

# The Development of a Coaching Intervention: Challenges and Directions for Intervention Research

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## Background

The purpose of our IES-funded development and innovation study is to **improve literacy outcomes at the middle school level** by developing the AIM Coaching Model, an innovative adaptive coaching model designed for middle school coaches to use to support teachers as they implement evidence-based literacy instructional practices as part of a Tier 1 (i.e., English language arts, science, social studies) school-wide literacy model.

### Research Design:

- ❖ Year 1: Develop
- ❖ Year 2: Implement and Refine
- ❖ Year 3: Evaluate (i.e., Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial)
- ❖ Year 4: Measure Sustainability

## Rationale

- Instructional leaders can support transformative change in teacher practice by providing teachers with effective professional development (PD) to support evidence-based instruction (e.g., Kennedy, 2005).
- One widely used form of PD that is ongoing, extends support for teachers, and meets many of the features of effective PD is instructional coaching (e.g., Joyce & Showers, 1982).
- Several challenges in the secondary school setting prevent instructional coaching from being implemented with high levels of quality and regularity: superseded by other forms of PD, lack of coaches, limited expertise, need for coach training in effective techniques.
- Despite the existence of instructional coaching challenges at the secondary level, there remains a need to employ instructional coaching to support teachers and ultimately students, specifically in the area of literacy instruction.

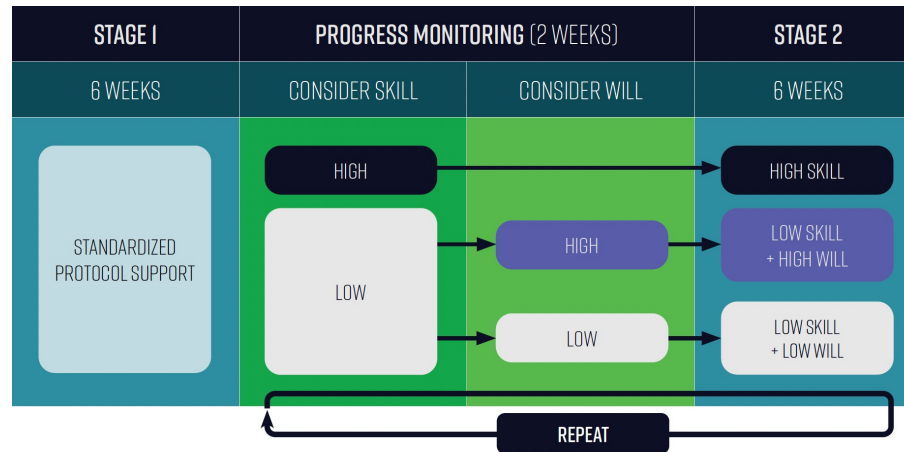
## Purpose

The focus of this poster presentation is to **introduce the AIM Coaching Model and explain the development and ongoing evaluation processes**. We present key challenges we faced related to the AIM Coaching Model development and evaluation process as well as solutions that addressed those challenges and implications of those solutions. Finally, we discuss implications for future research that specifically investigates or includes coaching.



## Individualized Professional Learning:

### Adaptive Intervention Model (AIM) for Instructional Coaching



## Literacy Practices:

### School-Wide Promoting Adolescents' Comprehension of Text (SW-PACT)

<b>Comprehension Canopy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce topic with springboard</li> <li>• Provide necessary background information</li> </ul>
<b>Essential Words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select 1-2 words essential to understanding topic and text</li> <li>• Present student-friendly definition, image, examples, non-examples, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Reading of Text</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce purpose for reading</li> <li>• Facilitate partner reading</li> <li>• Facilitate Get the Gist practice</li> <li>• Discuss culminating question</li> </ul>

## Training for Instructional Coaches:

### AIM Coaching Professional Development (ACPD)

- Coaches participate in 3-hour ACPD session
- Coaches receive AIM Coaching manual and other virtual coaching resources (e.g., coaching logs)
- ACPD includes features of effective PD (e.g., collaboration with colleagues)
- ACPD includes four coach PLC sessions, scheduled at critical junctures during the intervention (e.g., Progress Monitoring Stage), designed to provide coaches with extended support of their knowledge and skills

## Development Phase

### Challenge 1: Distributed vs. Non-Distributed PD and its Impact on Teacher Learning and Student Dosage

- ❖ **Solution:** Introduce all three practices at BOY and extend Stage 1 from 4 to 6 weeks to provide a longer initial learning period while not sacrificing the need to progress to the more individualized stage of support (i.e., Stage 2) quickly.
- ❖ **Implications:** Consider strengths and drawbacks of each approach. Non-distributed approach may allow more time for individualized support after initial learning.

### Challenge 2: Limited Numbers of Coaches

- ❖ **Solution:** A team approach where one person serves as the lead coach to coordinate implementation of the model while content-area coaches conduct Stage 1 and Stage 2 activities.
- ❖ **Implications:** A team approach allows more flexibility but may increase variability in coach fidelity. Support from researchers and PLCs are critical to maintain coherence among the team.

## Evaluation Phase

### Challenge 1: Pilot Study Design - Treatment vs. Comparison

- ❖ **Solution:** In order to isolate the effect of the AIM Coaching intervention, we delivered SW-PACT PD to both the AIM Coaching and BAU coaching conditions.
- ❖ **Implications:** Researchers should link PD/coaching to instructional practices with evidence of effectiveness; consider if research design adequately isolates effect of PD/coaching.

### Challenge 2: Level of Random Assignment

- ❖ **Solution:** We randomly assigned schools to AIM Coaching or BAU coaching (1) because students would be nested within both and (2) to avoid BAU teachers working with AIM Coaching teachers.
- ❖ **Implications:** Given issues of power, researchers can consider how results from a pilot study support the need for a fully powered efficacy study in the future.

### Challenge 3: Recruitment of Whole Schools

- ❖ **Solution:** Secure school district liaison to support recruitment efforts and prioritize the school-wide model.
- ❖ **Implications:** Consider that inherently supportive and involved administrators may bias both conditions.

### Challenge 4: PD Time and Delivery Format

- ❖ **Solution:** We delivered SW-PACT PD to all coaches and teachers at the same time; we delivered ACPD to treatment coaches in a half-day PD.
- ❖ **Implications:** Include \$ in the research team budget and work with schools to ensure various resources (e.g., substitute funds) are available before the plan is finalized. Allow for virtual PD.

### Challenge 5: Tracking Dosage and Fidelity

- ❖ **Solution:** We sent surveys to all coaches and teachers to track dosage, tracked SW-PACT fidelity with audio recordings, and used coaching logs and surveys to track AIM fidelity.
- ❖ **Implications:** Budget and priming of results should be considered when tracking dosage and fidelity.

