

# EVALUATION BRIEF

## SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES AND THE COACHING ACADEMY 2007-2008

*“Our theory of action proposed that time allocated, and spent in high leverage coaching roles, would lead to improved teacher skills and practice, and in turn, improved student achievement.”*

### THE COACHING ACADEMY

*School Instructional Coaches (SICs)* work to ensure successful and effective implementation of instructional programs in schools by providing knowledge, skill, and support to teachers. The program evaluation for 2007-08 was not the work of *School Instructional Coaches* themselves, but of monthly academies, provided by the Schultz Center, to prepare school instructional coaches for the challenging role they have in schools. District-based support for this school-based position was being re-examined for the 2008-2009 school year, so aspects of the evaluation was also aimed at determining the perceived needs of schools in knowledge and skill areas necessary for high performing *School Instructional Coaches*, particularly in areas other than Literacy, which has, in the past, defined the role. The objective for the 2007-08 evaluation was to determine the extent to which monthly coaching academies were able to support *School Instructional Coaches (SICs)* in their expanded role, and the extent to which they were able to address the content, instructional strategies, and adult learning needs of *School Instructional Coaches* in order to better prepare them to carry out their roles as defined in schools.

### HOW THE COACHING ACADEMY WORKS

All programs designed and delivered through the Center are based on The Schultz Center's *theory of action*. We believe that if teachers are provided with deep, focused professional development around research-based practices, and ample opportunities for reflection and personal growth, that this will lead to excellent instruction and student achievement. Changes in teacher knowledge and skill will translate to student performance as depicted in the model at right.

Coaching is time and resource intensive, and we are accountable for the resources expended and the results achieved. Data collection systems in the program were designed to accurately and validly document necessary information in the process, and provide evidence that our *theory of action* is sound. Data was collected on time spent in types of coaching activities, and feedback on training needs in the areas of subject area knowledge and instructional skills and practices. Adult learning theory principles were collected for use in ongoing needs assessment, program planning, and program evaluation.

### WHAT WAS EVALUATED

The evaluation of SICs and the monthly coaching academies for school year 2007-2008 was based on two primary data sources:

1. direct feedback from surveys of principals and *School Instructional Coaches* themselves, and
2. data collected by program staff to document ongoing coaching activities provided to schools in the form of monthly activity logs.

### Program Highlights

🌟 Data was Collected from Surveys and Monthly Activity Logs

67% Principals Responding

64% Coaches Responding

106,871 Reported Coaching Hours

🌟 Identified High Leverage Roles for *School Instructional Coaches* to Help Maximize Success of Educational Programs



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## WHO PARTICIPATED

Electronic surveys of all principals and *School Instructional Coaches* were distributed in May. Two-thirds of each group responded, providing sufficient data to project with confidence that the opinions and attitudes reported were representative of groups as a whole.

Survey Groups	# Distributed	# Responded	% Responding
Principals	153	103	67%
Coaches	165	105	64%
Schools Reporting by Both (Coach & Principals)	84 (55%) to allow comparisons within and across schools in some cases		

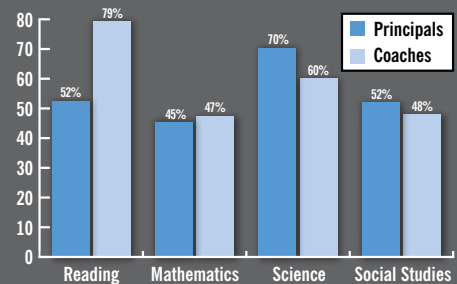
## AREAS OF TRAINING NEED

From provided feedback, we determined the highest priority training needs for supplementing the knowledge of coaches in subject matter and helping them with skills to assist teachers in improving instructional practice. The top areas of need identified by principals for assisting teachers were:

- ◆ using formative assessment to guide instruction (79%)
- ◆ planning for differentiated instruction (78%)
- ◆ planning based on data (76%)
- ◆ developing rigor in lesson planning (74%)
- ◆ with knowledge of ESE processes & procedures (72%)
- ◆ with knowledge of specialized instruction, strategies and interventions (71%)
- ◆ effective lesson planning (70%)

Both principals and coaches were asked about levels of need that coaches currently have for training in specific subject area content. In some cases, a “perception gap” of perceived needs for subject matter training existed between the views of principals and coaches. The bar graph at right illustrates these discrepancies.

Perceived Areas of Training Need



## SUCCESS OF THE WORK

Of the specific roles of *School Instructional Coaches*, five of these roles were identified as categories of activity that were based on best-practices evidence and linked to improving student achievement. **These high leverage roles were classroom supporter, learning facilitator, instructional specialist, data coach, and curriculum specialist.** Monthly activity logs reporting the number of hours spent in various activities was collected. If our *theory of action* is correct, greater concentration of time spent in these *high leverage roles* will be linked to higher levels of student achievement. Analysis of reported coaching hours submitted for 2007-2008 determined that *high leverage roles* were emphasized heavily in the work of *School Instructional Coaches*. The table at right lists all categories of coaching roles used in the reporting system and the proportion of hours recorded in that category in order of magnitude (most frequently recorded to least). The identified *high leverage roles* are emphasized for clarity.

Coaching Roles	% Time Reported
<i>Classroom Supporter</i>	22%
<i>Learning Facilitator</i>	12%
School Support	10%
<i>Instructional Specialist</i>	9%
Learner (Coaches Training)	9%
<i>Data Coach</i>	8%
School Leader	6%
<i>Curriculum Specialist</i>	5%
Other (?)	5%
Resource Provider	5%
Accountability	3%
Catalyst for Change	3%
Mentor	2%
<b>All Reported Coaching Hours*</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Percentages Represent a Total of 106,871 Coaching Hours.

## CONCLUSION

Our *theory of action* proposed that time allocated, and spent in high leverage coaching roles, would lead to improved teacher skills and practice, and in turn, improved student achievement. All schools were categorized by the amount of time spent in *high leverage coaching roles*. As the graph shown at right indicates, **the more time spent in high leverage coaching roles in the school, the more points are gained on the School Grade points total.** Feedback from surveys and coaching data verified that **the work of School Instructional Coaches continues to be highly valued as critical to the success of a school instructional program.**

School Grade Point Gains in Relation to Time Allocated to Coaching

