Intervention Name:
Math Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

Common Core State Standards Domain Areas: (check all that apply)

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Setting: (check all that apply)
Whole-class   Small-group   Individual   Acquisition   Fluency   Generalization
X             X             X             X             X              X              X

Focus Area: (check all that apply)
Acquisition   Fluency   Generalization
X             X             X

Function of Intervention: Math PALS is a whole-class peer-tutoring program that can be used with students across grades K-6. With PALS, students work step-by-step on grade-level mathematics skills. The PALS model allows for students to practice mathematics skills with immediate feedback and to engage in discussion about mathematics.

Brief Description: Typically, a higher-performing mathematics student is paired with a lower-performing mathematics student. The pair works together as a Coach and Player to answer grade-level mathematics problems.

At grades K-1, the teacher always conducts a brief lesson to demonstrate the lesson’s pair work. The students then break into pairs and work together for 15-20 minutes. Students work on a “game board” with the Coach’s prompts on the left side and the Player’s mathematics problems on the right.

(Fuchs, Fuchs, Yazdian, & Powell, 2002)
At grades 2-6, students start each lesson by working in pairs (without a teacher lesson). The pairs work together for 15-20 minutes, and then the students work individually to review the lesson’s skill.

**Procedures:**

- **Duration:** Kindergarten Math PALS runs for 16 weeks, 2 sessions each week, 15-20 minutes each session. Grade 1 Math PALS runs for 18 weeks, 3 sessions each week, 15-20 minutes each session. Grades 2-6 Math PALS runs for a minimum of 24 weeks, 2 sessions each week, 30 minutes each session.

- **Teacher training:** Teachers must read and become familiar with the Math PALS training materials. Training lasts 3 sessions for K-1 Math PALS and 4 sessions for 2-6 Math PALS. Teachers can attend a formal Math PALS training or read the teacher manual to learn about PALS training.

- **Instructional practices:** Teachers pair students (i.e., students do not get to choose their partner), and teachers switch pairs periodically throughout the program. When students work in pairs, teachers constantly monitor and provide feedback, when necessary.

- **Monitoring system:** With K-1 Math PALS, students have an opportunity to earn smiley faces throughout the lesson for completing mathematics problems and working well in pairs. The smiley faces are not tied to any tangible reward. With 2-6 Math PALS, students earn points throughout the lesson for finishing problems and working well in pairs. The pair with the highest number of points during the lesson wins the opportunity to collect PALS folders at the end of the session.
Critical Components (i.e., that must be implemented for intervention to be successful): Teachers must successfully train students on the Math PALS strategies. Teachers must prepare materials for each one- or two-week lesson. Teachers must implement lessons with high levels of fidelity, and students should work in pairs with high levels of fidelity.

Critical Assumptions (i.e., with respect to prerequisite skills): Teachers choose Math PALS lessons about mathematics skills that have already been introduced to the students. Teachers use Math PALS as a way to practice, extend, or remediate mathematics learning.

Materials: Teachers must purchase the appropriate Math PALS manual from http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/
Costs are as follows:
- Kindergarten Teacher/Student Manual: $40
- Grade 1 Teacher/Student Manual: $40
- Grades 2-6 Teacher Manual: $40
- Grade 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Student Manual: $30
Note: Grade 2-6 teachers buy one Teacher Manual (that can be used across grades 2-6) and one Student Manual for their appropriate grade level for a total of $70.

References: