where he/she is to where he/she wants to be

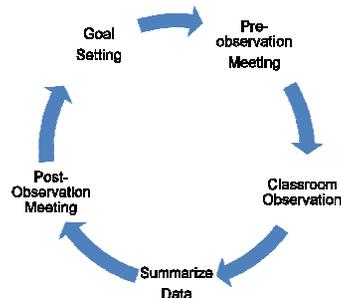
DEll-D Coaches ...

- Work with teachers in their classrooms for 3 hrs/week
- Maintain the coaching schedule
- Attend teacher institutes and monthly small group meetings alongside teachers
- Focus on strengths and growth
- Foster skills in problem-solving, self-direction, and reflection
- Keep the lines of communication open and build trust
- Model strategies by leading, shadow coaching, side-by-side
- Use the coaching cycle
- Support and celebrate change

Developing Coaches...

- Orientation
- Manual
- Ongoing training
- Coach for the coaches
- Side by side visits

DEll-D Coaching Cycle



Goal-Setting

Using the ELLCO, CRIS, and child assessment data, teachers and coaches work together to write a long-term classroom development plan. This plan guides the weekly coaching visits. Long term classroom plans are written in the fall and are revisited as often as necessary, but at least every 3months.

Prior to the weekly visit and using data collected from the previous visit, coach and teacher determine the focus (e.g., focus – comprehension of stories, teaching strategy – ask questions during the reading) and their respective roles (e.g., prepare in advance together by writing appropriate questions on sticky notes, the coach will read to the children and model asking questions, the teacher will video tape the activity for later review with the coach.

Pre-observation Meeting

Observation

Coach observes, models, collects data



Post-Observation Meeting

Coach and teacher analyze data, discuss problems. The coach matches amount and type of feedback to the individual teacher as she builds self-direction and self-evaluation skills in the teacher.



Coaching Results

"Coaching is developing people on purpose." (Doyle, 1991)

Changes in ELLCO Scores Year 2

Section	Pre-observation (Sept/Oct. 2008)	Post-observation (Apr/May 2009)
Learning Environment Checklist	32.75	39.08
General Classroom Environment	22.75	24.25
Language & Literacy Environment	26.25	31.25
Language Activities Rating Scale	8.08	11.00
Total	90.17	105.50

Changes in CRIS Levels Year 2

CRIS Levels	Sept 2008	Feb 2008	April 2008	June 2008
Establishing Bronze	100%	58%	17%	0%
Achieved Bronze	--	42%	83%	100%
Achieved Silver	--	8%	42%	58%
Achieved Gold	--	--	--	25%

Disclaimer

This information is being provided for the purpose of the fiscal year (FY) 2008 Early Reading First Grantee meeting in Seattle, Washington. Assessment tools and other information and materials mentioned or shown at this meeting by presenters or grantees are provided as resources and examples for the viewer's convenience. Their inclusion is not intended as an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition, the instructional practices and assessments discussed or shown in these presentations are not intended to mandate, direct, or control a State's, local educational agency's, or school's specific instructional content, academic achievement system and assessments, curriculum, or program of instruction. States and local programs are free to use any instructional content, achievement system and assessments, curriculum, or program instruction that they wish, so long as the instructional materials and literacy activities meet the Early Reading First Statutory requirement of being based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of the language and literacy skills described in the Early Reading First Statute, and are part of their approved grant application.

