

Research Evidence for Literacy Collaborative

Literacy Collaborative has been evaluated through internal evaluations, third-party outside studies, and collaborative projects conducted with researchers at other universities. Several large-scale quantitative studies have documented the effect of Literacy Collaborative on both teaching and student learning. In addition, three survey studies of teachers and students have provided evidence of teacher perceptions of the Literacy Collaborative program and of student attitudes toward reading and writing. Positive effects of LC were found for both teachers and students, including improved teaching and increased student achievement in literacy.

LC program research has been reviewed by the [Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center](#)¹ (CSRQ) in Washington, D.C. CSRQ set very stringent research standards and found no programs with strong evidence of effectiveness. Literacy Collaborative was rated among the stronger comprehensive school reform programs, with moderately strong evidence of positive effects on diverse student populations.

Literacy Collaborative Teacher Quality Study (2004-2009)

This quasi-experimental, value-added study of 18 Literacy Collaborative schools, funded by a Teacher Quality Grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, was conducted by Dr. Anthony Bryk, president of the Carnegie Institute for the Advancement of Teaching, in collaboration with researchers at Stanford University, University of Chicago, and Literacy Collaborative. Results were published in as a final report to IES (Hough, Bryk, Pinnell, Kerbow, Fountas, & Scharer, 2009) and in a peer-reviewed journal, *The Elementary School Journal* in [2010](#) and [2011](#).

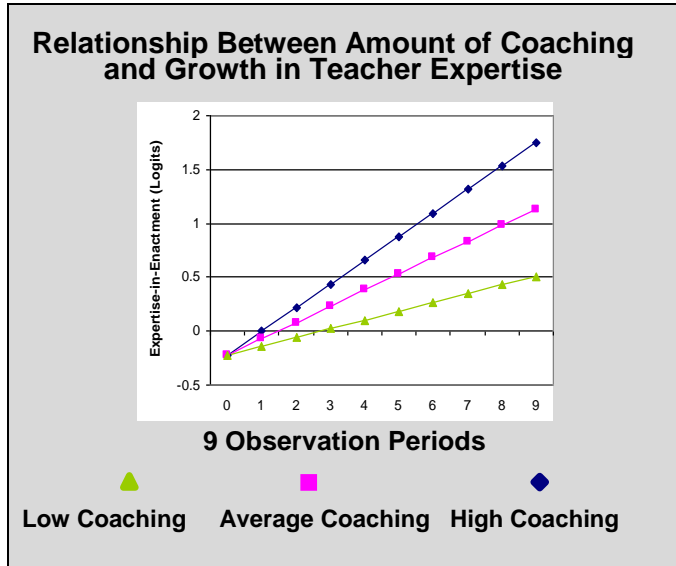
The study followed teacher and student growth over four years in 17 Literacy Collaborative schools across eight different states. Teachers were observed in their classrooms three times per year and the quality of their instruction evaluated with an extensive rubric. Students were tested twice per year with the DIBELS and Terra Nova assessments. The study included teacher surveys and extensive interviews with the literacy coordinators about their experiences as coaches and professional developers.

Results of this study show that coaching led to improvements in professional practice and that these improvements and the improved practice led to accelerated student achievement.

¹ CSRQ reviewed approximately 100 programs and chose 22 well-established and comprehensive school reform programs, including Literacy Collaborative, for formal review and inclusion in their catalog.

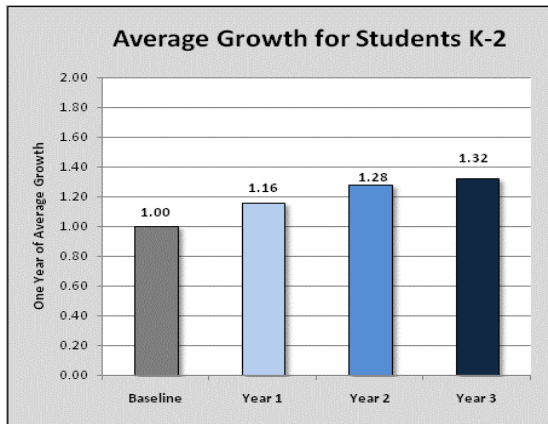
Specifically, teachers who experienced a high degree of coaching saw a **30% increase in student achievement** in literacy over the years of the study. Results indicate value-added improvements in K-2 student learning of **16%**, **28%**, and **32%** over the years of implementation as compared with the baseline year.

Figure 1: Relationship between Coaching and Expertise



High coaching: Teachers improve rapidly
Average coaching: Teachers improve at average rate
Low Coaching: Teachers improve at a slower rate

Figure 2: Literacy Achievement in LC Schools

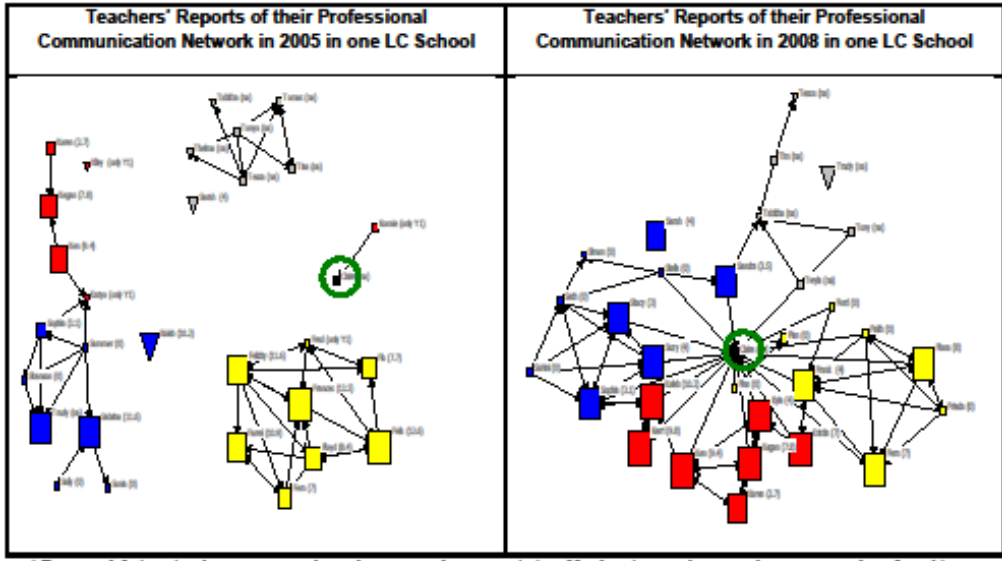


Baseline: Students learn **1.00**
Year 1: Students learn **1.16**
Year 2: Students learn **1.28**
Year 3: Students learn **1.32**

The results also demonstrate how the professional networks and communication increased within LC schools. The graphs below show the communication network in one school before and after adopting LC. On the left, before LC, communication was primarily within a grade level.

After LC, on the right, the literacy coach has become the hub of communication and report much more professional communication across the school.

Figure 3. Growth in Professional Networks.



* Downward-facing triangles represent teachers whose survey data were missing. Numbers in parentheses are the average number of coaching sessions the teacher received per year.



Classroom Impact Study (2002-2004)

A matched-control classroom impact study conducted by the Education Development Center (EDC) compared the quality of literacy instruction and improvement in teacher practice. The researchers documented practice in 55 LC classrooms and 34 non-Literacy Collaborative classrooms in Massachusetts. Classrooms were observed three times using a quantitative rubric that rated the extent to which each teacher followed the LC instructional framework, and the overall quality of literacy instruction each teacher provided. The findings suggest that:

- Literacy Collaborative teachers who closely followed the Literacy Collaborative framework, on average, demonstrated higher quality teaching than Literacy Collaborative teachers who followed the framework with less fidelity.
- Literacy Collaborative teachers, on average, demonstrated faster rates of growth in the quality of their literacy teaching as compared with growth shown by non-Literacy Collaborative teachers.

...Literacy Collaborative is indeed a powerful intervention...

EDC concluded that “this study demonstrates that Literacy Collaborative is indeed a powerful intervention: Literacy Collaborative classrooms grow in quality of instruction at a faster rate than comparison group classrooms, where growth rate is flat” (Clark-Chiarelli, 2004, p. 29).

Literacy Collaborative Surveys (2001-2004)

Literacy Collaborative researchers conducted two surveys of literacy coordinators and teachers in Literacy Collaborative schools (Bartlam & Boucher, 2001, 2003). Surveys indicate:

- LC Improved teaching skills and improved staff relationships; and.
- Increased reflection on teaching practice, more focus on the needs of individual students, and increased time spent on literacy instruction and activities.

Literacy Collaborative provided school staff with a common language for communicating about the successes and needs of their students.

Indiana Early Literacy Intervention Grant Program (1998–2004)

In Indiana, the state Department of Education contracted with the Center for the Evaluation of Educational Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University to evaluate several programs that were funded by the state’s Early Literacy Intervention Grant Program (ELIGP), including Literacy Collaborative. Comparing schools that had adopted the Literacy Collaborative with schools that had not adopted any programs, CEEP found the following:

- Literacy Collaborative schools, on average, showed substantially larger increases in passing rates than schools with no interventions, particularly in high-poverty schools.
- Literacy Collaborative schools, on average, had lower special-education referral rates than schools with no special programs.
- Literacy Collaborative schools, on average, had modestly lower 2nd grade retention rates, particularly in urban schools.

In their summary report, CEEP wrote that “of the individual ELIGP-funded interventions included in prior CEEP evaluations, Literacy Collaborative has most consistently demonstrated success on student outcomes” (Plucker, Simmons, and Ravert, 2005, p. 35).

References

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