Coaching Overview

STATE PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) was awarded a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) of the U.S. Department of Education to assist Maryland in reforming and improving our system for personnel preparation and professional learning in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of evidence-based specially designed math instruction and social-emotional supports for elementary as students with disabilities. One of the design elements of the grant is grounded in professional learning and coaching.

The MSDE collaborated with significant stakeholders and national experts, Dr. Douglas Fisher, Dr. Nancy Frey, Dr. Thomas Guskey, Dr. Jenny Root, and Dr. Carol Quirk to provide robust professional learning and consultation on a coaching program that supports educators with planning, implementing, and adjusting evidence-based specially designed math instruction and social-emotional supports with fidelity. Fidelity of educator implementation and coaching process implementation will be measured by the SPDG evaluators, Dr. Amy Gaumer Erickson, and Dr. Pattie Noonan.

ROLE OF COACHING

Coaching is an essential component of effective professional learning. A coaching framework and process have been designed and will be implemented and maintained by university, state, and local school systems.

SPDG Coaches work collaboratively with educators to create conditions for deep reflection, learning, and desirable changes in practice that support teacher growth and autonomy. SPDG Coaching facilitates ongoing targeted professional learning grounded in research and builds on the strengths and talents of educators to ensure all students, specifically students with disabilities, have access to rigorous evidence-based math, social-emotional, and specially designed instruction which contributes to increased math achievement and equitable outcomes for students.

Coaches engage educators in the coaching cycle to support fidelity of the evidence-based practices (EBPs). The coaching cycle offers feedback aligned to clear criteria of the EBPs and support through co-planning, direct instruction, modelling, and observation/videotaping.

Evidence-based Practices

Core Math

1. Explicit (Systematic) Instruction
2. Mathematical Language
3. Representations
4. Number Lines
5. Word Problems
6. Fact Fluency

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)

1. Systematic Prompting and Feedback
2. Self-regulation Support for Learning and Behavior
3. Peer Assisted Instruction
4. Manipulative-based Instructional Sequences
5. Modified Schema-Based Instruction
6. Learning and Communication Accessibility

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

1. Identity and Agency
2. Emotional Regulation
3. Cognitive Regulation
4. Social Skills

INITIAL PLANNING

Prior to beginning the coaching process, the coach will communicate individually with each educator, including specialized educators (i.e., special educator, ESOL educator), visit the classroom in the implementing math classes, and meet with each educator to develop a Work Plan.

To develop the Work Plan, the coach and educator collaboratively:

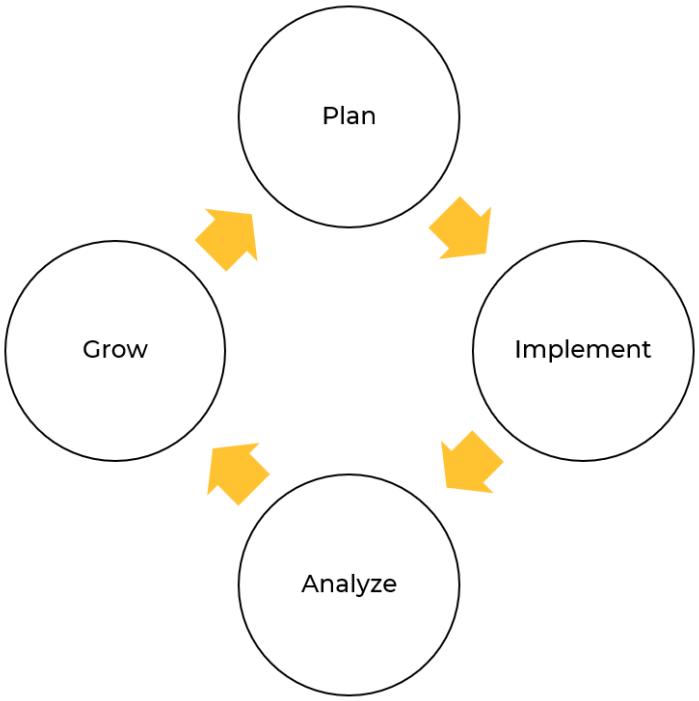
- Identification of best communication methods
- Discussion of types of teacher-preferred in-class, resource, or other learning opportunities
- Preview and self-assess District selected evidence-based practice areas for mathematics, specially designed instruction, and social-emotional learning (SEL) supports
- Self-reflection of proficiency levels
- Schedule the first coaching cycle

COACHING CYCLE

Once a Work Plan is developed, the coaching cycle is ready to begin. There are four stages to the coaching cycle: plan, implement, analyze, and grow.

The goal of a Coaching Cycle is to:

- Collaboratively plan the implementation of evidence-based practice(s)
- Provide feedback on the implementation of the evidence-based practice(s)
- Engage in learning activities to build teacher's capacity for implementing EBPs
- Increase teacher autonomy



EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

The coaching process is a partnership between the coach and educator designed to support proficient implementation of targeted practices.

	Expectations	Outcomes
Coach	• Implement coaching framework and process with fidelity • Provide feedback aligned to criteria of the evidence-based practices • Consistently document coaching cycles • Strategically differentiate educator support • Maintain confidentiality	• Meet individual educator needs • Build capacity and autonomy of educators • Grow coaching practices • Feel success, confidence, and competence
Educator	• Strategically plan standards driven lessons utilizing evidence-based practices • Consistently commit to coaching sessions • Reflect and adjust teaching practices • Advocate for needs and exercise agency	• Increase the use and fidelity of evidence-based practices • Meet individual learner needs • Reflect and build autonomy • Feel success, confidence, and competence
Principals	• Preserve confidentiality between coaches and teachers • Cultivate a safe teaching and learning environment for teachers to take risks • Ensure coaches and educators have a location for private coaching sessions and time for coaching (i.e., compensation, coverage) • Prioritize the outcomes of SPDG through the School Improvement Plan and engage in school-based and stakeholder meetings	• Meet coach and educator needs • Reflect and highlight impact of EBPs on student outcomes • Scale up implementation of EBPs school-wide • Celebrate improved school-wide math performance

AGREEMENTS

The coaches and teachers implementing SPDG evidence-based practices will collaborate to engage in the coaching process as they work together to improve outcomes for all children with a focus on success for children with disabilities.

The purpose of the following agreements is to support a clear understanding of this commitment:

- Initial planning and coaching sessions are scheduled in advance. The coach provides calendar invites. If there is a need to cancel a meeting (i.e., illness, student emergency) or adjust timelines, communication is provided to the other person at least 12 hours in advance to honor the other person's time. We recognize that at times there could be an unforeseen emergency that does not allow prior notice.
- Initial planning includes collaboratively drafting a Work Plan to clarify and self-assess the district selected EBPs. The Work Plan documents proficient EBPs as well as informs coaching cycles.
- In a Coaching Cycle, the EBPs are co-planned with the coach and teacher. The coach observes/video records the teacher's implementation of the EBP. Documentation of the observation is non-evaluative and not shared with the teacher's supervisor and/or administrators. Video recording is optional at the discretion of the teacher. Video captured will only be used for learning purposes and will only be shared with the teacher's consent.
- Coaching conversations are scheduled post-observation within 2 workings days whenever possible. The coaching conversation capitalizes on identifying the strengths and opportunities to "grow" proficiency of implementation. Coaching conversations are confidential. Coaches document designated data points required by the external SPDG evaluating team.
- Once an evidence-based practice is determined proficient, the Work Plan is updated by the coach and both the teacher, and the coach determines the next EBP to be implemented and coached.
- Professional learning is essential to implementing evidence-based practices with fidelity. Professional learning is provided through co-planning and a variety of learning activities within the coaching cycles, which are facilitated within a workday or compensated outside the workday.
- Coaching Cycles are a collaborative process therefore input from the teacher is essential for achieving the outcomes of SPDG. At the end of each coaching cycle, a coach asks for input on what is working and what can be improved with the next coaching cycle. Feedback is also collected after each coaching cycle through an anonymous survey.

District Selected Evidence-based Practices

	Math	SDI	SEL
All	Fluency	Manipulative-based Instructional Sequences	Cognitive Regulation
HCPSS	Representation	Self-regulation & Support for Learning & Behavior	Identity & Agency
WCPS	Explicit Systematic Instruction	Peer Assisted Instruction	Emotional Regulation

Math

- **Fluency:** Automatic retrieval of math facts is a critical component of mathematics proficiency as it gives more mental energy to understand and execute complex mathematical tasks and procedures. Students need to be able to apply knowledge of all operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) accurately and efficiently. They also need automaticity in subtasks important for solving, such as recalling equivalencies and estimating place value. This is not easy for students who experience difficulties in mathematics. Without automatic retrieval, students will struggle to follow their teachers' explanations of and demonstrate proficiency.
- **Representation:** Concrete and semi-concrete representations are part of core instructional programs. Students who struggle to learn mathematics need additional, focused instruction using representations to model mathematical ideas. Teachers choose representations carefully and connect them explicitly to abstract representations (mathematical notation) so that students can conceptualize the connection between the representations and the mathematics.
- **Explicit Systematic Instruction:** Providing explicit instruction during instruction to develop student understanding of mathematical ideas. The term systematic indicates that: (a) instructional elements intentionally build students' knowledge over time toward an identified learning outcome, (b) materials are designed to develop topics in an incremental and intentional way, and (c) instruction provided supports student learning.

SDI

- **Manipulative-based Instructional Sequences:** This includes both concrete and virtual manipulative instructional sequences and are evidence- based interventions for students with disabilities. They are often referred to as concrete- representational-abstract or concrete-semi concrete-abstract. It is a framework in which the concrete (movable), representational (pictorial) and abstract (mathematic notation) forms of math concepts, strategies, and procedures are explicitly taught to facilitate deep understanding. While phases may differ based on student and concept (e.g., CRA, CA, VR), the critical commonality is progression through phases based on student data.
- **Self-regulation & Support for Learning & Behavior:** Teachers customize task requirements, and provide instruction in goal setting, self- evaluation, and self-graphing performance and progress. These result in opportunities to:
    - Create agency/confidence
    - Regulate emotions
    - Recognize/regulate strategies toward a goal
    - Engage with adults and peers as a learner and class community member
    - Support peers as learners
- **Peer Assisted Instruction:** Teachers use peers to provide models, prompts, and authentic

feedback (Mahoney, 2019). Example strategies include:

- Reciprocal teaching/learning
- Tutor/Tutee
- Mixed ability and flexible grouping
- Mixed ability learning pairs

SEL

- **Cognitive Regulation:** Successful learners take actions and use processes to acquire information, organize information, make decisions, and assume responsibility for learning. Learner Competencies:
  - Recognizes one's thinking and considers the actions to get it done.
  - Responds to personal restlessness or inattention with strategies to help them re-focus using breaks, call and respond, or physical movement, monitoring progress, and celebrating growth.
  - Recognizes when problems occur and takes effective steps toward a solution.
  - Problem-solves by considering options, making a choice, and/or taking the appropriate action.
  - Manages time and adopts study habits using organizational scaffolds as needed.
- **Identity & Agency:** Identity (how we think about ourselves) governs Agency (belief that I can influence the world around me). A strong sense of Identity and Agency helps a learner take risks and persevere through challenges. Learner Competencies:
  - A recognition of one's strengths.
  - The self-confidence to try something new.
  - Self-efficacy or belief in oneself.
  - A growth mindset fueled by perseverance and grit.
- **Emotional Regulation:** Emotions can positively or negatively affect how a learner participates in school and how they manage or regulate their behavior. The ability to understand and regulate emotions and behavior influences how they are perceived by others. Learner Competencies:
  - Ability to identify and describe one's own emotions.
  - Perception of one's emotional state as the first step to identifying the emotions of others.
  - Recognizes and manages feelings of stress.