

# Coaching and Problem-Solving Process

Project STAIR

Technical Report 18

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## **Coaching and Problem-Solving Process**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this technical report is to describe the coaching and problem-solving process for treatment teachers and coaches throughout Year 2 (2019-2020) implementation of Project STAIR (Supporting Teaching of Algebra: Individual Readiness).

### **Method**

In Project STAIR, the purpose of coaching is to deliver ongoing support for middle-school educators (i.e., interventionists, general education teachers, special education teachers). Project STAIR coaches observed and recorded teacher implementation of the project's components as outlined during STAIR Core Professional Development (PD). At the conclusion of the Core PD, each teacher selected either explicit instruction or the use of multiple representations as an instructional focus for the duration of project. Coaching sessions provided teachers individualized support in implementing their chosen instructional focus and the DBI process.

The coaching process included monthly face-to-face (FTF) consultations, classroom observations, and virtual check-ins between STAIR coach and teacher on an as-needed basis. The monthly FTF consultations began with an email prior to classroom observation outlining FTF date confirmation, data-based individualization (DBI) survey, and FTF consultation target objectives. Classroom observation consultations allow coaches to offer additional explanations, provide resources including suggested Tailored PD, provide feedback and assistance in implementing data-based individualization (DBI) procedures including progress monitoring, and reiterate project goals for student participants. Classroom observations allowed coaches to collect data and confirm teacher use of strategies. Virtual check-ins gave teachers the opportunity to ask

clarifying questions and share ongoing experiences with coaches. Coaches maintained regular contact with their assigned teachers.

STAIR coaches assisted treatment teachers in selecting 2 to 4 targeted students appropriate for the study. Once identified, coaches and teachers developed a schedule for coaching and observations of the students as they participated in mathematics instruction. The coaching cycle includes a pre-observation coaching session, classroom observation, and a post-observation session. Coaches observe teachers during instructional times student participants are present. Coaching occurs at least twice a month, either virtually or face-to-face.

Coaches at each of the sites had a variety of teaching, coaching, and other professional experiences.

**SMU Coach 1.** Doctoral student with a Master's degree in mathematics education (Secondary Mathematics). A classroom teacher for 6 years (9–12 and post-secondary) and a building-level instructional coach for 2 years, this person collaborated with multi-site coaches as part of Project STAIR.

**MU Coach 2.** Doctoral student with an education specialist degree in special education (Cross Categorical). A classroom teacher for 11 years (K–12) and a district-wide behavior coach for 5 years, this person coached one teacher and observed one control teacher as part of Project STAIR.

**MU Coach 3.** Doctoral student with a Master's degree in special education (Early Childhood). A classroom teacher for 2 years (pre-K–5), this person coached one teacher as part of Project STAIR.

**MU Coach 4.** Professor and the chair of the Special Education department at their institution. This person has a Ph.D. in educational psychology. In addition to being a classroom teacher for 6 years (K–5) and a university faculty member for 16 years, this person has been a consultant to school-based teams and has developed and implemented coaching models through multiple federally-funded grants. As part of Project STAIR, this person consulted with MU and UT coaches.

**MU Coach 5.** Doctoral candidate with a Master's degree in special education (Cross Categorical). A classroom teacher for 4 years (6–12) and a district-wide behavior coach for 2 years, this person coached one teacher as part of Project STAIR.

**MU Coach 6.** Doctoral student with a Master's degree in education (Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Reading). A classroom teacher for 6 years (K–8), this person coached two teachers as part of Project STAIR.

**UT Coach 7.** Doctoral student with a Master's degree in teaching (English Language Arts and Reading). A classroom teacher for 4 years (K–8) and a building-level instructional coach for 2 years, this person coached four teachers as part of Project STAIR.

**MU Coach 8.** Doctoral candidate with Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. A classroom teacher for 5 years (K–5 self-contained Special Education), this person coached one teacher and observed one control teacher as part of Project STAIR.

**UT Coach 9.** Researcher with Ph.D. degree in Special Education. A classroom teacher for 5 years; certified in math, science, and special education (PK–12), this person coached two teachers as part of Project STAIR

### **Conclusion**

STAIR coaches assisted nine teachers utilizing the STAIR Coaching and the Problem-Solving Process. Each treatment teacher received a minimum of six FTF coaching sessions and six virtual coaching sessions, for a total of 12 coaching sessions.

