

Implementation and Acceptability of an Adapted Classroom Check-Up Coaching Model to  
Promote Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

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## **Abstract**

Literature suggests that improving teacher use of culturally responsive classroom management strategies may reduce the disproportionate number of racial and ethnic minority students who receive exclusionary discipline actions and are identified as needing special education, particularly for emotional and behavioral disorders. Coaching teachers is one way to support teachers' development of such culturally responsive classroom management strategies, however there is limited research on the implementation and teacher-perceived acceptability of coaching, both broadly and for this specific skill set. In this article, we focus on the adaptation of the Classroom Check-Up (CCU) coaching model for addressing culturally responsive classroom management strategies; we also discuss issues related to the implementation dosage, fidelity, feasibility, and acceptability of the CCU model. Specifically, data from 146 coached teachers are included which summarize how coaches spent their time, the fidelity to the coaching model, and acceptability and feasibility of the CCU model. Findings indicated that the CCU required about 3 hours of active teacher participation. Coaches spent a substantial amount of time collecting data in the classroom as well as building relationships and trust within the schools to facilitate uptake. The results suggested that coaches implemented the model as intended and that the time required of teachers is relatively modest. Teachers provided positive feedback about four domains of the coaching, indicating the acceptability and feasibility of this adapted version of the CCU.

For decades, data have indicated that there is a disproportionate number of racial and ethnic minority students who receive exclusionary discipline actions such as office referrals and suspensions, as well as referrals to special education (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010; Burke & Nishioka, 2014; Kewel Ramani, Gilbertson, Fox, & Provasnik, 2007; Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002;

Waitoller, Artiles, & Cheney, 2010). Despite increased awareness of and attention to this concern, the field lacks empirically-supported educational interventions and strategies that successfully reduce such inequities (Skiba et al., 2011). Emerging research suggests that culturally responsive classroom management strategies may help address such classroom concerns before they result in disproportionate referrals and suspensions; however, the extant literature lacks clarity on the professional development models that may promote use of these strategies. In this article, we summarize the findings from a study focused on the implementation of a classroom management coaching model called the Classroom Check-Up (see Reinke, 2006; Reinke, Herman, & Sprick, 2011), which was adapted to promote culturally responsive classroom management strategies, with the ultimate aim of improving student outcomes. We focus on the coaching dosage, acceptability, feasibility, and fidelity of the adapted CCU coaching model, as a foundation for later examining the efficacy of this approach.

### **Disproportionality and Need for Teacher Support**

Disproportionality is defined as the over- or under-representation of a group along a particular data point relative to representation within the population (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Moore-Thomas, 2012). It is a widespread concern with regard to exclusionary disciplinary practices and identification for special education generally and specifically for students with emotional and behavioral disorders (Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggins-Azziz, 2006). Disproportionality is most evident when comparing African American students to Caucasian students, but other racial and ethnic minority groups are also at risk. For example, research has shown that far fewer Caucasian students are suspended or expelled than African American and Hispanic students; male students of these races and ethnicities are at the highest risk (Fabelo et al., 2011; Porowski, O'Conner, & Passa, 2014; Skiba et al., 2002; Wallace,

Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). Of the *IDEA* disability categories, students categorized as having emotional disturbance (ED) are at the highest risk of suspension, with the highest rates being among African American students with ED (Krezmien et al, 2006). Presumably, most students with emotional and behavior disorders are coded as having ED under *IDEA*.

Some scholars attribute racial disproportionality to students and teachers differing in their values, communication styles, and language patterns (e.g., Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008). This issue is of particular importance with regard to the identification of students with EBD (Skiba et al., 2006), given how culture may intersect with the behaviors students engage upon, the response of adults in the school building, and the identification process of EBD. To bridge these differences, scholars suggest that educators understand the relationship between students' culture and behavior (Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Hosp & Hosp, 2001; Skiba et al., 2006) and incorporate students' culture into their teaching (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Although pre-service teachers in the U.S are offered curricula in culturally responsive teaching and classroom management (Bales & Saffold, 2011; Kea & Trent, 2013; Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008), teachers report feeling underprepared to manage behavior problems, particularly those displayed by students from diverse backgrounds (Siwatu & Starker, 2010). Further, many pre-service educators demonstrate minimal skills in culturally responsive teaching (Kea & Trent, 2013). The lack of improvements in teacher cultural proficiency and systemic disproportionality may stem from traditional teacher training models, which often offer limited exposure to or meaningful feedback regarding culturally responsive teaching in field placements and student teaching (Kea & Trent, 2013; Trent et al., 2008). More support to in-service teachers may be required to develop these skills, and may serve as a prevention strategy for the identification and support of students with EBD.

## **Coaching and the Classroom Check-Up**

School-based coaching is a form of professional development and technical assistance provided to improve teacher skills (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009). Although workshops are commonly used for professional development, research suggests they are not adequate to improve general teaching practices (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010), and may be even more challenging with sensitive content relating to culture and race (Hollins, 2013). Coaching that embeds collaboration with colleagues and teacher reflection of practices may be more effective (Garet et al., 2001), and has demonstrated effects on teacher practice and student outcomes (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Ponitz, 2009; Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, & Morrison, 2008; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008). There are a number of reasons that coaching may be effective. In-service teachers typically receive limited performance feedback or opportunities for guided practice (Oliver & Reschly, 2007), but coaching fills this gap by allowing classroom-based practice. Moreover, social learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978) indicates that social interactions, like those that occur between a coach and teacher, facilitate learning. Similarly, the relationship between the teacher and coach can create a commitment within the teacher to learn and grow (Joyce & Showers, 1980). Lastly, research suggests that people are more successful when given the opportunity to reflect and make decisions about behavioral change (Dunlap et al., 2000; Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

The Classroom Check-Up (CCU; Reinke, 2006; Reinke et al., 2011; Reinke et al., 2008) is one example of a coaching model that aims to improve teachers' classroom management practices by applying a structured problem-solving approach. It incorporates a communication technique called motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), intended to empower teachers to adopt and sustain their use of new or improved classroom behavior management and

instructional practices. Motivational interviewing is a counseling tool that addresses people's ambivalence about behavior change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), which is relevant in education, given the barriers to teachers' implementation of evidence-based practices. Use of specific listening and communication skills during motivational interviewing fosters a non-evaluative environment, making the teacher feel safe to identify areas of weakness and targeted skill development (for greater detail, see Reinke et al., 2011). The CCU was developed to be administered by teachers, psychologists, or staff development personnel trained in the model.

In the current project, we made minor adaptations to the original Classroom Check-Up (CCU) model to address teacher cultural proficiency more directly, with the goal of reducing inequities in disciplinary practices and special education referrals. Specifically, we followed the original CCU five steps of teacher interview, collection of data, providing teachers with feedback, goal setting, and on-going progress monitoring. The 30-45 min semi-structured interview was the first step to developing a relationship between the coach and the teacher and provided information about what the teacher's values. With regard to the teachers' perspectives, we focused both on asking the typical questions regarding classroom behavior management found within the original CCU, and added questions about the five additional domains of cultural competence, which we refer to as the Double Check CARES domains (i.e., **C**onnection to the curriculum, **A**uthentic relationships, **R**eflective thinking, **E**ffective communication, and **S**ensitivity to students' culture; for additional information and the coaching documents used in the Double Check Project and the CARES model see Bottiani et al., 2012; Bradshaw & Rosenberg, in press; Hershfeldt et al., 2009). Each of these domains is firmly rooted in the literature on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings

1995b; Ladson-Billings 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and thus all domains were potential focal areas for coaching in this adapted version of the CCU.

The coach used the interview to collect information on the teachers' strengths, classroom management and culturally responsive practices the teacher would like to change, and previous experiences with coaching. There were additional features added to the interview to facilitate relationship building between the coach and the teacher (e.g., a card sort activity regarding the teacher's values that can later facilitate conversations where the teacher engages in change talk). At the end of the interview, the coach explained the data collection process, which included the coach conducting three classroom observations to assess overall climate and management (e.g., use of specific strategies such as proactive behavior expectations and praise) as well qualitative information about each of the CARES elements. The teacher was also asked to complete an ecology checklist, which is a short survey with reflective questions about the teacher's use of classroom management and culturally responsive practices and uses a four-point Likert-scale of *rarely to almost always*. During the feedback session, the coach synthesized information from the interview, ecology checklist, and classroom observations and provided specific feedback related to the strengths on which to build, as well as areas of relative weakness. The feedback form addressed student behavior (e.g., engagement and disruptions), teacher positive behavior supports (e.g., use of praise and reprimands; opportunities to respond/pacing), and each of the CARES elements. The teacher and coach then worked together to select a discrete area(s) to address through a change in the teacher's practice, by setting a specific goal (i.e., typically to increase the use of a specific strategy or set of strategies) that the teacher felt was important and feasible. The pair developed an action plan, specifying the steps and resources needed to achieve the goal. Included in this process was a discussion about the teacher's rating of importance and

confidence to implement the plan, strategies to overcome potential barriers, a plan to monitor the implementation and outcomes of the goal. Next, the teacher implemented the strategy within the classroom, occasionally receiving follow-up observations and feedback from the coach as scaffolding for moving into the self-monitoring phase, once the behavior became routine. In this study, coaching was provided by research team-trained coaches who were external to the participating schools. For a more complete description of the CCU (i.e., focused only on classroom management), see Reinke et al. (2011). For the materials supplemented with items aligned with the five Double Check CARES domains, see Bradshaw and Rosenberg (in press) for the Double Check model and Pas et al. (in press) for specific information on the adaptations of the CCU to address culturally responsive practices.

### **Overview of the Current Study**

The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of the CCU coaching model when applied to culturally responsive classroom management using data collected about coach time spent in schools and with teachers, fidelity to the coaching model, and teachers' perceptions of acceptability. Taken together, these data can allow for conclusions to be drawn about the feasibility of this model (Bowen et al., 2009). These data were collected as part of a developmental grant, aimed at assessing the overall acceptability and feasibility (Bowen et al., 2009) of the Double Check professional development intervention. A recent review of the coaching literature suggests that social and behavioral interventions that are supported through coaching are almost always viewed positively; however, much of this assessment has come from questions regarding the social validity of the interventions, rather than the coaching itself (Stormont, Reinke, Newcomer, Marchese, & Lewis, 2015). Although some earlier studies of the CCU suggested that teachers view the work as important and effective (Reinke et al., 2008), the



adaptation of the CCU to address issues related to culturally responsive classroom management is novel and not well understood. Further, Stormont et al. (2015) identified gaps in our understanding of how coaches spend their time (i.e., the specific activities engaged in), as well as how much time is typically dedicated to the process overall. Research on coaching of teachers serving students with behavioral disorders (Sawka, McCurdy, & Mannella, 2002) and of teachers coaching each other (Shernoff et al., 2011) suggests that coaching, on average, can take as few as six or as many as 16 hours. Literature regarding non-peer coaching of regular educators is lacking and thus a better understanding of the time commitment, as well as whether the process can be carried out with fidelity, is needed as a foundation for determining the efficacy of such coaching.

In this study, we collected data on each of these implementation components: dosage (i.e., the time spent and activities engaged upon); fidelity (i.e., the extent to which the coaching was carried out as planned); and teachers' perceptions of acceptability, including a more comprehensive approach than has been utilized in prior studies, reflecting the coaching process, working relationship, teacher investment, and benefits. The overall goal of this paper was to better understand the implementation of this adapted version of the CCU and examine its feasibility.

## **Method**

### *Procedure*

Data for this study were collected from and regarding teachers participating in a set of two studies that utilized the Double Check CARES version (Bottiani et al., 2012; Bradshaw & Rosenberg, in press; Hershfeldt et al., 2009) of the Classroom Check-Up (Reinke et al., 2011). Through this coaching, teachers' use of positive behavioral classroom management and

culturally responsive teaching practices were promoted. The participating school district approached the researchers about being involved in the study and invited school principals to an informational session with researchers for recruitment and to sign letters of commitment to participate. This recruitment process was conducted for two consecutive years. Teachers in the first cohort were notified that they would have the opportunity to participate in coaching, whereas in those in the second cohort volunteered to be randomized to possibly receive coaching. Across both cohorts, teacher participation was voluntary and consent was provided to participate and to provide data. Teachers were coached across one school year. Teachers completed a survey asking about the acceptability of the coaching at the end of the school year; the survey was in a pre-addressed envelope to be sent directly to the researchers. The coaches also provided ongoing data regarding their visits to the schools and contacts with teachers. In Cohort 2, the coaches also completed a CCU fidelity measure. The Institutional Review Board at the researchers' institution approved this study.

### *Participants*

The sample of coached teachers included 146 K-8 teachers in a large east coast public school district. Specifically, 51 teachers in six participating schools (i.e., 3 elementary and 3 middle) volunteered to be coached in Cohort 1. Cohort 2 included 95 teachers in 12 new schools (i.e., 6 elementary and 6 middle) who were randomly assigned to the intervention status and received coaching. Control teachers did not receive coaching and thus are not included in the current study. Across the full sample of teachers, 37% taught students in elementary schools. The vast majority of teachers were female (i.e., 85%) and White (i.e., 80%), and 36% were 30 or younger. See Table 1 for teacher demographics. Two coaches hired by the research team provided support to the teachers in Cohort 1; the same two and two additional coaches provided

support to the teachers in Cohort 2. Coaches were all female and had either a master's degree in education or doctorate in school psychology. All coaches were trained in the CCU model using readings (i.e., Reinke et al., 2011), didactic trainings, and viewing of videos; they received bi-weekly supervision.

[Insert Table 1]

### *Coaching Fidelity Measures*

**Coaching dosage.** After each visit to the school, the coaches logged the duration of their school visit as well as the specific activities that they engaged in at the school level using an electronic tablet. Specifically, coaches allotted the amount of time spent providing: (a) professional development sessions; (b) attending meetings (e.g., school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports [PBIS] meetings, equity team meetings aimed at addressing disproportionality, and others such as grade level and faculty meetings); (c) coaching individual teachers with the CCU; (d) providing support regarding data; and (e) relationship building. Relationship building was coded for any activity where a coach made herself more familiar to individuals in the school building and built personnel's trust and acceptance of her. For example, having lunch with teaching and support staff, attending events, lending assistance where needed, and discussing the classroom with teachers were coded as relationship building.

In addition, coaches completed a similar, but separate electronic log regarding each individual contact with a coached teacher. The coaches logged the total time spent in the classroom with the teacher as well as the specific amount of time spent on each core coaching activity. As noted above, these activities included the specific steps of the coaching (i.e., the interview, data collection, feedback, action planning, and follow-up observations and feedback). This also included relationship building activities meant to help build trust and a collaborative

relationship between the coach and each individual teacher once a coaching case was initiated (i.e., in contrast to the more general relationship building coded in the logs about school visits). These data were collected for both cohorts.

**Acceptability of coaching.** Participating teachers provided information regarding the coaching relationship on an *alliance survey* (see Johnson, Pas, & Bradshaw, 2016). The *alliance survey* included four subscales (Bradshaw et al., 2009a, 2009b) including: *working relationship* (e.g., “The coach and I worked together collaboratively”;  $\alpha = .76$ ); *coaching process* which assessed how competently the steps of coaching were conducted (e.g., “The coach communicated effectively”;  $\alpha = .85$ ); a *teacher investment in coaching* scale which assessed how much the teacher valued the coaching (e.g., “The work I did with the coach was important”;  $\alpha = .88$ ); and *perceived benefits of the coaching* which assessed positive impact on students (e.g., “The students benefit from the work with the coach”,  $\alpha = .71$ ). All responses were provided on a 5-point Likert scale (*never to always*). A confirmatory factor analysis supported this four-factor model (see Johnson et al., 2016). Teachers in both cohorts completed this measure. Coaches also rated each Cohort 2 teacher’s comfort level and willingness to engage in the interview, feedback, and goal setting on a 6-point Likert scale of *strongly agree* and *strongly disagree*.

**Fidelity of the coaching.** For coaching conducted with Cohort 2 teachers only, coaches completed electronic checklists indicating whether they had excluded (0), partially implemented (1), or fully implemented (2) each part of the interview, feedback, and goal setting. The checklist included specific content that the coach was supposed to cover during each coaching step, to assess whether the coaching was implemented as intended.

*Analyses*

Frequencies and descriptive analyses of the coaching data were conducted using SPSS to determine (a) the amount of time coaches spent, on average, with teachers; (b) the relative engagement in different coaching and school-level support activities; (c) whether the process was acceptable to teachers; and (d) if the CCU was implemented with fidelity. Taking these data together, conclusions regarding feasibility are drawn (Bowen et al., 2009).

## **Results**

### *Dosage*

Based on data provided by coaches regarding their school visits, coaches spent an average of 180.47 hr serving each of the Cohort 1 schools and 167.35 hr serving each of the Cohort 2 schools. Coaches spent the largest proportion of their time conducting coaching; this accounted for about half of their time (i.e., Cohort 1 = 45% and Cohort 2 = 51%). Coaches spent the next largest proportion of time engaging in activities focused on relationship building, with the purpose of building trust and being seen as a resource in the school building (i.e., Cohort 1 = 31% and Cohort 2 = 29%). Coaches spent 16% (Cohort 1) and 11% (Cohort 2) of their time delivering the professional development sessions. As noted earlier, there were five sessions that were scheduled to last about 45 min. The amount of time dedicated to these sessions varied by school, as some schools received one session for all staff (e.g., in smaller and often, elementary, schools), whereas in other (i.e., larger and often middle) schools, a session was delivered to each grade level separately. Less than 10% of coaches' time (i.e., Cohort 1 = 7% and Cohort 2 = 6%) was spent attending school team meetings. The top three meetings coaches attended were the PBIS team meetings ( $M = 19.74$  hr for Cohort 1 and  $M = 25.33$  for Cohort 2), the schools' equity team meetings ( $M = 14.54$  hr for Cohort 1 and  $M = 15.95$  for Cohort 2), and grade-level meetings

( $M = 13.03$  hr for Cohort 1 and 35.92 for Cohort 2). This time equated to roughly one or two hour-long meetings each month, across the school year.

Based on logs completed regarding specific coaching case contacts with individual teachers, coaches spent an average of 395.28 min (6.59 hours) with each Cohort 1 teacher. This included the time coaches collected data in the classroom. Teachers were in direct contact with the coach for an average of 179.44 min, or just under 3 hr (i.e., 2.99). This calculation excluded all coach data collection activities, as the teachers were engaged in regular classroom instruction during this time. The average time spent by a coach on a Cohort 2 case was comparable (i.e., 439.35 min or 7.32 hr). The amount of direct contact time with the teachers was on average 193.08 min or about 3.22 hr. Specific information on each step of the coaching, including the average time spent per teacher and percent of time this comprised, is provided in Table 2. Across the five CCU steps, the data collection via classroom observations took the greatest proportion (i.e., about half) of time. Coaches were expected to visit the classroom on three occasions.

[Insert Table 2]

### *Acceptability*

The feedback from teachers regarding acceptability of coaching on four scales was fairly favorable (see Johnson et al., 2016 for further information on this measure). Over 90% of teachers responded favorably (i.e., *agree* and *strongly agree*) on nearly all items (see Table 3). Virtually no concerns were noted by the teachers on the survey, with the exception of 25% feeling that they did not have sufficient time to participate in the coaching.

Of the four scales, items within the perceived benefits of the coaching scale showed the greatest variability. Although the benefits overall (i.e., on average across items) were perceived positively (see Johnson et al., 2016), approximately 20% ( $n = 25$ ) of the teachers did not report

that the coach often or always increased their knowledge of cultural proficiency; rather, these individuals all reported that their cultural proficiency was *sometimes* improved. Similarly, 16.5% ( $n = 21$ ) of teachers said that their coach *sometimes* increased their knowledge of classroom management strategies, and 4% ( $n = 5$ ) said the coach *never* or *seldom* did.

Coaches also rated the teachers' comfort with and willingness to participate in the interview, feedback, and goal setting. Coaches reported in 93.6% of the cases that they *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that teachers felt comfortable with the interview and displayed a willingness to participate. Coaches reported that they *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that teachers felt comfortable and displayed a willingness to participate 91.4% of the time during the feedback process and 86.2% of the time during goal setting.

[Insert Table 3]

### *Fidelity*

Fidelity data were only collected in regard to Cohort 2 (i.e., 95) teachers. The percent of cases in which the coach implemented each element of the interview, feedback, and goal setting is depicted in Table 4. For the interview, the data reflect that nearly every element was fully implemented (i.e., with 98-100% of teachers), with the exception of completing every question on the interview. In this case, coaches reported that all interview questions were asked for 73.7% of the coaching cases. Similarly, elements of the feedback were also fully implemented with nearly every teacher. The lowest compliance rate during feedback (i.e., 94.7%) was for writing a menu of options for the teacher to choose from. The greatest variability for a CCU step was seen on goal setting and related directly to the discussion of goals. Specifically, the coaches prompted teachers to identify a CARES coaching goal 80% of the time, whereas they prompted a positive

behavior support goal nearly 97% of the time. The vast majority of teachers (87.4%) set one goal and 10.5% of teachers set two goals. Just two teachers did not select a goal.

[Insert Table 4]

Given that teachers raised the acquisition of knowledge as a potential area of concern within the acceptability measure, and that fidelity data reflected teachers not setting a goal in both the positive behavior supports and cultural responsiveness domains, we further examined whether those who did not report a high level of knowledge acquisition also had not set a goal in the relevant area. We found that six teachers who reported that they felt their knowledge of cultural proficiency had improved just *sometimes* did not have fidelity data (i.e., Cohort 1); moreover, 56% of these teachers ( $n = 14$ ) had not set a CARES goal. Of the 21 teachers who *sometimes* reported improvement in their knowledge of classroom management, 38% ( $n = 8$ ) were Cohort 1 teachers, and their goal setting is unknown. Of the remaining 13 teachers, 9.5% ( $n = 2$ ) had not set a goal targeting positive behavior supports, and 37% ( $n = 8$ ) had not set a CARES goal.

## Discussion

In this article, we described the acceptability, dosage, and fidelity of implementation of an adapted version of the Classroom Check-Up coaching model (Reinke, 2006; Reinke et al., 2011) that additionally addresses culturally responsive classroom management practices (Bradshaw & Rosenberg, in press; Pas et al., 2016) when implemented with 146 teachers in 18 elementary and middle schools. The Classroom Check-Up is a fully-developed model that was adapted to address the five Double Check CARES domains, thereby targeting culturally responsive classroom management. As a foundation for assessing the efficacy of this model, the degree to which this model could be acceptably implemented was examined. These data



suggested that this adapted CCU coaching approach is efficient for teachers to engage in, only requiring teachers to dedicate about 3 hours of direct contact with the coach. Compared to other training activities aimed at improving classroom management competencies, this version of the CCU coaching took considerably less time than some coaching models (e.g., coaching for teachers serving those with behavior disorders in Sawka et al., 2002 and the peer coaching studied by Shernoff et al., 2011; Larson, 2016), but was similar to the time spent coaching the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Intervention (see Reinke et al., 2014). Nearly half of the time a coach spent on a teacher was focused on collecting data; this required no active participation by the teacher and was the greatest time commitment by the coach. Similarly, coaches supporting the Incredible Years using the CCU spent about 45% of time observing teachers (Reinke et al., 2014).

The issue of time commitment is an important one, as this is a concern commonly raised in the literature (e.g., Stormont et al., 2015) and was specifically raised by teachers in this study. Despite reporting time as a concern, most teachers did not feel the coach took too much of their time and nearly all agreed that the time spent with the coach was productive. A goal of coaching should be to provide quality coaching, while being mindful of the teacher's time. Future studies should further examine the impact of dosage on the improvement of teacher classroom management, as well as perceptions of the coaching intervention.

It is important to note that the coaches spent nearly one-third of their time engaging in relationship building activities at the school level (e.g., getting to know and conversing with teachers in the building; offering assistance) to build trust, establish themselves as a resource, and become integrated in school-wide activities; the goal of these activities was to increase staff engagement in the intervention and uptake of the culturally responsive classroom management

content. Relationship building was also a means for promoting more positive coaching relationships, in which teachers would be truly reflective and therefore engage in behavior change. Most of the time dedicated to relationship building occurred at the beginning of the school year. It is possible this relationship building was part of the reason that coached teachers later saw the coaching as acceptable.

The vast majority of teachers in the study considered the coaching acceptable, particularly in terms of the working relationship, process, investment, and benefits. Taken together with the fact that this required a relatively modest amount of teachers' time, it appears as though this is potentially a feasible coaching model (Bowen et al., 2009). More than 90% of teachers believed that the coaching benefitted their students; close to 80% increased their self-perceived knowledge of cultural proficiency and classroom management. While prior research on therapeutic alliance (i.e., examining the relationship between counselors and clients) indicates that the development of a collaborative working relationship is related to client behavior change (e.g., Ackerman & Hilsenroth, 2003; Horvath & Greenberg, 1989), more research is needed to examine this relationship within school-based coaching (see Johnson et al., 2016). Moreover, additional research is necessary to find out how coaching can maximize the accrual of knowledge of cultural proficiency and classroom management, so that all teachers experience this improvement. The preliminary findings in this study indicated a fair degree of overlap between a teacher reporting that he/she attained such knowledge just some of the time and not having set a relevant goal (i.e., CARES for cultural proficiency and positive behavior supports for classroom management), suggesting that the goal a teacher chooses to focus on is important to increase knowledge in that area.

Of considerable interest in regard to fidelity is that each element of the interview was fully implemented with the exception of each question in the interview. This finding suggests that the coach may have tailored how the interview was conducted. Given that the coaches tend to naturally shorten the interview, this raises a broader question of the purpose of the interview and how it can be streamlined and made most efficient. For instance, it is necessary to ask questions about multiple domains to guide the feedback; in the case of Double Check, to ask both about classroom management and cultural proficiency. On the other hand, questions about teaching experience may be important to get to know the teacher, which ultimately begins the formation of trust and allows the teacher to speak more candidly. To address this, the interview included items on all topics, with specific items highlighted for removal when time ran short. Thus, the data showing that coaches did not always ask all questions was expected.

The coach reported data indicated that the greatest proportion of teachers felt comfortable with the interview, that slightly fewer felt comfortable receiving feedback, and fewer teachers felt comfortable during goal setting. Despite this decline, coaches reported that about 86% of teachers were comfortable during goal setting. The goal setting component of the CCU is the part that is the least controlled solely by the coach and may be an area to tailor, specifically for teachers not displaying comfort. Teachers are rarely given the opportunity to determine their own goals for professional development and thus may be the least comfortable with this CCU step. As such, administrators and school leaders may want to provide teachers with more opportunities to set their own goals about their own practices.

One final interesting finding was about the goals teachers set: teachers were more apt to identify a goal related to positive behavior support and less apt to choose a goal related to cultural proficiency. It could be that teachers felt they needed more support in basic classroom

management strategies prior to addressing the implementation of culturally responsive strategies specifically. When thinking of a hierarchy of skills, as presented by Reinke et al. (2011), the positive behavior supports are likely a precursor to some of the more challenging CARES strategies. On the other hand, teachers may have felt less comfortable working on a goal that was related to cultural proficiency. It is also possible that because the coaches prompted fewer teachers to set a CARES goal, as compared to traditional positive behavior support goals, this area was less often selected.

### *Limitations*

The data collected in this study were all self-report, by either the teacher or coach. Specifically, consistent with prior research, teachers reported their own perceptions of acceptability, whereas the implementation (e.g., dosage and fidelity) data were reported by the coach. Future studies will consider other external sources (e.g., observations) of these types of data. Although this study included coaching data with 146 teachers, which is fairly large within the coaching literature, the coaching was conducted by four coaches. However, the amount of time this process takes should be similar with other coaches, given the structured nature of the CCU. Findings regarding fidelity and acceptability, however, may vary based on the coach implementing the model. Therefore, additional research in other settings and with other coaches would provide a useful replication and generalizability. Nevertheless, these findings demonstrate the acceptability of this coaching process as applied to cultural proficiency and classroom management. The study was also limited with regard to the diversity of teachers, as the majority were White and female. Although representative of the teaching population in the United States (Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013), conclusions drawn from this sample are not representative

of other racial and ethnic groups. Finally, all of the coached teachers volunteered and may differ from those who did not volunteer.

### *Conclusions*

The continuing issue of disproportionality among students from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds, particularly for those students with EBD, highlights a need for teacher professional development. Supporting teachers in their classroom behavior management is important for all students, but is especially important for students receiving special education, given that 95% of all students with disabilities attend regular education schools and over 60% are included in general education classrooms 80% or more of the time (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Previous research has suggested a gap between traditional styles of classroom management and culturally responsive classroom management (Larson, 2016) indicating that specific support around these two areas is needed. This study aimed to determine whether the adapted Classroom Check-Up coaching intervention, which combined traditional classroom management strategies and culturally responsive strategies (5 CARES domains), is feasible, based on data regarding dosage, fidelity, and acceptability, and thus merits additional efficacy research. These data are important in establishing a more robust literature on interventions to improve culturally responsive and classroom management practices, an area that is in need of more research. This adapted CCU was implemented with a low burden on teacher time and is seen as acceptable to teachers. Taken together, these findings suggest that the adapted CCU coaching model is potentially feasible and is an intervention worth additional study of efficacy with regard to teacher behavior and student outcomes.

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Table 1.  
*Teacher Demographics*

	<b>Cohort 1</b> ( <i>n</i> = 51)	<b>Cohort 2</b> ( <i>n</i> = 100)
<b>Staff member is:</b>		
General educator	79.6	99.0
Special educator	6.1	1.0
Encore teacher	12.2	0.0
Guidance counselor	2.0	0.0
Female	80.4	88.0
20-30 Years Old	39.2	33.0
31-40 Years Old	21.6	22.0
41-50 Years Old	19.6	18.0
51-60 Years Old	17.6	20.0
Over 60 Years Old	2.0	4.0
White	86.3	76.3
Black	13.7	14.4
Other Races	0	9.3
In a middle (versus elementary) school	56.9	66.0

*Note.* Numbers reflect the percent of teacher in each category. Percentages may not add to 100% because of missing data.

Table 2.  
*Average Time Spent on Each Coaching Step*

<b>Coaching Steps</b>	<b>Cohort 1</b>		<b>Cohort 2</b>	
	Average Minutes	Percent	Average Minutes	Percent
Interviews	59.71	13%	52.14	10%
Data Collection	60.89	50%	50.72	48%
Preparation for Feedback	35.47	3%	39.31	8%
Feedback	48.23	11%	40.15	7%
Collaborative Goal Setting	22.62	3%	34.61	7%
Follow-up Feedback	38.72	14%	37.79	13%
Other	19.77	6%	18.94	7%

*Note.* The other activities included checking in with teachers, scheduling, and relationship building.

Table 3.

*Percent of Teachers Reporting “Often” to “Always” on Items of Coaching Acceptability*

<b>Working Relationship</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. The coach and I agreed on what the most important goals for intervention	98.4
2. The coach and I trust one another.	98.4
3. The coach was approachable.	99.2
4. The coach and I worked together collaboratively.	95.3
5. Overall, the coach showed a sincere desire to understand and improve my classroom.	98.4
6. The coach incorporated my views into the services provided.	94.5
<b>Coaching Process</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. The coach was knowledgeable.	100.00
2. The coach communicated effectively.	98.4
3. The coach delivered support, recommendations, and technical assistance in a clear and concise manner.	94.5
4. The coach made suggestions that were appropriate for my classroom	97.6
5. The coach provided support that matched the needs of me and my classroom.	94.5
6. I received an appropriate amount of feedback from the coach.	91.3
7. The coach provided me with practical and useful feedback and strategies.	90.6
8. The coach provided helpful information.	94.0
9. The coach was accessible.	96.9
<b>Investment</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. The time spent working with the coach was effective and productive.	95.3
2. I had enough time available to participate in the coaching process.	75.4
3. The work I did with the coach was important.	92.1
4. The coaching took too much of my time.	6.3
5. I will be able to effectively implement the strategies recommended by the coach in the future.	89.7
6. I would recommend the coaching to another teacher.	88.9
7. My overall reaction to the coaching was positive.	93.7
<b>Benefits of Coaching</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. My students benefitted from my work with the coach.	91.3
2. The coach helped build my capacity to implement evidence-based strategies.	87.4
3. The coach had a positive impact on my classroom.	92.9
4. The coaching increased my knowledge of strategies to promote student engagement.	89.0
5. The coach increased my knowledge of classroom management strategies.	79.5
6. The coach increased my knowledge of cultural proficiency.	78.6



Table 4.

*Implementation of each component of the CCU coaching process*

<b>Initial Interview</b>	Not Done (%)	Partial (%)	Full (%)
1. Build rapport.	0	2.1	97.9
2. Complete the values card sort.	0	1.1	98.9
3. Complete the interview obtaining information for each question.	0	26.3	73.7
4. Explain the purpose of classroom observations.	0	0	100
5. Explain next steps to CCU process	0	1.1	98.9
6. Explain that the data will not be shared with others.	0	0	100
7. Schedule time to visit classroom to conduct observations.	0	2.1	97.9
<b>Personalized Feedback</b>			
1. Explain the CCU feedback form.	0	1.1	98.9
2. Link the data and feedback to the positive behavior support framework.	1.1	1.1	97.9
3. Link the data and feedback to the CARES framework.	1.1	2.1	96.8
4. Summarize data on feedback form for review with teacher.	1.1	0	98.9
5. Provide examples of teacher strengths and areas in need of attention.	1.1	0	98.9
6. Ask for teacher input throughout the feedback session	1.1	0	98.9
7. Write down areas to focus intervention on menu of options.	3.2	2.1	94.7
8. Provide advice only when solicited by teacher.	1.1	4.2	94.7
<b>Goal Setting</b>			
1. Review action planning process.	2.1	0	97.9
2. Prompt the teacher to identify positive behavior support goal.	3.2	0	96.8
3. Prompt the teacher to identify a goal under CARES heading.	11.6	8.4	80
4. Teacher set a positive behavior support goal.	10.5	2.1	87.4
5. Teacher set a goal under CARES heading.	53.7	3.2	43.2
6. Collaboratively design a plan of action with the teacher.	4.2	2.1	93.7
7. Ask the confidence and importance rulers.	4.3	1.1	94.7
8. Brainstorm any possible barriers to the plan with the teacher.	4.3	1.1	94.7
9. Schedule a follow-up session/observation.	9.5	2.1	88.4