

# Washington State Enhanced Peer Coaching Program Fact Sheet: 2008-2009

*"I have grown as a teacher-leader and have learned many new strategies for technology integration...I believe it has improved my relationships with peers, increased the engagement of my students, and motivated me to continue improving my craft."*  
Peer Coach

The following statements are excerpts from the Enhanced Peer Coaching Program of Washington State 2008 – 2009 Annual Evaluation Report. The purpose of this document is to provide a look at selected findings, it is not an executive summary and interested parties should see the annual report for more information. The evaluation of the program was conducted by Evaluation & Research Associates of Lynnwood, Washington.

## Program Description

Washington State's Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) received federal funding through Enhancing Education through Technology (EETT) to implement a program that uses technology in K-12 schools to improve student academic achievement. OSPI dedicated funding from this source to implement a two-year enhanced version of the Microsoft Peer Coaching Program to teachers from eligible schools. Coaches were awarded funds for training, registration at the Northwest Council for Computer Education (NCCE) Conference, travel expenses to trainings and NCCE, substitute teacher and/or release time costs, and equipment and software for themselves and their collaborating teachers. Nine facilitators in Educational Service Districts (ESDs) were responsible for the facilitation and management of the coach training sessions.

## Participants

- Two cadres were funded in 2008-2009: 162 out of 176 teachers continued as cadre 1 coaches in their second year of the program and 96 coaches were funded for two years as cadre 2 coaches
- Peer coaches worked with one or multiple teachers at their school, with a total of 380 collaborating teachers.

## Peer Coach Training

- Valuable aspects of the training sessions included collaborating with other coaches, learning specific technology skills or about a new technology resource, and having time to work and explore on projects that would be useful for their collaborating teacher or in their classroom.
- Coaches' suggestions to improve trainings included inviting collaborating teachers to attend more sessions and more time to work on their own projects.

## Equipment

- Cadre 1 coaches most commonly purchased computers, digital cameras, video projectors, and document cameras for themselves. Cadre 2 coaches also most frequently purchased computers, followed by software and interactive whiteboards.
- Collaborating teachers most commonly received a document camera, computer, interactive whiteboard, and/or software.

## Peer Coaching Schedule and Activities

- About 65% of coaches spent up to 50 hours coaching over the school year.
- At least 90% of coaches assisted their collaborating teacher with integrating technology into lessons. Over two-thirds of coaches worked with their collaborating teachers on learning how to use a new piece of equipment or offered them tech support. These two areas were rated as the most useful by collaborating teachers.

## NCCE (2009)

- According to conference records, the final number of peer coaches and collaborating teachers attending the conference in 2009 was 189.
- The majority of coaches from each cadre marked that the NCCE conference was a good or excellent professional development experience overall.

## Program Structure

### School, District, and ESD Support

- Coaches were most satisfied with the support from their ESD and less satisfied with support from their school district.
- Many coaches commented on limited district technology resources, including delays in technology support, outdated equipment, and blocks on some of the resources they wished to purchase or use.
- Sixty-five percent of cadre 1 coaches and 73% of cadre 2 coaches communicated with their principal regarding peer coaching at least every other month, though 65% of cadre 1 coaches and 46% of cadre 2 coaches never shared their collaboration logs with their principals.

*"The peer coaching model has made me more reflective on my teaching practice. Now, I'm constantly thinking about where I can incorporate technology to my lessons. Before, my lessons were strictly taught with the minimal technology possible because of my lack of skills with technology. Now, I feel more confident about doing more projects that require technology because I know the students will be engaged and will learn more by doing them."* Collaborating Teacher

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## *Program Benefits and Barriers*

- Coaches identified benefits of the peer coaching model to be the one-on-one support for teachers learning to integrate technology from other teachers, the opportunity to collaborate with a peer, and obtaining technology equipment.
- Collaborating teachers cited benefits of peer coaching as having an expert nearby to answer their questions and offer technical support, one-on-one assistance, and the opportunity to collaborate with a colleague.
- Principals were largely satisfied with the peer coaching program. On a five-point scale where 1 = Not Satisfied and 5 = Very Satisfied, their mean overall experience with the program was 4.36.

## *Barriers to Participating*

- As in 2007-2008, "time" to participate in the program was the most common barrier experienced by coaches in 2008-2009.
- Most coaches (75%) reported not encountering barriers, those that did specified they faced barriers related to time, budget, technology support, and problems with collaborating teachers or school administration.
- Many coaches experienced challenges with district technology departments, which approved brands of equipment, did not communicate well on the grant budget, did not allow access to certain Web resources, and was not timely in installing or maintaining equipment.

## *Year 2*

- Cadre 1 coaches felt more comfortable in their second year and felt they accomplished more.
- Having cadre 1 coaches work with new collaborating teachers was thought to broaden the impact of the program at the school, though many thought working for more than a year with a collaborating teacher was very beneficial for both parties.

## **Impact**

### ***On Coaches***

- Overall, coaches felt their own lessons had improved, especially in using technology and incorporating standards. They were more up-to-date on technology resources and strategies, and learned through collaborating with other coaches and their collaborating teachers.
- Many coaches grew into a leadership role as a result of their increased knowledge and collaboration, becoming technology advocates or advisors at their school.

### *Cadre 1*

- ✓ Cadre 1 coach self-ratings of their collaboration skills and coaching skills increased significantly during the first year of the grant then increased again at a significant level by the end of their second year.
- ✓ The most gains by cadre 1 coaches in year 2 were made in enhancing another teacher's lessons, including: working collaboratively to infuse Internet resources and to plan or implement standards-based technology-enhanced improvements in another teacher's lessons in the two years of the grant.
- ✓ Cadre 1 coaches made large gains in the PILOT Technology Integration Survey during year 1: In the second year of the grant, the percentage of coaches in Tier 1 remained the same, Tier 2 increased 9%, and Tier 3 decreased 9%.

### *Cadre 2*

- ✓ Cadre 2 coaches rated their collaboration and coaching skills higher after the end of their first year of coaching with statistically significant gains.
- ✓ On the PILOT Technology Integration Survey, the percentage of cadre 2 coaches in Tier 1 decreased by 25%, Level 2 increased 8%, and Level 3 increased 17% in one year of the coaching program, a statistically significant difference.
- ✓ Compared to PILOT scores for the state of Washington, cadre 2 coaches were fairly similar to all of the other teachers in the fall. By spring 2009, cadre 2 coaches were much less likely to be in Tier 1, and more likely to be in either Tier 2 or Tier 3.

### ***On Collaborating Teachers***

- In the PILOT Technology Integration Survey, the percentage of cadre 1 collaborating teachers in Tier Level 1 decreased 11%, and Tiers 2 and 3 increased 11% and 5%, respectively.
- Coaches also observed a shift in attitude regarding technology, with collaborating teachers coming to see it as a tool to support learning and help with productivity.

### ***On Students***

- Collaborating teachers and coaches thought the peer coaching program affected their students by increasing their engagement and motivation, learning of class content, and general technology skills.
- Coaches and collaborating teachers observed an increased student understanding of content as a result of utilizing technology in the classroom.