

Motivational Interviewing Skills for Coaches (MISC) Project Summary

In the past several decades, effective classroom behavior management strategies, particularly teachers' *provision of opportunities for students to respond* (OTR) during instruction and *positive feedback*, have been identified and high-quality implementation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Matheson & Shriver, 2005) has been associated with student academic engagement and reduction of classroom disruptive behavior (Gage, Scott, & Hirn, & MacSuga-Gage, 2016; Scott, Hirn, & Alter, 2014). Despite the compelling data supporting the importance of these strategies, providing support for teachers that results in increased use of them remains challenging.

Coaching has emerged as a promising approach for improving the implementation fidelity of a variety of evidence-based practices. While judged to be a promising strategy, coaching – and the science to inform and support its use – is still in its infancy. There is a substantial need for a professional development system that clearly and comprehensively specifies: (a) the conversational skills (e.g., summarizing, asking questions, providing affirmations, reflecting) coaches need to successfully influence teacher practices; (b) the scope and sequence of professional development systems capable of equipping coaches with these requisite conversational skills; and (c) skill-based proficiency standards associated with improvements in teacher implementation of effective practices and student outcomes.

Notably, the *Motivational Interviewing Training and Assessment System (MITAS) for Coaches* has the potential to advance the field in the area of coaching in this manner. While this project is focused on skills-based professional development for instructional personnel who coach in the context of evidence-based classroom behavior management strategies, the knowledge gleaned and tools created will also have broader implications for coaching as a professional development strategy to support a wide range of teacher behaviors that are consistent with evidence-based intervention delivery and instructional and management strategies.

The current study, a 4-year IES funded Development and Innovation project, represents a major step towards development of a comprehensive program of research to improve student educational outcomes by advancing a partially-developed professional development infrastructure to ensure the most effective teaching strategies and interventions are implemented with fidelity. The purpose of this project is to: (a) create an initial version of the *Motivational Interviewing Training and Assessment System (MITAS) for Coaches*; (b) Investigate the usability, feasibility, and fidelity of implementation of the *MITAS for Coaches*; and (c) examine the promise of the *MITAS for Coaches* to influence proximal and distal outcomes.