

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION FOR ADOLESCENTS:
INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS AT-RISK FOR READING
FAILURE**

by

Teresa R. Rush

An education leadership portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS AT-RISK FOR READING
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ABSTRACT

For this Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP), I investigated, selected, implemented, and evaluated a comprehensive commercial Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents struggling with reading comprehension at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA). LAAA is a K-8 charter school which had no specific Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescent students in grades 6-8. The school had concerns about meeting the needs of students at-risk for reading failure within their Response to Intervention (RTI) model, and analysis indicated areas for improvement which included acquiring an evidence-based intervention to address the problem, improving the protocols within the RTI model, evaluating the promise of the intervention for affecting student achievement, evaluating intervention fidelity, and considering the feasibility of the intervention within the school's RTI context.

To address this purpose, I reviewed literature and interviewed teachers and students to inform my selection of an intervention. The selected intervention addressed the identified needs by providing an increased focus on struggling readers, including programmatic elements customized to the needs of the school, and addressing school-specific constraints that could improve feasibility of the intervention. I then developed a curriculum map and instructional map based on the investigated reading intervention. Last, I implemented the intervention over 12 weeks for 7th and 8th grade students and evaluated intervention feasibility, fidelity, and preliminary student results.

ELP findings supported feasibility of the intervention and in this ELP project. The results suggest that developing standardized protocols for addressing the needs of adolescents placed in a Tier 2 reading intervention at LAAA may have promise for addressing instructional features and contextual factors specific to LAAA. Fidelity results also revealed promise for a standardized intervention approach that incorporates strategies, routines, and protocols that effectively address the needs of at-risk adolescents at LAAA. Intervention results revealed favorable outcomes on three built-in intervention assessments (e.g. LevelSet, Activity, and Thought Question scores) and the NWEA Map Growth Reading assessment in the areas of Information: Key Ideas and Details; Language, Craft, & Structure; Vocabulary; and Overall Performance. I evaluated and provided results on implementation and utilized the results of the intervention, fidelity observation protocol, and program review in my final recommendations for LAAA.

Based on feasibility of the intervention, I recommend LAAA adopt a Standardized Intervention Protocol RTI model that incorporates a consistent, team-based approach for placing students in tiers of intervention and delivers a standardized intervention with strategies, routines, and protocols that effectively address the needs of at-risk adolescents.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have designed Response to Intervention (RTI) models to identify and support students who have specialized reading needs relating to education or behavior (Reed, Wexler, & Vaughn, 2012). The RTI approach includes screening children in general education classrooms for indicators that show they may need special support. The RTI models help general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators identify students with special needs and develop learning plans to facilitate a personalized, high quality education (Reed et al., 2012). Because RTI models are specific to individual students, schools, and districts, school leaders should develop and test RTI models to achieve maximum efficiency for their specific schools (Reed et al., 2012).

The Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) is a K-8 charter school that represents its own school district. The school has adopted an RTI model and allocated sufficient resources (e.g. core reading programs, 1-1 computers) and obtained professional development for middle school content area teachers, but there are no successful reading interventions matched to the needs of adolescents with reading comprehension difficulties (Snow, 2002). While the first step to improving reading comprehension instruction for adolescents is to ensure quality instruction and resources for reading instruction as a schoolwide effort (Tier 1), the second step is to provide

ongoing reading interventions (Tier 2) to improve comprehension and vocabulary development for students with reading difficulties who demonstrate persistent low reading performance (Reed et al., 2012). This is an area of improvement for LAAA.

Because of the strong focus on Tier 1 instruction, the LAAA middle school faculty has not acquired the needed additional resources for addressing the needs of struggling adolescent readers. At LAAA, adolescents at-risk for reading failure need effective reading interventions; this problem is compounded by the limited number of evidence-based reading interventions available to adolescent students that have a demonstrated positive impact on reading growth in comprehension (Wanzek, Vaughn, Roberts, & Fletcher, 2011). What follows is the process by which I investigated effective practices for adolescents, selected an appropriate Tier 2 reading intervention, and evaluated the promise for affecting student achievement, intervention fidelity, and feasibility of the intervention. This process addressed the contextual needs of LAAA's RTI program and determined effective instructional practices and resources for adolescents in need of Tier 2 reading intervention.

Problem Statement

Many of the adolescents attending LAAA are challenged by the same academic literacy demands prevalent in middle and high schools across the United States. Such demands are prominent in high-stakes testing, which can limit students' scores on assessments of college and career readiness. Researchers have limited knowledge about effective interventions for struggling adolescent readers in Grades 6 to 12, thereby making adolescent literacy a legitimate challenge (Wanzek et al., 2011). Many

adolescents do not have the reading strategies to read and comprehend complex texts, which places them at-risk for ongoing reading problems (Lang et al., 2009).

In a high-stakes educational environment such as this, educators must support the reading development of all students within a model aligned to evidence-based practices outlined in rigorous research for adolescent literacy. If research shows that Tier 2 intervention within an RTI framework is the most effective means to provide students with reading deficits the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels, such a framework should not only be utilized as an instructional framework in the elementary grades, but also for adolescent students in later grades in need of Tier 2 reading interventions. Due to the differing nature of early and later grade schedules (e.g., more courses, more movement between classes, limited time in the daily schedule for interventions), the recommendations that arise from much of the RTI research may not transfer, easily. Therefore, one must address the gap in the literature by investigating the most effective instructional strategies and Tier 2 interventions within an RTI framework for adolescents with reading problems.

Addressing the Problem

I developed my Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP) to address the needs of LAAA and demonstrate leadership by investigating, selecting, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive Tier 2 reading intervention to improve students' responses to the intervention model to close the reading gap between adolescents at-risk for reading failure and their more proficient peers. I focused on utilizing the most effective instructional strategies, protocols, and resources to improve reading intervention

instruction within a middle school-wide systematic approach to RTI-structured interventions, supported by The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR Anchor Standards, 2010), and reflecting instructional shifts in literacy required by Common Core State Standards (NGA & CCSSO, 2010).

I developed my Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP) to address the LAAA middle school's need for an improved RTI model. Specifically, I investigated, selected, implemented, and evaluated a Tier 2 reading intervention in LAAA middle grades. By examining empirical research on instructional practices, which maximize the learning of at-risk adolescents with reading difficulties, I selected a commercial reading intervention with strategies based on evidence from literature reviews, interviews, and survey results of secondary reading programs and interventions designed for adolescents at-risk for reading failure.

Substantial literature has indicated that specific components of common interventions are crucial for addressing reading challenges for adolescents (Reed et al., 2012). Specifically, components from Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions linked with RTI success include fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension instruction (Pyle & Vaughn, 2012). Additionally, Reed et al. (2012) highlighted that multisyllabic word recognition replaced an emphasis for younger students on phonemic awareness as a crucial component.

My goal was to understand effective reading interventions for adolescents, and then select and implement an effective Tier 2 RTI model. The main data collection methodology included reviewing standards-based reading instruction documentation,

conducting interviews, exploring strategies for intervening in the education of adolescents struggling with reading and vocabulary, and conducting a literature review. I focused on research-based reading comprehension strategy instruction to help students meet the rigorous demands of the CCSS (2010).

I also focused on RTI practices suitable for the needs of adolescents needing reading intervention. RTI was designed to address core educational gaps: (a) increased educational focus on struggling readers; (b) a more targeted RTI adapted to the school specifically, rather than solely national guidelines; (c) increased focus on effective Tier 1 instruction as a means of prevention (d) earlier intervention at Tier 1, rather than allowing progression to Tier 2 and 3; and (e) effective measures for choosing and delivering interventions for adolescents struggling with reading (Reed et al., 2012). Because RTI changes the focus of instruction from a “wait and fail” system to one where interventions are provided, I also addressed the need for Tier 2 reading intervention at LAAA by investigating and implementing an RTI approach that would enhance intervention fidelity at the school thus improving student outcomes.

Organization of ELP

My portfolio includes six chapters, in addition to references and appendices containing ELP artifacts. The current chapter describes the problem and my method for addressing the problem. In Chapter 2, I describe my role as the researcher in addressing the problem, the school organization and its context for the problem, and the goals for the project. In Chapter 3, I further elaborate on my strategies for addressing the problem of addressing reading achievement for struggling adolescent readers using an updated RTI

model based on strategies identified in literature. Chapter 3 also includes information about the project timeline, resources, organizational flow, and process. In Chapter 4, I present the study results and findings related to the promise for affecting student achievement, intervention fidelity, and feasibility. In Chapter 5, I describe the elements of my project that were successful and elements that could be improved to better meet the needs of middle grades staff and students at LAAA. Additionally, I propose subsequent steps that the school leadership could take to improve Tier 2 reading intervention at LAAA. Finally, in Chapter 6, I reflect on my experience undertaking this research project and provide information on my development as an educational leader.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Located in Newark, Delaware, LAAA serves approximately 739 students. Students range from grades K-8, and similar programs operate in Philadelphia, Miami, and Chicago. LAAA states that dual-language learning is a core value of the institution. While the school's mission is to "educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities" (Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, 2019), the school is challenged in addressing the needs of students who struggle to make adequate progress in reading and reading comprehension. Effective intervention is crucial in addressing student reading difficulties; however, LAAA does not have a personalized RTI model that provides successful intervention in the education of students who are at-risk for reading failure. To address this substantial challenge, I investigated, selected, and tested a commercial Tier 2 reading intervention, which relevant literature and my investigation indicated were likely to impact reading growth in comprehension and vocabulary positively over time.

RTI in Reading for Adolescents

Planning, developing, implementing, and sustaining an RTI model for adolescent students is a complex endeavor. Middle and high schools serve adolescents who exhibit varying degrees of reading achievement and even more diverse reading needs (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). The challenge that these school leaders face is how to best utilize

resources (i.e., programs, staff, and instructional strategies) to improve students' reading proficiency within the confines of a complex school schedule and limited remaining school years. For these reasons, a systemic framework is needed to maximize opportunities for reading intervention.

RTI at the elementary level has been conceptualized as a multi-tiered framework designed to meet the educational needs of all children in Grades K-5 (Reed et al., 2012). The same is true for RTI at the middle and high school levels, especially regarding reading development. However, there are key differences between RTI for reading at the elementary and secondary levels (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2010). Both address the needs of students struggling with reading by providing effective, evidence-based Tier 1 instruction and high-quality reading interventions for students with reading difficulties; however, prevention is the focus in early elementary grades, whereas remediation is often the focus in upper elementary, middle, and high school grades (Reed et al., 2012).

A key benefit of RTI models for improving the reading development of adolescents is the delivery of increasingly more intensive interventions for students who have demonstrated insufficient response to intervention or difficulties in reading achievement for an extended time (Reed et al., 2012). The purpose of RTI is to systematically provide struggling students with the additional time and support needed to learn the skills needed to be successful in school and beyond (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). Because older students' reading needs vary, teachers must provide each student with targeted, supplemental instruction designed to meet each student's individual reading needs (Reed et al., 2012).

Another reason for implementing an RTI model in reading at the secondary level is to provide a school-wide framework for improving core (Tier 1) instruction to keep Tier 2 and Tier 3 populations of struggling readers relatively low. This can result in an increased awareness of groups of students who do not meet end-of-year reading benchmarks, thus creating a need for teachers to improve their instructional strategies across the content areas to assist in improving literacy for all students. The initiative to improve core instruction across the content areas includes monitoring student progress. If students who were not previously identified as needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading instruction meet criteria for one of these placements, they will be served accordingly, as mandatory within an RTI model.

Delaware's RTI Regulations

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, a discrepancy model should no longer solely be used to identify students struggling to make adequate educational progress (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Instead, school leaders should use a process that determines if a child responds to systematic, research-based instruction. Leaders of some states have mandated that RTI be implemented in all K-12 schools as an initiative to improve academic achievement across all grade levels (Zirkel & Thomas, 2010). RTI effectively allows all schools to meet these legislative requirements, and these were adopted into Delaware state regulations in 2011 to hold all schools accountable for implementing instructional strategies that meet the educational needs of all students (Delaware Department of Education, 2011).

According to Delaware's RTI regulations, struggling readers who score at or below the 25th percentile on a norm referenced test or the designated cut point on a curriculum-based measure for a given reading screener, should be provided a Tier 2 reading intervention along with progress monitoring every two weeks. Tier 2 reading interventions must supplement core literacy instruction in the general education curriculum, delivered in a small group setting, and at a minimum of 90 minutes per week and for no less than two sessions per week for at least six school weeks. If the Tier 2 intervention is unsuccessful after a total of 12 school weeks (i.e., has made no progress or is not on trajectory toward end-of-year benchmarks), the student must be given a Tier 3 reading intervention, as designated by a team of experts.

RTI regulations recommend the same stipulations for Tier 3 reading interventions, except that if after 24 weeks, the student is not on a trajectory to meet end of the year benchmarks or is making no progress, he or she should be evaluated for special education services. Tier 3 reading interventions must be monitored on a weekly basis and must continue even after a student is referred for an initial special education evaluation. If the student is given an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), his/her IEP should include RTI interventions and results, and interventions should be designed based on students' reading needs (Delaware Department of Education, 2011). Tier 2 intervention was the focus of this ELP project.

Organizational Context

LAAA currently serves a diverse student population, with over 30% of the population consisting of English Language Learner (ELL) students and over 25% coming

from low income families (DDOE, 2019). The demographics of LAAA necessitate a wide range of programs to meet the needs of students. LAAA aims to foster a culturally-inclusive community that honors and helps all K-8 students realize their full potential in English and Spanish content area classrooms and beyond. LAAA accepts students based on a lottery system to ensure that all New Castle County, Delaware students have an equal opportunity for admission. Preferences are not given to students based on academic prowess, as at other schools around the country and state; instead, LAAA conducts its lottery based on a first come, first served basis with no attention given to gender, race, socioeconomic status, educational needs, district of residence, extracurricular participation, or any other applicant characteristic.

Student Characteristics

The Delaware Department of Education website provides information about curriculum, teacher qualifications, state assessment outcomes, and the student population (DDOE, 2019). In 2017-18, LAAA had 739 enrolled students ranging from Grades K-8. The school had a large population of students with characteristics typically associated with an increased likelihood of reading challenges, such as status as an ELL or students receiving special education services. Additionally, over a quarter of the student population at LAAA comes from low-income families. English learners comprise 34.5% of the student population, 25.4% are from low income households, and 8.6% are students with special needs (see Table 1).

Table 1

Selected Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Student Characteristics

Characteristics	2016-2017	2017-2018
English Learner	27.5	34.5
Low Income	27.1	25.4
Special Education	8.7	8.6

Note. Enrollment values represent percentages.

In addition to the diverse learning needs of the student population, LAAA also had a racially/ethnically diverse student body. Table 2 presents the racial/ethnic makeup of the student population. In the 2017-18 school year, 13% of the population was African American or African, 60% were Hispanic/Latino, and almost 24% were White.

Table 2

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2016-2017	2017-2018
African/American	15.3	13.1
American Indian	0.1	0.1
Asian	2.1	1.5
Hawaiian	0.1	0.1
Hispanic/Latino	57.7	60.3
White	23.6	23.9
Multi-Racial	0.9	0.9

Note. Enrollment values represent percentages.

Staff Characteristics

LAAA had a diverse administrative and instructional staff of 64 members, including one head of school, two assistant heads of school, one director of instruction, 54 teachers, and eight paraprofessionals. At LAAA, 58.5% of teachers held a master's degree or more.

Beginning in 2017-18 school year, my first year at LAAA, I led schoolwide efforts in improving the reading growth of middle school students. Much of this change was a direct response to changing state accountability influenced by the CCSS English/Language Arts (ELA) standards and Response to Intervention (RTI) requirements set by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE).

School Characteristics

As suggested by the diverse student body and school value of promoting dual language education, LAAA exuded inclusivity for all students, regardless of their racial or economic backgrounds. The school leadership places a high value on creating fellowship between students and building a culturally-inclusive community. Additionally, with a large population of students with special learning needs, LAAA has a strong focus on creating educational plans which work for the specific needs of students. These values are reflected in the school's mission statement and core values. As previously mentioned, the school's mission is "to educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities" (Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, 2019).

In addition to the value of promoting dual language learning, LAAA also focuses on educating students through project-based learning and developing opportunities for hands-on student learning experiences. This focus is exemplified by classroom instruction, which encourages independent and small group projects to convey lesson plan material. The school focuses on developing students who can work collaboratively with peers and have a high degree of personal integrity, as exemplified by accountability, social/emotional intelligence, a positive mindset, a passion for inquiry, resilience, and appreciation.

LAAA's RTI Model

During the 2017-18 school year, LAAA's middle school RTI team utilized the Problem-Solving model to address the reading needs of all adolescent students. In this approach to RTI, our school-based team: (a) analyzed student reading performance (e.g. percentile ranks) on the NWEA MAP Reading schoolwide screener to identify students with reading deficiencies, (b) determined intervention resources that could be utilized during the reading intervention block, and (c) evaluated the outcomes of reading instruction to inform tiered placements for the next RTI cycle.

LAAA Tier 1 Instruction

In the LAAA middle grades, 6-8 ELA teachers had four units of study they taught: Literary, Nonfiction, Test Readiness, and Poetry from our Reading and Writing Workshop Tier 1 curriculum. All instruction focused on the CCSS for ELA-Literacy in Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening for the specific grade level being taught. Additionally, in the 2017-18 school year, the LAAA instructional coaches applied for the

Delaware Department of Education Opportunity Grant and won \$100,000 to implement the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading program in grades 3-8.

The purpose of the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading program was to enhance implementation of Tier 1 literacy instruction across content area classrooms by embedding language acquisition scaffolds in LAAA elementary and middle school teachers' lessons. Altogether, our goals addressed wide reading experiences, outreach, literacy, vision, engagement, and support (W.O.L.V.E.S.), all principles that improved our Tier 1 core reading instruction. Lessons included the following Before, During, and After (B, D, A) reading framework instructional components: build background knowledge; pre-teach academic vocabulary; preview the text; set purpose, read, and discuss; summarization and sentence framing; and writing from language frames (paragraph and sentence frames).

LAAA Intervention

Because of the lottery process utilized at LAAA, the school's student body is diverse, regarding students' educational and linguistic needs. Students with the most intensive reading needs require effective interventions to improve their reading development.

The growing body of literature addressing the effectiveness of interventions for adolescent struggling readers has targeted specific components of literacy development that have the highest impact on adolescents' reading success (Reed et al., 2012). Researchers have asserted that Tier 2 and 3 reading interventions in *early* grades have focused heavily on five critical areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency,

vocabulary, and reading comprehension (Pyle & Vaughn, 2012). Most of these components should still be addressed within the time and curricula allocated for reading interventions targeting *adolescents*; however, Reed et al. (2012) noted that RTI for adolescents must shift focus from phonemic awareness and phonics to multisyllabic word recognition, while all other reading components should remain important areas of reading instruction for adolescents. Table 3 provides information on the number of grades 6-8 students eligible for reading intervention during winter 2018.

Table 3

Number of Students in Reading Intervention Winter 2018 by Grade Level

Grade	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8
Students in Grade	95	45	49
Students in Reading Intervention	23	6	10

Prior to the intervention used in my ELP project, I previously tried two, seemingly promising reading intervention programs at LAAA (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *What's Happening*®? and CommonLit); however, students still failed to make adequate reading progress during the first two trimesters of the school year. During the first trimester, I used Houghton Mifflin Harcourt *What's Happening?* (Beck, Conner, & Kruse, 2013) – a supplementary nonfiction reading intervention program specifically designed to improve the reading proficiency and test scores of Tier 2 middle school students.

The *Student Edition* includes high-interest, relatable nonfiction articles with before-, during-, and after-reading scaffolding and activities that promote student

engagement. The Teacher's Guide offers a variety of resources, including assessment supports and Lexile® levels for each selection (MetaMetrics, 2017). *What's Happening?* instruction focuses on comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency student growth. Students appreciated the content focused on social issues and culturally-relevant topics, but this was not enough to engage them in the content, as they frequently expressed their concerns about completing "packets" of work too often.

For the second trimester, I used a digital reading program called CommonLit (Meisinger, 2014), which offered high-quality, free instructional materials aligned to the CCSS created by teachers to support literacy development for students in grades 3-12. I used the CommonLit Digital Reading Program to engage my seventh- and eighth-grade struggling readers in literary texts to improve their reading comprehension; unfortunately, the program failed to target students' vocabulary acquisition skills, provided few progress monitoring reports, and students expressed their concerns about their lack of interest in the content of the digital texts in CommonLit. While the programs and strategies I used with students during the first two trimesters all seemed promising initially, these led to inadequate reading growth for students. Therefore, I was a catalyst in progressing the schoolwide literacy initiative by facilitating the search for a reading intervention that most effectively addressed the remedial reading and motivation needs of adolescent struggling readers.

To inform my investigation into an effective Tier 2 reading intervention, I realized through discussions with faculty members that there was no specific program or curriculum map for reading intervention in grades 6-8. While allowing teachers to have

some autonomy in their approach to reading instruction is important, especially when it allows teachers to personalize lessons to the needs of students, having an instructional roadmap is important for making and tracking progress. Although teachers independently develop their reading intervention lesson plans at LAAA, there is currently no dedicated time for teachers to collaboratively plan intervention lessons or seek feedback from colleagues on intervention implementation. Teachers may undertake such endeavors on their own; however, structured collaborative time can increase educational efficacy and guide novice teachers in how to handle the challenge of students with reading comprehension difficulties. As teachers do not have to seek feedback on intervention implementation and interventions are typically not reviewed or approved at LAAA, assuring quality reading intervention may be a challenge. Additionally, there may be challenges in developing cohesion within a grade level or across Grades 6-8.

Constraints Related to Intervention

Among the challenges related to consistency in intervention implementation at LAAA, there were serious constraints: (a) unreliable funding, (b) intervention time scheduling, (c) limited reading interventionists, (d) limitations on group size, and (e) no interventions matched to the needs of adolescents placed in Tier 2 reading intervention. LAAA administration does not designate funding for middle school reading interventions in spite of the lack of reading proficiency 6th – 8th grade students exhibit on standardized assessments. In addition, the context in which LAAA adolescent students were served was within a 30-minute, daily intervention block scheduled during the 2017-18 school year. The intervention selected had to be feasibly implemented within this block of time

for a small group of students. At LAAA, Tier 2 reading intervention groups typically range from 8-10 students, as several students needing reading intervention may also need math intervention and are therefore placed in math intervention classes for six weeks at a time. Group size is constrained by LAAA administration demands of small group intervention implementation (e.g. 8-12 students) and the lack of funding needed to hire interventionists to teach reading intervention in middle school. Similarly, lack of funding has placed constraints on interventions that the LAAA administration can adopt because of their potentially high costs.

Identifying constraints early on in the intervention selection process allowed me to tailor the intervention to the needs of LAAA middle school teacher, student, and administrator expectations. Consideration of these constraints, along with the research, survey data, and interview responses about Tier 2 reading intervention implementation helped guide my selection of the reading intervention for this project.

LAAA Achievement Data

According to Education Trust (2016),

States have to test all students on statewide assessments in the following areas: reading/language arts and math every year in grades three through eight and once in high school; and science once between grades three and five, once between six and nine, and once again between 10 and 12. These tests must provide valid, reliable, and comparable information on whether all students are meeting state standards in each subject. (p. 20)

Below, I provide information about the reading performance of students in 6th - 8th grades at LAAA. First, I discuss results related to the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC). Then, I provide relevant results from the Northwest Evaluation Association

(NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment. The NWEA MAP assessment data compare student achievement among peers at a statewide or national level. Additionally, these data play an important role in understanding and standardizing conditions under which students may need additional reading interventions. By comparing student achievement to peers, teachers can better intervene in the education of students falling behind and explain to parents the potential need for personalized educational planning (Reed et al., 2012).

In addition to improving student learning and understanding educational gaps, NWEA MAP Growth Reading assessment data were important for teacher and school accountability. These data were a useful resource for judging student improvement and the ability of teachers to help students progress. At LAAA, teachers did not appear to use NWEA MAP assessment data to its full potential to meet adolescent students' reading needs beyond placement in tiers of intervention. Monitoring the success of interventions requires benchmarking, and without adequate data collection prior to interventions and ongoing use of those data to inform instruction and instructional decisions for at-risk students, teachers and school leaders will struggle to judge the progress of their students or the success of intervention techniques adequately.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)

The SBAC is a Common Core standards-aligned, criterion-referenced assessment that measures 3rd to 8th grade students' abilities to understand content knowledge more deeply, think more critically, and apply their learning to real world contexts. The SBAC utilizes computer-adaptive tests that require students to complete selected responses,

constructed responses, brief writes, and performance tasks to measure their achievements in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics.

For this assessment, students are assigned achievement levels based on their performance. According to the SBAC (2012), “Achievement levels are defined by Achievement Level Descriptors, the specifications for what knowledge and skills students display at each level (i.e., Level 1-Below Standard, Level 2-Near Standard, Level 3-At Standard, and Level 4-Above Standard)” (para. 2). Students performing at Levels 3 and 4 are on track toward achieving college and career readiness by the conclusion of Grade 12.

Figure 1 accentuates the need for effective reading interventions for ASPIRA’s adolescent students. The graph shows the results of the 2017 administration of the SBAC for 6th - 8th grade students. Results indicated that only 25% of all sixth-grade students, 16% of all seventh-grade students, and 29% of all eighth-grade students met the benchmark set for the SBAC reading claim (see Figure 1). Of note, these data represent the *reading* claim only, and are not the SBAC ELA scores, which include four domains: Reading, Writing, Speaking/Listening, Research/Inquiry. A significant number of students in each middle school grade level were performing “below standard” on the CCSS Reading benchmarks or were approaching these marks. Either way, none of the grade-level groups met the benchmark, thus supporting the need for effective intervention strategies that targeted LAAA middle school students’ reading needs.

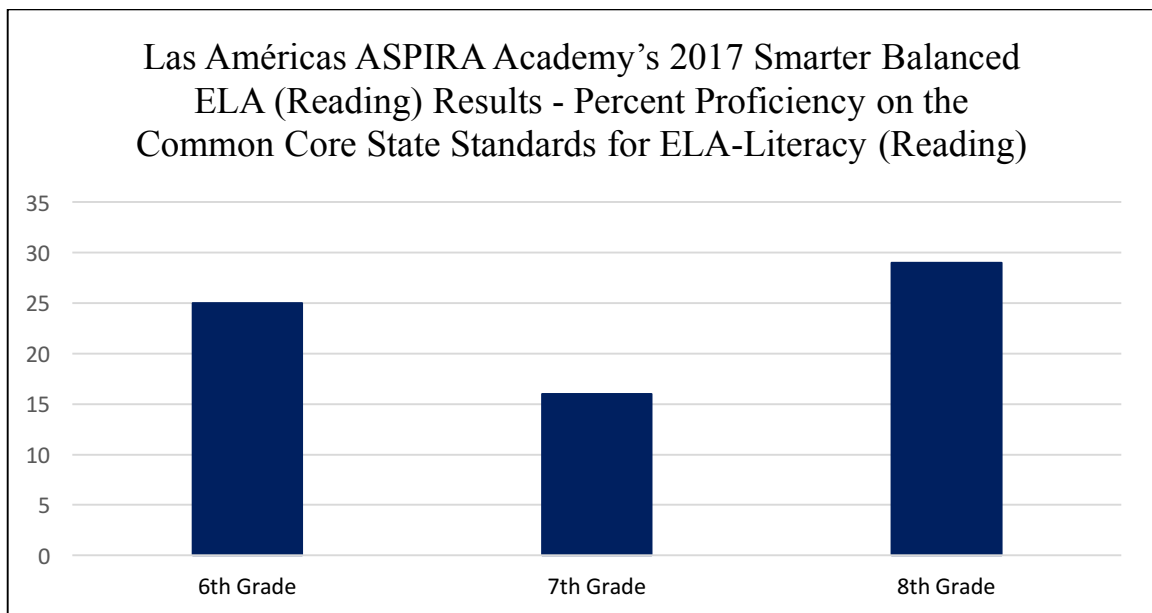


Figure 1. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's 2018 Smarter Balanced ELA Results - Percent Proficiency on the Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading Claim) in each grade level.

NWEA MAP Reading Assessment

The NWEA MAP assessments, called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP, 2017), are each a computerized adaptive test, designed to provide schools with accurate, reliable, and valid data on students' reading achievement levels. The NWEA MAP assessments are also used to predict students' understandings of the CCSS in ELA-Literacy (reading) and mathematics, thus providing predictive validity for students' performances on Delaware's Common Core-Aligned Accountability SBAC assessments. LAAA uses the NWEA MAP assessments for this stated purpose.

The NWEA MAP assessments help LAAA teachers screened students to determine which students should be placed in math or reading interventions and the NWEA MAP assessments were also used to track students' reading proficiency over

time, specifically to identify students at high risk for failing classes that require CCSS proficiency. These types of ongoing assessments are crucial to an effective schoolwide reading program, as data obtained from assessments can be used to identify and instruct students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

To determine which students were not reading proficiently and needed reading interventions, LAAA teachers used the norm-referenced benchmark percentile scales provided. These benchmarks are based on the existing NWEA MAP Reading Assessment national norms and the nationally accepted recommendations, as defined as follows (MAP Growth, 2017): *High = above 80th percentile, High-Average = 61st to 80th percentile, Average = 41st to 60th percentile, Low-Average = 21st to 40th percentile, and Low = Below 21st percentile.*

Figure 2 shows the results of the LAAA winter 2018 administration of the NWEA MAP Reading Assessment to students in grades 6 to 8. Results indicated that 23% of all sixth-grade students, 7% of all seventh-grade students, and 50% of all eighth-grade students scored in the “Lo” overall RIT score range for the NWEA MAP Reading Assessment and were eligible for reading interventions (see Figure 2).

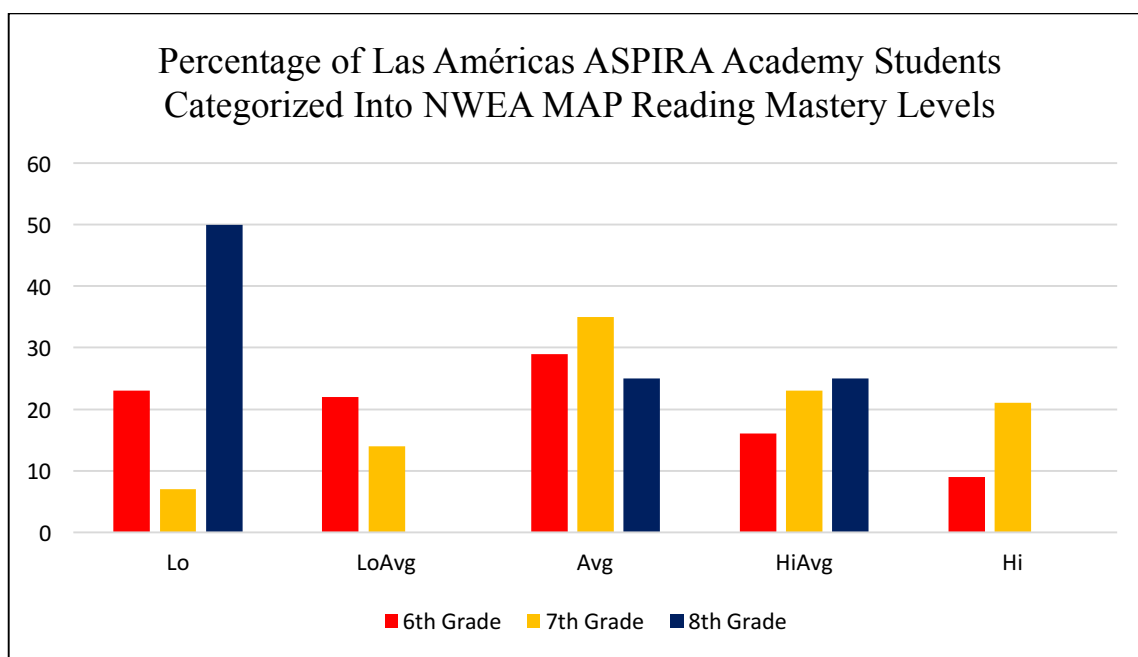


Figure 2. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy’s Winter 2018, NWEA MAP reading results: Percentage of students in each grade level at each proficiency level of the Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading).

A significant portion of the students in both 6th and 8th grades qualified for intervention (Tier 2 reading support) or urgent intervention (Tier 3 reading intensive support) according to the results of the winter 2018 NWEA MAP Growth Reading Assessment. In 7th grade, significantly fewer students qualified for intensive reading intervention; however, a smaller group of students still remained in need of intensive reading interventions to close the reading achievement gap in order to meet grade level reading proficiency on benchmark and state-level reading assessments. At this point, The LAAA RTI model did not allow for all of these students to receive the appropriate reading instruction that they deserved due to a lack of effective reading interventions, trained staff, and the RTI approach needed to serve students with reading difficulties.

Figure 3 shows estimates for the probability of students scoring at Level 3 or higher on the Smarter Balanced assessment in the spring, based on an observed MAP score from the winter term. Results indicated that 67.4% of sixth grade students, 55.6% of seventh grade students, and 59.1% of eighth grade students were predicted to not meet the proficiency on the SBAC ELA assessment due to their Lo to LoAvg Winter MAP Reading Assessment RIT scores.

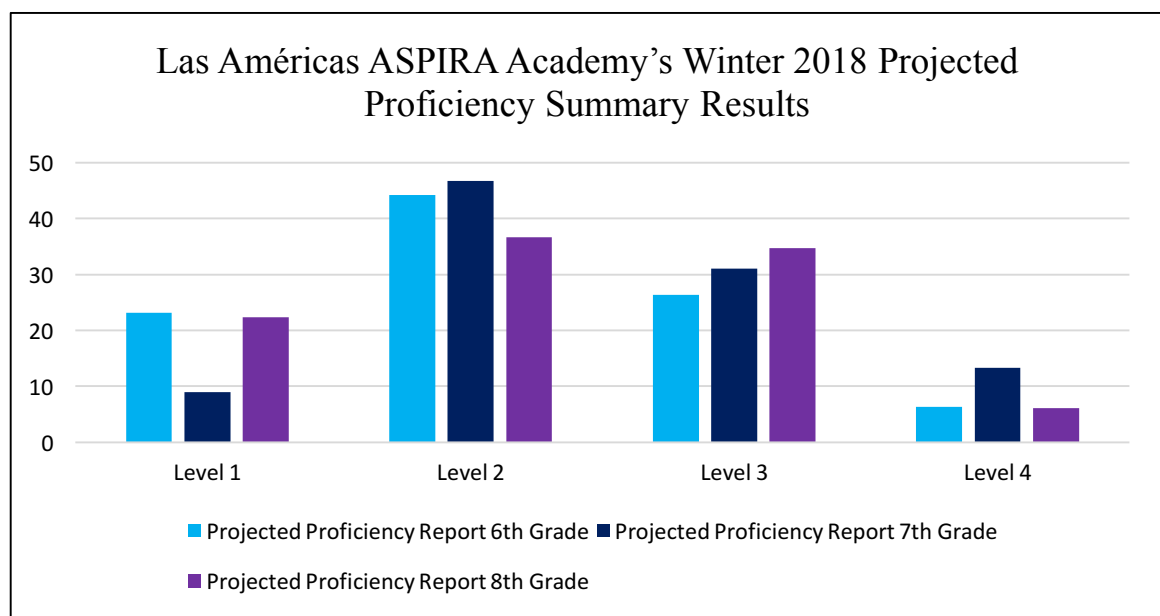


Figure 3. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's Winter 2018 projected proficiency summary results: Projected percent proficiency on the Spring SBAC 2018 Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading) in each grade level.

In February of 2018, there were eight 7th - 8th grade students in my Tier 2 reading course receiving reading intervention in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Their growth in reading ability was tracked using the NWEA MAP Reading Assessment as a progress monitoring tool. On average, students achieved one month of reading growth, according to their MAP Reading results from the beginning of October to

mid-January after being given 12 weeks of reading intervention using the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt *What's Happening?* program. On average, students should have made three months of reading growth because they received reading intervention for 12 weeks.

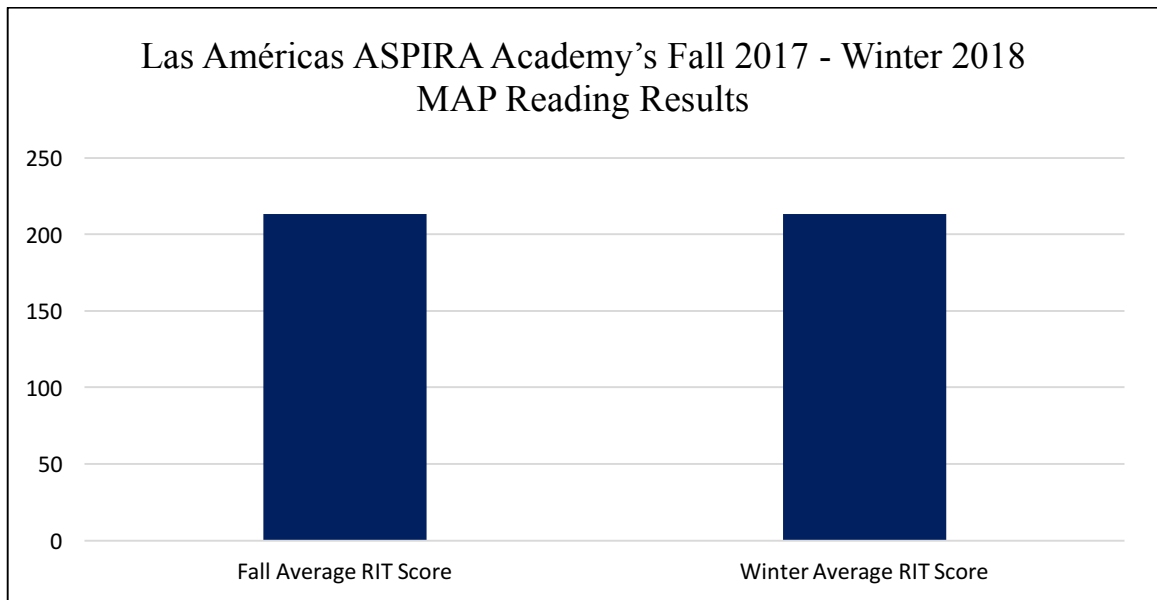


Figure 4. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's Fall 2017 - Winter 2018 MAP reading results: Average RIT score growth in Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading) from before Tier 2 Reading Intervention to after Tier 2 Reading Intervention.

I attribute students' lack of reading growth to students' wide variety of reading difficulties and lack of reading interventions available within the RTI model that could significantly improve their reading abilities. To reach desired outcomes in reading, students receiving Tier 2 intervention may require additional or unique reading interventions beyond what is currently available in the school. I aimed to address the reading achievement gap at LAAA by using research on the most effective instructional practices and interventions to research and implement a reading intervention for students

at-risk for reading failure who received Tier 2 intervention to address needs in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

This ELP added to my skills and knowledge needed to provide effective instruction to adolescent students. Becoming an expert in education during a time when change is constant and necessary has helped me to develop professionally. Therefore, I have actualized my goals to improve my educational and leadership practice in reading intervention to benefit my students.

Candidate's Role

During the ELP process I served in two different positions in Delaware public schools – reading specialist at POLYTECH High School, and Middle School RTI Coordinator and Literacy Coach at LAAA. Below I describe how these positions complemented each other and contributed to the leadership work of the ELP.

While at POLYTECH I completed four artifacts that became part of the ELP. During the 2014-15 school year, I surveyed middle and high school program coordinators and reading interventionists and analyzed the data to create an infographic of survey results (see Artifact 1, Appendix B). From their results, I determined common themes among their programs related to reading instruction for adolescent students as part of an investigation of reading programs for adolescents. During the 2015-16 school year, I delivered professional development in literacy instructional strategies as part of my position. I used staff and student outcomes to further define the need for improved reading instruction at Tier 1 and addressed the use of reading comprehension strategies

across tiers of instruction in my RTI in Reading Evaluation report (see Artifact 2, Appendix C).

In my POLYTECH role and for this ELP project, the infographic (see Artifact 1, Appendix B) and RTI in Reading Evaluation report (see Artifact 2, Appendix C) helped me determine key components of secondary reading programs commonly used to meet the needs of adolescents (e.g. comprehension strategy instruction, vocabulary instruction, and motivation/engagement techniques). Because I did not have enough information about why these components were so widely used, I used these artifacts to guide my research into reading interventions for adolescents on a wider scale. I identified that transfer of strategies between tiers of instruction may support retention of strategic reading and motivation across all literacy-focused classes, regular or remedial. I further investigated this concept and provided implications in my white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) and book review brief (see Artifact 4, Appendix E) recommendations that addressed why there is a need for specific features of reading interventions that can be utilized across multiple reading contexts and classrooms. Findings that emerged were aligned with my findings from the survey and evaluation report, as these were specific to the effectiveness of reading interventions that target students' deficits in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition on the reading growth of adolescent, struggling readers.

During the 2017-18 school year, I transitioned to a new position. I became LAAA's Middle School RTI Coordinator and Literacy Coach and completed six artifacts that became part of this ELP. I also served as reading interventionist in order to support

middle school students at-risk for reading failure because of limited staffing. At LAAA, I developed a summary of survey results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F) from interviews of teachers' and students' perspectives on the most effective components of reading interventions for adolescent struggling readers which played a vital role in my selection of an intervention for students needing Tier 2 reading intervention and the proposed Standard Intervention Protocol RTI model.

As LAAA's Middle School RTI Coordinator, my role included determining and implementing an effective Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents and evaluating the effectiveness. Both the middle school Assistant Head of School and English Language Arts teachers requested that I present to interventionists and administrators a research-based, systematic approach to adolescent reading instruction that could be replicated in classrooms across the middle school during a designated intervention time.

Without first investigating reading programs for adolescents at POLYTECH to develop Artifacts 1-4, I would not have been able to determine key components to focus my research for tiered reading instruction and subsequently determine appropriate, research-based approaches to teaching reading comprehension and new vocabulary to adolescents within LAAA's RTI context. Features of reading interventions and recommendations for addressing these components of effective reading interventions helped me to begin investigating a reading intervention and developing a plan for implementation of reading remediation for adolescents at-risk for reading failure at LAAA. It also further validated my concern for Tier 2 students at the secondary level needing immediate reading intervention, as they could become a much higher risk for

reading failure while having the highest chance for no longer needing Tier 2 reading instruction by the end of the school year.

To address intervention further, I developed a curriculum map (see Artifact 6, Appendix G) and instructional map (see Artifact 7, Appendix H) based on the chosen reading intervention and research on adolescents with reading difficulties. The commercial intervention selected provided content and instructional activities, and I created the curriculum and instructional maps to provide a scope and sequence and to prioritize intervention lesson activities. Finally, to assess the progress of the intervention project, I created and used a Fidelity Observation Protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I) to monitor implementation and interviewed students to gain further perspective into the effectiveness of the implementation. I then created a Presentation of Interview Results (see Artifact 9, Appendix J) to be shared with the LAAA administration and incorporated results from intervention implementation and the fidelity observation protocol observations into an RTI Score Card: Program Review of Intervention Implementation (see Artifact 10, Appendix K).

Improvement Goal Context

Although LAAA had an RTI model in place prior to my intervention ELP project, the model was not customized to a degree to intervene adequately in the education of adolescents who were at-risk for reading failure. The school has a large population of students who are English learners or in need of special education, which increased the need for high-quality Tier 2 interventions for students who were failing to meet reading benchmarks. The school's philosophy of education was inclusive, encouraging, and

literacy-focused, but students struggled to meet reading standards, and the current intervention techniques (e.g. strategies, routines, and protocols) did not appear to result in substantial improvement among students.

Additionally, the teachers received little time specifically dedicated to professional learning dedicated to how to best teach adolescents with reading difficulties, despite LAAA having students who met the description of a student with reading difficulties. According to Delaware's RTI regulations, students who score at or below the 25th percentile in the norm referenced test must be provided a reading intervention with progress monitoring every two weeks. Though the school had an RTI model in place, it often did not meet the best standard practices for Tier 2 interventions. For example, students who required both a math and reading intervention would not receive the reading intervention until the subsequent 6-week cycle.

Improvement Goal

Despite substantial research on the RTI process and reading interventions, few studies combined the two fields to address reading interventions conducted as a response to intervention model (Wanzek et al., 2011). My improvement goal was to participate in addressing that deficiency by studying a potentially effective response to intervention model with adolescent students at-risk for reading failure at LAAA. The purpose of this education leadership portfolio was to build LAAA's intensive reading program within an RTI framework to maximize students' reading growth and establish a highly effective Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents. In the following chapters, I provide the

process and results of my research addressing effective reading interventions for adolescents at-risk of reading failure.

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

My rationale for improvement strategies was grounded in a review of the literature, survey data, and interview responses that have all guided my work in improving LAAA's middle school RTI model, more specifically, the implementation of a Tier 2 reading intervention. I examined empirical research on instructional practices and routines that maximized student learning for at-risk, adolescents with reading difficulties. Research incorporated evidence-based approaches to response to intervention, reading comprehension strategy instruction, vocabulary acquisition, technology-enhanced instruction, and motivation. Interviews also explored these themes to further determine which Tier 2 reading intervention components were most appropriate for adolescents with reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition needs. I selected strategies for this improvement initiative based on evidence from a white paper, book review, interviews, and a secondary reading programs survey. Finally, I selected, implemented, and evaluated a commercial reading intervention for adolescents and developed a presentation of results and recommendations to be shared with LAAA administration.

Overview of Approach

My goal for addressing Tier 2 reading intervention implementation at LAAA was to understand what features of reading interventions were most effective for adolescents, determine and implement an effective Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents, and

evaluate the effectiveness of it within an RTI structure with the ultimate goal of establishing a research-based, systematic approach to adolescent reading instruction that could be replicated in classrooms across Tier 2 classes during the designated intervention time. I found resources designed to help teachers implement a systematic approach to standards-based literacy instruction and help students meet the rigorous demands of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (NGA & CCSSO, 2010). I focused on research-based reading comprehension strategy instruction and approaches to vocabulary instruction and morphemic analysis called for in the CCSS for ELA-Literacy (NGA & CCSSO, 2010) and supported by research (e.g., comprehension strategy instruction and vocabulary acquisition). I also investigated literature on tiered reading instruction to determine appropriate, research-based approaches to teaching reading comprehension and new vocabulary. This research helped guide my selection in reading intervention.

In order to select an effective reading intervention for adolescents at-risk for reading failure at the school where this study was conducted, I designed artifacts that helped me to investigate issues of reading interventions designed for adolescent students and evaluate my efforts.

Stage I: Research on Reading Interventions for Adolescents

This section of the ELP explains my investigation of issues related to reading interventions designed for adolescents. I employed a survey to learn more about RTI and Tier 2 reading programs for adolescents, investigated research on effective Tier 2 reading interventions for adolescents, and evaluated a secondary reading program to inform the

implementation of effective reading instruction for students needing Tier 2 reading intervention. To conduct this research, I created the following ELP artifacts: 1) an Infographic from Secondary Reading Programs Survey, 2) RTI in Reading Evaluation Report, 3) White Paper on Reading Interventions for Adolescents, 4) Brief from a Book Review of RTI for Reading in Secondary Schools, and 5) Summary of Results from Interview of English Language Arts Teachers' and Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Interventions.

Analysis of Reading Programs Survey

To learn more about reading intervention programs for adolescent students, I attended a state meeting of literacy practitioners and coordinators and administered a Secondary Reading Programs Survey which informed development of an infographic (see Artifact 1, Appendix B). The infographic depicts the results from this survey which I developed in Qualtrics as an EDUC 828 student in February, 2015 with feedback from my professor. As a reading specialist in my previous position at POLYTECH High School, my responsibility was to attend state Literacy Cadre meetings regularly to learn more about how I could improve reading instruction for students in my reading intervention courses. In March, 2015, Delaware middle and high school reading interventionists and program coordinators agreed to anonymously provide their perspectives on challenges and successes of their current remedial reading programs within an RTI framework by completing my survey within two weeks. Once all surveys were submitted, I analyzed quantitative and qualitative results on teachers' use of instructional strategies, books and materials, and their ratings of their reading programs.

Results were used to inform selection of a reading intervention for adolescent students and what intervention was selected to address their reading needs.

Program Evaluation

After collecting data on RTI programs and reading instruction for adolescents from Delaware interventionists and program coordinators, I collected survey and student growth data on reading instruction for adolescents at POLYTECH High School. As a student in EDUC 863, I decided to continue my investigation of secondary reading programs by studying the implementation of literacy instructional strategies at a secondary school in an RTI Evaluation Report (see Artifact 2, Appendix C) from February, 2016 to May, 2016 to better determine why some students needed reading instruction beyond what they receive in their core academic classes. My goal was to conduct an evaluation of POLYTECH High School's Tier 1 core reading program within the RTI framework to better understand reading programs for adolescent students.

In order to do this, I collected STAR Reading data (Renaissance Learning, 2012) from 30, tenth- and eleventh-grade students from teachers' social studies classes to be used as pre-test data before their teachers implemented literacy instructional strategies. I then delivered a workshop in February, 2016 on Before, During, and After reading strategies and vocabulary instructional strategies and analyzed data from a Survey Monkey pre-post survey of 20 teachers' understanding of literacy instructional strategies, frequency of literacy instructional strategies used in their instruction, and perceptions of the impact their instruction had on student learning. In May 2016, I examined STAR Reading growth from students to determine the impact instruction had on their reading

growth.

This evaluation was conducted within a secondary RTI setting in response to a schoolwide effort (Tier 1) to improve vocabulary and comprehension instruction across content areas classes. The results of the literacy workshop indicated improved perception, knowledge, and use of literacy instructional practices as well as significant improvements in student reading growth. I used those results to define further the need for improved reading instruction at the most foundational level of literacy instruction (e.g., Tier 1 instruction) and to explore opportunities for addressing the needs of low achieving adolescent students who may benefit from a more targeted approach to reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction.

The most important idea to note about the outcome of this evaluation was that because Tier 1 instruction did not provide students with the most reading difficulties with targeted instruction, school administration should incorporate reading remediation opportunities for older students who continued to struggle with reading. These supports in Tier 2 reading intervention should support the role of reading comprehension strategy and vocabulary instruction in Tier 1, content area classrooms. Transfer of strategies between tiers of instruction supports retention of strategic reading and motivation across all literacy-focused classes, regular or remedial, therefore making it imperative that Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescent struggling readers incorporate Tier 1 instructional, reading, and vocabulary strategies.

White Paper and Book Review

As a student in EDUC 822 in November, 2016, I began my comprehensive

analysis of existing research on the effectiveness of reading interventions that target students' deficits in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition to include in a white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) with recommendations for practice. Studies were reviewed with samples of students in 4th to 12th grades who were well below grade level expectations for reading. See Artifact 3, Appendix D which also contains key recommendations for middle and high school administrators on implementing RTI for adolescent struggling readers. These papers served a pivotal role in informing my choice in reading intervention and corresponding RTI procedures and protocols.

To deepen my understanding of issues related to reading interventions meant for adolescents, I also completed a two-page book review brief (see Artifact 4, Appendix E) of *RTI for Reading at the Secondary Level: Recommended Literacy Practices and Remaining Questions (What Works for Special-Needs Learners)* by Reed et al. (2012), a book tailored to leaders in literacy education and RTI who provide practical advice for delivering intensive reading interventions to adolescents served in an RTI structure. While empirical and relevant literature had a strong impact on informing my studies, I knew I needed to use multiple modes of research to serve adolescents at-risk for reading failure most effectively.

Summary of English Teachers' and Adolescents' Interview Responses

In order to continue my school improvement efforts in providing organizational and instructional supports to improve reading instruction and RTI at the secondary level, I became a Middle School Literacy Coach and RTI Coordinator for LAAA beginning in the 2017-18 school year. In the fall, the LAAA instructional coaches team applied for the

Delaware Department of Education Opportunity Grant and won \$100,000 for our initiative, called the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program. The purpose of the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program was to enhance the balanced literacy framework by embedding language acquisition scaffolds in LAAA's teachers' reading lessons.

The W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program was also a partnership with the University of Delaware (UD) and I played a vital role in determining the Before, During, and After (BDA) reading framework for our school based on my understanding of effective instructional strategies for adolescents struggling with reading comprehension difficulties. As a Tier 1 initiative, the W.O.L.V.E.S Reading Program did not address all students' reading difficulties; hence, I decided to incorporate these best practices and additional scaffolds and supports in my reading intervention implementation, an action step supported by my program evaluation.

Walpole and McKenna (2007) argued a tiered approach to reading instruction provided an instructional model that can be implemented school-wide, and that the model delivers a structure that supports differentiated instruction. During the reading block, teachers deliver Tier 1 (e.g., whole group, grade level) instruction by using a shared reading approach. Assessment informs Tier 2 (e.g., small group, instructional level) instruction which is targeted and purposeful. In Tier 3, students needing further intervention (as evidenced by assessment data) receive additional support outside of the classroom (Walpole & McKenna, 2007).

Although I had plenty of research and survey data to support my selection of an intervention, I needed to know what the teachers and students I served believed were the

most effective components of a reading intervention designed for adolescents since they would be the ones interacting with the intervention.

In November, 2017, I conducted interviews to determine LAAA English Language Arts teachers' and adolescent students' opinions about most effective features of a reading intervention designed for adolescents receiving Tier 2 reading intervention. My goal was to write a summary of results from the interviews (see Artifact 5, Appendix F). The summary included the semi-structured interview results from (a) eight, 5th to 8th grade English Language Arts teachers to determine their perspectives on what learning goals, instructional strategies, materials, and texts, should be in a Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents; and (b) eight 7th and 8th grade students' perspectives on what materials, instructional strategies, and texts they believed would help them improve their reading abilities.

I chose English Language Arts teachers based on their history of providing reading interventions to adolescent students with reading difficulties. I knew that these teachers would have the most insight into effective practices and materials suitable for adolescent struggling readers. For the student interviews, I chose the eight students that were placed in my reading intervention. I audio recorded their responses, transcribed them, and coded them to determine themes that emerged from all of their interview responses. I was not surprised to find the most common themes that both teachers and students believed would effectively address reading intervention included scaffolded reading instruction, engaging activities/materials, and technology integration. I knew I needed to select a reading intervention that addressed students' needs and teachers'

perceptions in order to encourage buy-in of the intervention by both students and teachers.

Stage II: Selection and Implementation of an Effective Tier 2 Reading Intervention

This section details my improvement strategies related to how I selected and implemented the Tier 2 commercial reading intervention for adolescent students at LAAA. At this stage in the improvement process, I followed a series of steps to develop a comprehensive approach to improving reading interventions for adolescent, struggling readers at LAAA. In order to address the need for effective reading intervention at LAAA, I selected and implemented a 12-week reading intervention for 7th and 8th grade students needing reading remediation. This required I design an overview of the 12-week intervention curriculum and daily lesson framework to detail week-by-week plans outlining the reading lesson content and instructional activities targeting adolescent students' reading comprehension difficulties. In order to accomplish this, I created the following ELP artifacts: (a) Tier 2 Reading Intervention Curriculum Map, and a (b) Tier 2 Reading Intervention Instructional Map. These artifacts provided a scope and sequence for the 12-week intervention period.

Intervention Selection and Placement

The white paper, book review, and interview results all served a pivotal role in informing my choice in reading intervention. Much of the background research from the first five artifacts supported an intervention that incorporated strategies, routines, and protocols that utilized the B, D, A reading framework, technology-enhanced comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, and teaching

practices and materials that improve student motivation. I also witnessed, firsthand, the positive impact several of these strategies had on Tier 1 instruction at POLYTECH High School and LAAA and wanted to ensure that the selected Tier 2 reading intervention would support the role of reading comprehension strategy and vocabulary instruction in Tier 1 content area classrooms to support transfer of new reading skills across contexts.

In December 2017, I began my search for an intervention program that addressed the needs of LAAA and was aligned with all of my research and findings. I decided on an intervention called TeenBizBoost[®] digital reading program (<https://www.achieve3000.com/learning-solutions/intervention/>) and requested a 12-week pilot of the program from the company after reviewing components of the program and concluding that it was aligned with my research on effective reading intervention components for adolescents (Achieve 3000, 2017).

TeenBizBoost[®] is a targeted, digital reading program that helps middle grades students advance their reading growth by providing differentiated online reading with built-in formative assessments that stretch students' reading comprehension abilities. Interventionists guide students through instructional activities supported by scaffolds when completing each assigned reading during a 5-Step Literacy Routine. For interventionists, the program provides standards-aligned lessons focused on nonfiction reading in science, social studies, and current events, with articles that contain linguistic supports for ELLs. Interventionists use the program with a small intervention group once they have completed the LevelSet[®] placement test. The program ensures assignments are tailored to each student's reading ability level.

In a typical 30-minute intervention session, teachers sequentially guide students through one or two of the following components per day of the program's 5-Step Literacy Routine: (a) respond to a before reading poll in writing (Monday), (b) read an article (Monday and Tuesday), (c) answer activity questions in writing (Tuesday), (d) respond to an after reading poll in writing (Wednesday), and (e) answer a thought question in writing (Wednesday). As part of the 5-step literacy routine, students complete an eight-question, multiple-choice, embedded assessment (e.g. Activity) also tailored to their individual reading levels. After the 5-step Literacy Routine, students interact with a grade-appropriate version of the text (e.g. Stretch Article) to complete a grade-appropriate multiple-choice assessment tailored to meet grade-level rigor (e.g. Stretch Activity) on Thursday and Friday. Built-in formative assessments are used to identify students' needs, inform instruction, and provide data through what the program terms *LevelSet*, a criterion-referenced assessment, and *Activity* questions, or short comprehension assessments, to inform reading growth. These tests measured understanding of specific reading skills and this facilitates matching appropriately-leveled reading materials to students. The LevelSet assessment was administered at the beginning and end of the 12-week intervention to track reading progress; Thought Question responses and Activity outcomes were used to measure comprehension of texts on a weekly basis.

Findings from my white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) that were aligned with survey and interview data served a pivotal role in informing my choice in reading intervention. I used the following factors outlined in Table 4 to determine a reading

intervention that addressed evidence-based features of reading interventions for adolescents: (a) provide reading comprehension strategy instruction that translates across disciplines, (b) provide vocabulary instruction, (c) provide technology-enhanced instruction, and (d) build motivation and engagement (see Table 4).

The intervention I selected provided lesson plans that incorporated leveled vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension strategy instruction matched to leveled texts. For vocabulary instruction, the intervention required teaching of Tier 2 target vocabulary, words pre-chosen for them by the TeenBizBoost[®] system; target words included three to five vocabulary words per article aligned with each student's individual Lexile level to be taught before students accessed the article. I guided students through using the 4-corner graphic organizer where they recorded a student-friendly definition, graphic representation of the word, example of it, and a sentence they produced with a partner of the word used in context, a vocabulary teaching technique that was incorporated in each article's lesson plan. My white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) revealed evidence-based research that supported reading interventions that incorporate opportunities for word learning, particularly through academic vocabulary instruction.

Table 4

Factors from Research Influencing Tier 2 Reading Intervention Selection for 6th to 8th Grade Students at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Factors Influencing Intervention Selection	Related Intervention Characteristics
Findings from Literacy Research	
1. Provide vocabulary instruction	Lesson plans that incorporate front-loading vocabulary, opportunities for vocabulary learning, and differentiated (leveled) vocabulary based on students' Lexile levels
2. Deliver reading comprehension strategy instruction that translates across disciplines	Lesson plans that include strategy instruction and opportunities for application, & differentiated leveled texts w/vocabulary
3. Incorporate technology-enhanced instruction	Digital reading program with embedded supports and resources (e.g. digital highlighting tool, Reading Connections workspace, e-texts, and text-to-speech audio)
4. Build motivation and engagement	Digital, high interest, nonfiction texts; paired reading exercises; opportunities for students to challenge themselves by completing Stretch Article & Activity; progress monitoring tools for self-monitoring & goal-setting
Other Background Considerations: Teacher & Student Interview Responses	
1. Adopt comprehensive intervention appropriate for 30-min. intervention block (informal teacher recommendation)	Intervention has enough resources to be used over time; however, intervention was designed for longer block of time (e.g. 45-60 min.) and will require modifications
2. Incorporate note-taking activities for students to track reading and retain information (student interview response)	Lesson plans w/instruction in note-taking skills, selective highlighting, note-taking graphic organizers, and Reading Connections workspace
3. Progress monitor student reading growth using intervention embedded progress monitoring tool (teacher interview response)	LevelSet and Activity progress monitoring tools built in to the intervention program
Contextual Factors & Constraints	
1. Consider limited staffing in LAAA middle grades when selecting intervention	Intervention differentiates content to minimize interventionists' responsibility for individualization and productivity during instruction
2. Consider limitations on group size for LAAA middle grades when selecting intervention	Intervention can be used with group of students regardless of group size

3. Consider limited funding for LAAA middle grades when selecting intervention

Intervention costs \$42.00 per seat; for Tier 2 intervention group, cost should be relatively low each school year

Lesson plans also provided me with guidance for student use of the digital highlighting tool and Reading Connections workspace embedded in each article in between chunks of texts. Students are taught to use reading strategies (e.g., *setting a purpose for reading*, *summarization*, and *generating questions*) and record information that would help them track their thinking while reading each text. The intervention includes high-interest texts students expressed interest in during their interviews (e.g., social justice, racism, crime, technology, and education).

The intervention program provides Before and After Reading Polls for each article which enhance instruction via technology and allow for students to respond to questions that reveal how students nationwide responded to each article's poll to engage students further in discussions about texts; I understood that this activity would be difficult to replicate without an intervention that incorporates the technology needed to provide these types of statistics on relevant topics to engage students in them.

The intervention program also includes technology that provides screening for students to determine their Lexile levels and tracks their reading growth through the LevelSet and Activity assessments. Middle grades ELA teachers expressed their desire for a comprehensive, standardized intervention program that included built-in assessments they could use to track students' reading growth to determine if their reading instruction was effective. The chosen intervention program can be used with all students needing Tier 2 intervention as it monitors student performance and automatically adapts all content for each student dependent on his/her Lexile.

This technology-enhanced progress monitoring tool was also a consideration in the intervention selection process, as it supported evidence from my White Paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) and Summary of Interview Results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F). Both artifacts emphasized the importance of technology integration and data-based decision-making as means for improving intervention effectiveness. After choosing the intervention, I considered the efficacy of the intervention for a 30-minute RTI block LAAA had built into the daily schedule and quickly realized I would need to modify the intervention selected in order to determine its feasibility after receiving training on the intervention.

The intervention also addressed constraints communicated to me by LAAA administration and middle grades ELA teachers. Teachers expressed that the intervention shouldn't require too much differentiation of materials as they were overwhelmed with designing their own interventions and differentiating content and materials to address all students' reading needs in the 2017-18 school year. They requested that the intervention have opportunities for individualization to target students' reading comprehension and vocabulary needs regardless of how different they are in one tier of intervention. The intervention selected levels all articles and vocabulary words according to each student's Lexile level and readiness for challenging texts.

LAAA administrators expressed recommendations for group size (8-12 students) which can be adhered to considering the intervention selected can be used with a group of students regardless of group size. Last, I decided to adhere to funding constraints when considering interventions. Because the selected intervention costs \$42.00 per seat and the

LAAA administration requires small intervention group sizes, I did not anticipate any conflicts with selecting an intervention at this cost because of the relatively low total cost of the intervention program once a number of students were determined for Tier 2 intervention.

In January 2018, I received training from a representative from the intervention weeks in advance of piloting the intervention program to establish an account, set up classes, review instructional frameworks and associated resources, and learn more about customer support services. The implementation manager assisted me in making decisions about pacing, scope, and sequence during the 12-week implementation process. Because I knew that adhering to program-specific protocols of instruction and assessment would contribute to the fidelity of implementation, I utilized the support center whenever I had implementation questions that I immediately needed answered.

In preparation for teaching students the 12-week intervention curriculum, I designed a 12-week, Tier 2 reading intervention curriculum map (see Artifact 6, Appendix G) with instructional strategies, materials, learning goals, standards, assessments, and skills along with the framework for daily lesson implementation. The rationale for developing the curriculum map was so that I could follow a scope and sequence for how the intervention would be implemented. This artifact was not specific enough to present an instructional model for any given week. So, I proceeded to develop an instructional map (see Artifact 7, Appendix H) to serve as a more in-depth, week-by-week sequence of instruction with modifications that addressed the condensed 5-Step Literacy Routine and included Stretch Article and Activity. Both artifacts were informed

by the research I conducted on the most effective reading interventions for adolescent struggling readers (e.g. the B, D, A reading framework and comprehension strategy instruction).

In January 2018, I hosted an RTI cycle meeting with the LAAA Assistant Head of School and 7th and 8th grade reading interventionists in order to determine the tiered placements of students for reading interventions. Students' SBAC ELA scores (Reading Claim) and NWEA MAP Growth Reading scores were used to decide eligibility for Tier 2 reading intervention. Students targeted for Tier 2 reading intervention were students who fell below the 25th percentile but above the 10th percentile; these students were placed in my Tier 2 reading intervention until they were on track to meet end-of-year benchmarks in reading. Anecdotal notes regarding student performances in reading comprehension were also factored into student placements in Tier 2 reading intervention. Once students were placed in my Tier 2 reading intervention, they were given the LevelSet pretest to determine their Lexile level in informational texts. Using their baseline Lexile levels, I paired each student with another student with similar Lexile levels before instruction began.

Intervention Modification

Although the white paper and other considerations from additional artifacts provided needed evidence for selecting an appropriate intervention for adolescents with reading difficulties, I needed to determine if the intervention selected could be utilized within LAAA's RTI context and the constraints of the middle grades' context. For the 2017-18 school year, LAAA administration designated a 30-minute RTI block for

interventionists to deliver remedial instruction to students in need of intervention. For the intervention I selected, the recommendation was that it be implemented within a 45-60-minute block of time in order for teachers to support instruction in reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, fluency, and foundational skills (Achieve 3000, 2017).

Because the focus of this ELP project is on students needing reading comprehension and vocabulary intervention and based on MAP Reading data students needed support in these two areas of reading, I decided that it was appropriate to pilot this intervention within a 30-minute, daily intervention block for 12 weeks to determine its feasibility. I also determined it to be appropriate to incorporate the Stretch Article and Activity within the intervention implementation.

The Stretch Article was designed for use after the 5-Step Literacy Routine, so I did not change the related sequence of instructional activities. In order to provide additional practice with reading comprehension strategies learned earlier, each week, I modeled for students how to use reading strategies to address breakdowns in comprehension at the beginning of each Stretch Article, use strategies or skills to focus on additional evidence, and show evidence of their learning by revisiting the Thought Question to individually add new evidence and reasoning to their responses. The purpose of the Stretch Article, and Stretch Activity which assessed their understanding, was to stretch their comprehension of grade-appropriate texts, which were beyond their independent reading level. Students completed the assessment on the Stretch Article to complete all reading tasks for the week.

In order to account for the addition of the Stretch Article and Stretch Activity in the weekly schedule, I condensed the 5-Step Literacy Routine into three days (see Table 5).

Table 5

Intervention Modification for Tier 2 Reading Intervention at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Reading Process/ Instructional Framework (BDA):	Day 1: Before Reading	Day 2: During & After Reading	Day 3: After Reading	Day 4: Before & During Reading	Day 5: After Reading
5-Step Literacy Routine	I. Pre-reading Activities: a. Before Reading Poll b. Build Background Knowledge c. Pre-teach Vocabulary d. Preview Thought Question/Purpose for Reading II. Article: 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer	II. Article: 1. Paired Reading Article 2. Discuss Article III. Activity: 1. Activity (CBM), After Reading Poll	IV. After Reading Poll: 1. Respond to previous poll question using new understandings and ideas V. Thought Question: 1. Respond to Thought Question and 'Save for Later'	VI. Stretch Article (Whole Group): 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer 2. Paired reading VI. Stretch Article cont'd: 1. Paired reading 2. Independent reading	VII. Stretch Activity: 1. Activity (CBM) 2. Revise Thought Question (Use Vocab Words & new understandings for revision)

From February 2018 to April 2018, I implemented a 12-week, reading comprehension intervention for eight, seventh- and eighth-grade struggling readers. Intervention sessions took place over the course of 12 weeks in daily, 30-minute sessions using the intervention. During the intervention time, I engaged students in the 5-Step Literacy Routine which incorporated (a) the Before Reading Poll to introduce the lesson, (b) a vocabulary activity to learn and use the vocabulary words in the Thought Question after reading the article, (c) use of reading strategies before students complete the activity, (d) completion of the After Reading Poll using what they learned from the content of the article after reading, and (e) use of evidence from the article and their notes to complete the Thought Question. For the Stretch Article, students applied learned reading strategies in pairs and eventually independently based on readiness to build meaning from their Stretch Articles. Afterwards, they completed the Stretch Activity and revisited the Thought Question completed earlier in the week to improve their responses using new evidence from their Stretch Articles.

I utilized different types of technology, a variety of lesson plans, rubrics and checklists, and instructional supports during the intervention lessons. These resources included videos, curriculum keys, skill instruction lesson plans, built in instructional supports, high-interest articles, sentence and paragraph frames, question types and strategies, a Thought Question rubric, a Thought Question peer review checklist, and graphic organizers for vocabulary and reading development.

Stage III: Evaluation of the Reading Intervention

Finally, this section of the ELP explains my evaluation of the Tier 2 reading

intervention and plan to share results with LAAA administration. To assess the effectiveness of the Tier 2 intervention, the LAAA assistant head of school evaluated my implementation using a fidelity observation protocol and I interviewed students post-intervention to gain further perspective into the effectiveness of the implementation; these artifacts were used to analyze student results both quantitatively and qualitatively and incorporate in a presentation and program review of the effectiveness of the designed reading intervention for administrators. In order to evaluate and share the effectiveness of the Tier 2 reading implementation, I created the following ELP artifacts: (a) Fidelity Observation Protocol, (b) Presentation of Post-Interview of Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Intervention, and (c) an RTI Scorecard: Program Review of Tier 2 Reading Intervention Implementation.

Observations and Intervention Fidelity

To monitor implementation and gain further perspective into the effectiveness of the implementation, I created and used a fidelity observation protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I). Creating the fidelity observation protocol required that I design a tool that administrators and reading interventionists could use to evaluate adherence to effective reading intervention implementation based on the intervention's goals, instructional strategies, content, duration, and curriculum specifications.

From February 2018 to April 2018, the assistant head of school viewed eight video observations of my reading intervention implementation on an iPad and completed my designed fidelity observation protocol in order to provide feedback on instruction. Observations included a running record of observed instruction and student responses

relating to the intervention articles and reading tasks as well as records of student proficiency or vocabulary and reading comprehension development. The purpose of the observations was to determine the level of quality as it pertained to fidelity of implementing instruction within an RTI framework for adolescent struggling readers.

To address the reading comprehension needs of my intervention group, I aligned my instruction to what was known about best practices in teaching reading comprehension and academic vocabulary to adolescent, struggling readers. This approach included the B, D, A reading framework, technology-enhanced multi-component comprehension strategy instruction, and academic vocabulary instruction that supported the learning objectives of core instruction.

Presentation and Review of Intervention Results

In May 2018, I analyzed students' post-intervention interview responses and developed a presentation of interview results and intervention recommendations to be shared with the LAAA administration. In order to provide a comprehensive evaluation and presentation of all of my findings, I incorporated my results from interviewing struggling readers on their opinions about the successes and needed improvements of the reading intervention implementation process in my Presentation from Post-Interview of Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Interventions (see Artifact 9, Appendix J); Students responded based on perceptions of their growth in response to the reading intervention, their ratings of their overall experience with the reading program, and what improvements they believe should be made in the reading intervention implementation.

Lastly, I analyzed quantitative data from students' reading growth and based on the results proposed recommendations for implementing a reading intervention for adolescent students within an RTI framework in my RTI Scorecard (see Artifact 10, Appendix K). Provided recommendations for administrators were based on results from intervention effectiveness of the designed reading intervention and fidelity observation protocol ratings. In the following chapter I reflect on the efficacy of improvement strategies related to intervention implementation and review of its effectiveness.

Chapter 4

EFFICACY OF IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

My improvement strategies helped me to understand effective reading interventions for adolescents, select and implement an effective Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents, and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. Because results and recommendations emerged from my improvement efforts, it is important to present to the LAAA administration an evidence-based, standardized approach to Tier 2 reading intervention that can be replicated in classrooms across the middle school during the designated RTI time.

Results of my intervention implementation that utilized reading comprehension strategy instruction and approaches to academic vocabulary instruction called for in the CCSS for ELA-Literacy (NGA & CCSSO, 2010) (e.g., close reading) and supported by research (e.g., comprehension strategy instruction and vocabulary acquisition) are reported below. I then report observation and fidelity results completed by the Assistant Head of School. Finally, I report post-interview results from students' perceptions of the intervention and their reading growth with the overall success of my intervention implementation and fidelity results from my RTI Score Card (Program Review).

Results

Because only eight students were included in the intervention and there was no control group, I did not conduct a statistical analysis. Instead, I reported averages for

student assessments at various points pre-intervention, during, intervention, and post-intervention. While scores cannot be directly attributed to the intervention, they are presented to provide context and demonstrate the potential promise of the intervention to affect student achievement. Average scores reported included the following built-in intervention assessment measures: LevelSet Lexile scores, Activity monthly Lexile averages, and Thought Question monthly average points. LevelSet Lexile scores were measured two times across the intervention, (e.g. pre-intervention and post-intervention) at winter 2018 and spring 2018. The Activity Lexile was automatically updated monthly to match each students' reading growth; I then averaged student scores across each month which resulted in two scores between LevelSet pre- and posttest administrations. Finally, Thought Question points were collected and averaged across each month resulting in three measurements during implementation.

I also report students' averages from two time points (pre-intervention and post-intervention) for MAP Reading scores. Outcomes include scores for Key Ideas and Details; Language, Craft, and Structure; Vocabulary; and Overall MAP performance (a composite RIT score of the three subscales). MAP Reading measures were collected pre-intervention (winter 2018) and again post-intervention (spring 2018).

LevelSet and Activity Lexile Results

In February 2018, eight students were placed in my Tier 2 reading intervention based on their performance on the MAP Reading assessment. All eight students were also given the built-in LevelSet pretest to determine their baseline Lexile level for informational texts in preparation for the intervention. To assess students' understanding

of vocabulary and comprehension from each of the 12 intervention weeks, I prompted them to complete a short, text-dependent, multiple-choice, assessment (e.g. Activity). While this 8-question Activity served as a progress monitoring tool for me, it was also useful for motivating students to use test-taking strategies on the LevelSet and Activity assessments. Test-taking strategies included:

- Reading the question and try to answer it *before* you look at the answer choices.
- Reading all of the choices.
- Eliminating answers that are not correct.

I created an anchor chart with these three test-taking strategies for multiple choice questions to reinforce key test-taking strategies in order to address a theme that emerged from my Summary of Interview Results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F). I encouraged students to refer back to the article when answering multiple choice questions and to find supporting evidence for their responses like they did when they completed graphic organizers and Reading Connections. Description of the LevelSet data and monthly Activity scores required examination of four sets of scores – LevelSet pre-test (pre-intervention), two sets of Activity monthly averages, and LevelSet posttest (post-intervention) (see Table 6).

Table 6

2018 LevelSet Pre- Posttest and Activity Lexile Averages

LevelSet Activity	<i>N</i>	Average
LevelSet Pretest Score	8	681.25
End of Month 1 Activity Score	8	688.13
End of Month 2 Activity Score	8	711.88
LevelSet Posttest Score	8	755.00

Utilizing measures built-in to the intervention can allow initial interpretation of student results. Table 5 reveals that the LevelSet pretest score had an average of 681.25. The average scores for End of Month 1, End of Month 2, and LevelSet Posttest scores are 688.13, 711.88, and 755.00, respectively. Students made an average of 6.88 Lexile points of growth from the beginning of the intervention to the End of Month 1, 23.75 Lexile points of growth from the End of Month 1 to the End of Month 2, and 43.12 Lexile points of growth from the End of Month 2 to the end of the intervention when the LevelSet posttest was administered at the end of Month 3. On average, students made gains from time point to time point and while I expected gains to taper off as we neared the end of the intervention (and school year), students made the most gains during the last interval of intervention implementation. In total, students made 73.75 Lexile points of growth.

Utilizing the LevelSet scores to assign students' Lexile levels and determine their reading growth over time using Activity averages and their LevelSet posttest scores helped me to document potential preliminary outcomes of my improvement efforts. I had hoped that the internal intervention testing in addition to the MAP Reading and Smarter

Balanced assessments would not overwhelm students and negatively impact the efficacy of my improvement efforts. In spite of the abundance of testing students experienced between winter and spring 2018 and the time of year in which the 12-week intervention was implemented, I observed students trying their best on all LevelSet and Activity assessments and I believe their reading performance is accurately represented by Table 5.

Thought Question Results

For each week of the intervention, I scored student Thought Question responses on a 25-point scale, added each students' four weekly scores, and then averaged them for each month of the intervention to determine improvement in responses on a 100-point scale. During the process, I modeled how to evaluate a Thought Question response by dissecting the question and what it was asking for through a modeling process, introducing the paragraph frame that reflects the type of thought question in the lesson, integrating appropriate evidence, reasoning, and summary statement, and evaluating it based on the thought question rubric. I also created an anchor chart to not only assist students in completing their responses but to also reinforce test-taking strategies for completing constructed responses. To help students more explicitly with completing the Thought Question, I projected a checklist provided by the intervention program for students to support the writing process further:

- Introduce the topic clearly; organize ideas using strategies, such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, quotes, and other details.

- Link ideas within and across categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., *in contrast*, *especially*).
- Include an ending statement or section.
- Use the words *trust* and *understand*, if you can.

Periodically, I encouraged students to use the same routine with their reading partners by completing their Thought Questions, individually, and participating in peer review by completing the Thought Question checklist, using it to offer productive feedback, and using it to make improvements to their work using evidence and reasoning from both the article and Stretch Article.

Afterwards, for each Stretch Article, I prompted students to read and comprehend the Stretch Article using the same reading skills they learned in its lower-leveled version. Reading tasks associated with the Stretch Article always occurred at the end of the week and seemed faster-paced. As students reread the article, they focused on additional evidence provided to stretch their comprehension of grade-appropriate texts and show evidence of their learning by revisiting the Thought Question and adding to their responses. Like in the 5-Step Literacy Routine, students used strategies taught for learning grade level appropriate vocabulary and note-taking based on reading skills taught in pairs and eventually, independently. Students completed the assessment on the Stretch Article to complete all reading tasks for the week.

The Stretch Article performance and Thought Question responses provided the most evidence regarding student achievement and growth. While the TeenBizBoost®

system scored each completed Stretch Activity assessment, I scored all Thought Question responses to determine improvements in reading comprehension of texts.

Students earned points and program achievements for successfully following the 5-Step Literacy Routine. I awarded points for completing the Thought Question, as it was a culmination of students' learning and the most difficult part of the reading tasks. I required that students revisit their initial answers and improve their responses, whereas the Before Reading Poll and Reading Connections/graphic organizers did not (see example Student Responses #1 & #2, below).

Thought Question Directions: New York City wants to hire new police officers. Leaders want these officers to speak different languages. Why is this? How could this help the city? Be sure to use facts from the Article in your answer. Type your answer in the text box below.

Initial Student Response: Leaders want police officers to speak different languages because if it's diverse, then there would be a different perception of people like a fairer one. If they are of a different race surrounded by different races, then they would have a less likely have a racist cop.

Revised Student Response: Leaders want police officers to speak different languages because if it's diverse, then there would be a different perception of people like a fairer one. If they are of a different race surrounded by different races, then they would have a less likely have a racist cop. It improves diversity in the police forces because in the article it says, "The changing face of the NYPD has been widely celebrated," which is like even when they have a bunch of officers, they actually care about what the officers. When one died, they said "An American flag and a Soviet symbol placed on his casket." (he was a Soviet man).

Students received program achievements and points which encouraged friendly competitiveness between students as they openly compared how many points, they earned from completing both assessments and the Thought Question. This motivated

students to take their time on activities to attempted to out-score their peers. Students found out about their points, achievements, and achievement statuses in comparison to other students (e.g., School Daily Top Scorer, Weekly Top Scorer), via pop-up announcements within the intervention program, once they logged in. They read:

Awards and Achievements: Student B scored the most points during the week of ____ - ____ compared to all students at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy using *TeenBizBoost*[®]. Student B earned 50 bonus points and an achievement. In addition, Student B's name will be posted to the School Weekly Top Scorer scoreboard.

Table 7 shows that the average scores for Thought Question Month 1 (Average Score), Thought Question Month 2 (Average Score), and Thought Question Month 3 (Average Score) were 77.50, 84.25, and 88.25, respectively.

Table 7

2018 Intervention Thought Question Results

Month	<i>N</i>	Average
Thought Question Month 1 (Average Score)	8	77.50
Thought Question Month 2 (Average Score)	8	84.25
Thought Question Month 3 (Average Score)	8	88.25

Students made an average of 6.75 points of growth from the end of Month 1 to the End of Month 2, and 4 points of growth from the End of Month 2 to the End of Month 3. Students improved their Thought Question responses by an average of 10.75 points. On average, students made gains from time point to time point with the most growth occurring between the end of Month 2 and Month 3. While gains were made in students' responses to the Thought Questions from month to month, further investigation into the

relationship between these outcomes and my instruction are needed to determine the potential impact of the intervention. However, these results show promise for implementing constructed response writing exercises of this nature in order to improve reading development within the 30-minute intervention block at LAAA.

MAP Results

Investigation of the NWEA MAP outcomes of Key Ideas and Detail; Language, Craft, and Structure; Vocabulary; and Overall Performance required examining of two sets of scores – pre-intervention and post-intervention (see Table 8).

Table 8

2018 NWEA MAP Pre- and Posttest RIT Averages

MAP Outcomes	<i>N</i>	Average
Winter: Key Ideas & Details	8	204.25
Spring: Key Ideas & Details	8	211.75
Winter: Language, Craft, & Structure	8	211.88
Spring: Language, Craft, & Structure	8	216.13
Winter Vocabulary	8	210.38
Spring Vocabulary	8	214.75
Winter Overall	8	209.00
Spring Overall	8	213.00

Table 8 contains average scores and shows that Winter Key Ideas and Details had an average score of 204.25 and Spring Key Ideas and Details had an average score of 211.75 (7.5 points growth). Winter Language, Craft, and Structure had an average score of 211.88 and Spring Language, Craft, and Structure had an average score of 216.13

(4.25 points growth). Winter Vocabulary had an average score of 210.38 and Spring Vocabulary had an average score of 214.75 (4.37 points growth). Winter Overall had an average score of 209.00 and Spring Overall had an average score of 213.00 (4.0 points growth).

Although the gains cannot be directly attributed to the intervention, students demonstrated reading gains in all four domains (i.e., Key Ideas and Details, Language, Craft, and Structure; Vocabulary; and Overall Performance) indicating reading growth over the course of a 12-week intervention for adolescents.

This project sought to determine the feasibility of a reading intervention that incorporated evidence-based features of reading interventions for adolescents at-risk for reading failure. To summarize, findings revealed that the selected Tier 2 reading intervention, which incorporated reading comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, and engaging activities showed promise for continued implementation at LAAA. Findings suggest that students in a standard protocol treatment may have positive reading outcomes although with the absence of a control group it is unclear if reading growth was caused by the reading intervention approach. Additionally, at the end of the 12-week intervention, I gave the LevelSet posttest, shared results and reading growth with students, and interviewed them on their attitudes toward intervention implementation and whether they would recommend it for other adolescents.

Fidelity: Observations Results

The LAAA Assistant Head of School completed the fidelity observation protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I) after observing each of eight videos of my instruction filmed

over the course of 12 weeks to determine the effectiveness of my intervention implementation. My design of the protocol was aligned with the intervention approach which included a Before, During, and After (B, D, A) reading framework, multi-component comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, high-interest texts, motivation and engagement strategies, building background knowledge, and providing corrective feedback. I utilized the completed fidelity observation protocols to determine patterns across indicator scores, strengths, and areas for growth in my instruction, and an overall score of my intervention implementation. Figure 5 displays the number of scores recorded for each of the eight videos and how many times either 3 points, 2 points, 1 point, or 0 points were given.

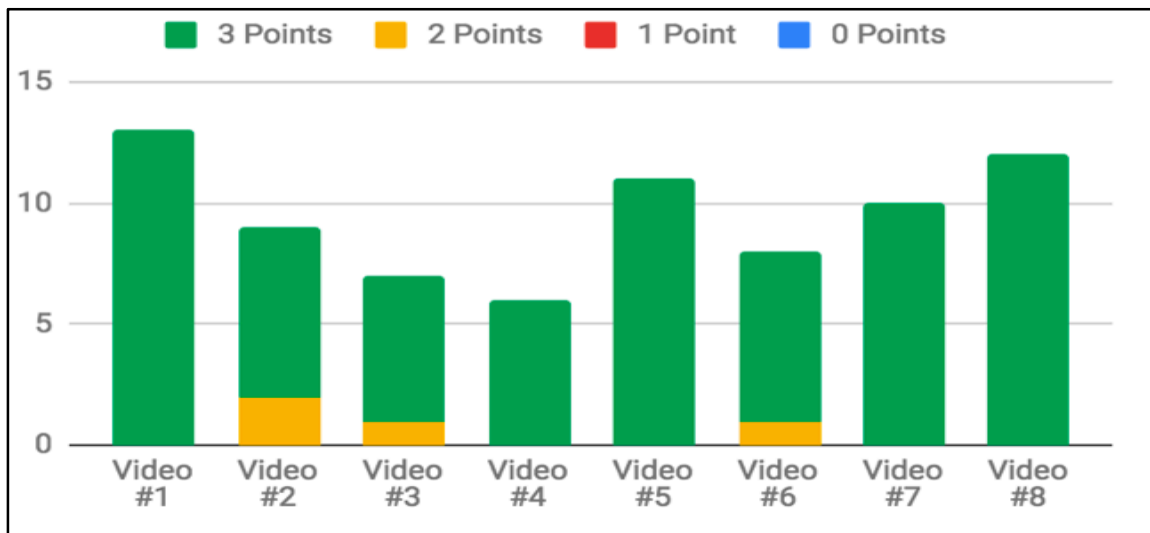


Figure 5. Fidelity observation protocol results.

The Assistant Head of School provided the following scores as an evaluation of my intervention implementation with corresponding feedback:

1. *Before Reading Score* (19/20): The average score for this section when indicators were observed was 85 points out of 90, or 94% of available indicator points.
2. *During Reading Score* (18/20): The average score for this section when indicators were observed was 97 points out of 105, or 92% of available indicator points.
3. *After Reading Score* (18/20): The average score for this section when indicators were observed was 23 points out of 25, or 92% of available indicator points.

Examples of indicators scored by the Assistant Head of School noted as effective in the reading intervention implementation are as follows:

1. Kept students on task and providing multiple, guided opportunities for students to practice learned reading strategies;
2. Provided modeling and immediate, explicit feedback so that students understand the rationale behind a particular strategy and how/when to use it;
3. Allowed students opportunities to work with partners to provide each other explicit feedback and correction during application of strategies within texts; and
4. Chunked texts into manageable parts for application of comprehension strategies as a whole group, in pairs, and individually.

Examples of notes the Assistant Head of School noted were effective in the reading intervention implementation are as follows:

1. Offered encouraging, timely feedback in a positive, supportive environment;
2. Kept students' attention with quick-paced lessons;
3. Explained how and when strategies are useful;
4. Included social interaction during lessons; and
5. Created opportunities for choice (e.g., choices among texts, topics, or activities).

Results of the observation sessions were positive and fidelity to the intervention is likely feasible and attainable. The rationale provided for scores was characterized by my use of effective strategies, protocols, and routines that included: pre-teaching academic vocabulary, use of engagement strategies (i.e. group reflections), leveraging the Stretch Article to encourage higher level thinking, use of sentence frames to frame responses to articles, reading strategy instruction (e.g. determining main ideas & summarizing), and improving constructed responses by providing language for reasoning in support of answers. After the scoring of the protocols, the assistant head and I met to discuss the scores and the rationale for scoring the indicators. After the productive meeting, I decided to utilize the feedback in my overall review of reading intervention implementation.

Feasibility: Interview Results

To investigate feasibility, I interviewed students after intervention to determine their perceptions about intervention success and what improvements they would like to see made in the reading intervention. Responses focused primarily on their perceptions of their own reading growth and challenges, effectiveness, and content (i.e., issues of social justice and equity) of reading activities and materials, and their critiques and

recommendations about the intervention. Below I provide results from the post-interview (see Figure 6).

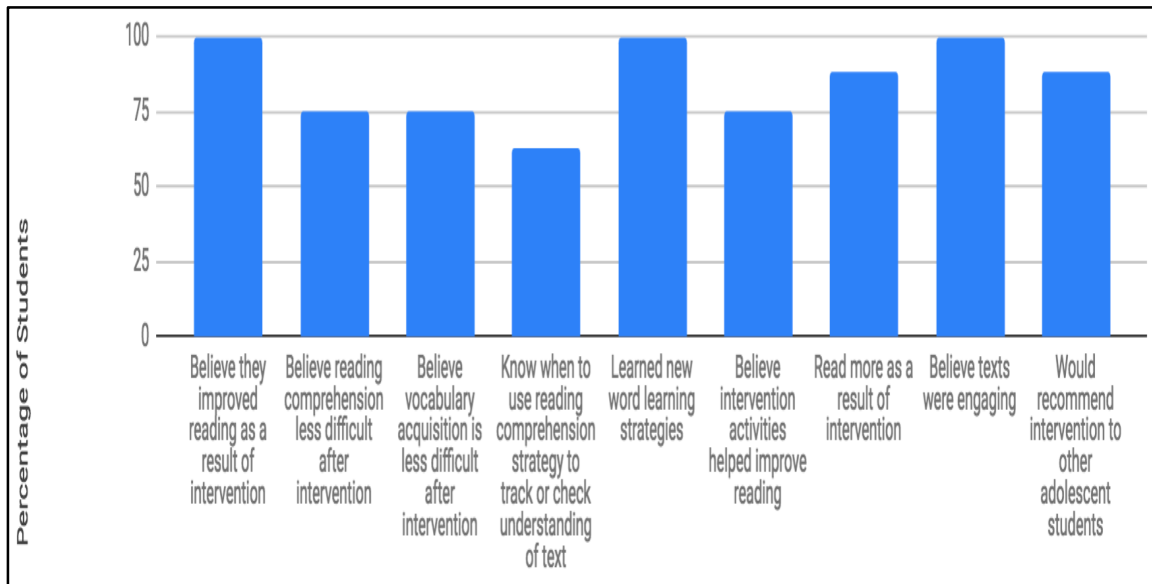


Figure 6. Post-intervention student interview results.

Results of the post-intervention student interviews were positive overall. The survey data showed that 100% of students believe that the reading instruction they received over the course of 12 weeks helped them become a better reader, learned word learning strategies for words they do not understand, and appreciated engaging materials such as texts that addressed their interests (e.g. rights, violence, drugs, money, and life problems).

Seventy-five percent of students rated reading comprehension as being less difficult than they originally expressed in their pre-interviews, vocabulary as being less difficult to learn in comparison to before the intervention, and believed that various activities (e.g. Thought question, stretch article and activity, and shared reading experiences) helped improve their reading. This is not surprising considering these

intervention components provided students with additional practice with reading comprehension strategies they had learned. It is also important to note that students who did not indicate this in their interviews critiqued the intervention, negatively, by indicating they did not believe their reading improved significantly because of the overemphasis on informational texts and not enough engaging activities besides “videos and just reading articles.”

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of students believed that the intervention motivated them to read more in and out of the classroom and would recommend this intervention to students in their age group for various reasons. Reasons provided by students include: (a) It supports learning in their ELA classes, (b) It encourages them to improve their assessment scores, (c) it helps with note-taking, (d) it is interesting, and (e) it has a good source of articles.

These data were presented to the Assistant Head of School as a part of a presentation of intervention results and student interview responses indicating the effectiveness and needed improvements for the Tier 2 reading intervention (see Artifact 9, Appendix J). The presentation ended with recommendations based on these data.

From interviewing students, I learned that the selected intervention and instructional approach have demonstrated feasibility in addressing students’ desire to receive reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction in a variety of ways. Students initially expressed a desire to improve their reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition through a scaffolded approach; my approach supported learning and transfer of strategies to other reading contexts, challenging students through complex and

meaningful reading activities, incorporating writing activities that engaged students in topics of interest, and discussing students' progress to motivate them throughout the 12-week intervention and communicate their growth pre- and post-intervention.

Program Review (RTI Scorecard) Results

Overall, my program evaluation indicates positive results of the intervention implementation related to potential student gains and high fidelity to the intervention based on the observation protocols, demonstrating the feasibility and promise of the selected intervention within Tier 2 instruction at LAAA. The RTI Scorecard (see Artifact 10, Appendix K) concludes my ELP project artifacts with a discussion of recommendations for RTI program administrators for adolescent students. Based on the results provided in the RTI Scorecard, I recommend that teachers have full access to the results of the MAP Reading assessment. The results will help administrators and interventionists evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and/or interventions and can be used as evidence for discussions about continuing or modifying Tier 2 intervention. The process of intervention improvement and reading program evaluation should be continuous as administrators and teachers should receive continued training and support around use of the RTI Scorecard results to improve reading intervention implementation.

The improvement strategies implemented will address RTI and Tier 2 reading intervention needs at LAAA. Outcomes of the interview and program review were presented to the Assistant Head of School to provide evidence for my recommendations for effective intervention implementation. Proposed measures for continued improvement are further described in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

This ELP project included an investigation of Tier 2 intervention in grades 6 to 8 at LAAA, including reviewing effective reading interventions for adolescents (Stage I), selecting and implementing a commercial Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents (Stage II), and evaluating the promise of the intervention with respect to student achievement as well as the fidelity and feasibility of implementation (Stage III). As part of this investigation, I interviewed both teachers and students in the initial stage. The results of the interviews, in part, were used to select the Tier 2 reading intervention for 7th and 8th grade students. I then evaluated intervention and fidelity observation results to determine the efficacy of my improvement efforts. Overall, I used a variety of data sources and addressed potential student achievement in reading from multiple avenues. My investigation, implementation, and evaluation of reading interventions designed for adolescents with reading difficulties influenced a set of recommendations and next steps for LAAA.

Stage I Reflection

In completing this ELP project, I have addressed the efficacy of specified RTI techniques, instructional strategies, and intervention components (e.g. instructional strategies, reading comprehension strategy instruction, vocabulary instruction,

technology-enhanced instruction, etc.) needed to improve Tier 2 reading intervention at LAAA.

While serving at POLYTECH High School, I identified effective RTI protocols and instructional practices supported by my Infographic (see Artifact 2, Appendix C), White Paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D), and Book Review (see Artifact 4, Appendix E) in order to determine the most effective intervention components and contexts for delivering reading interventions to adolescents at-risk for reading failure. While serving as Middle School RTI Coordinator at LAAA, I identified a lack of uniform intervention practices as an opportunity for growth and focus for this ELP. The prior RTI model used by LAAA in grades 6th to 8th, inadequately addressed the needs of adolescent struggling readers, which further focused an area for improvement. The research conducted to develop these artifacts guided my search into a Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents with reading comprehension and vocabulary needs but I required further information about the students and teachers that would benefit from my improvement efforts.

Including influence from students and teachers in my investigation of reading interventions for adolescents that were summarized in the Summary of Interview Results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F) expanded stakeholder participation and influence over the intervention. I interviewed both students and teachers to determine their perspectives on the necessary components of a Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescents which further validated my initial investigation into effective intervention strategies for adolescents. Both students and teachers influenced the selection of the Tier 2 reading intervention

with the aim of improving the efficacy of the intervention selected and customizing it to LAAA's specific needs. It is important to note that findings from my research influenced the intervention more than it did the RTI protocols, as my recommendations were not always followed and organizational conflicts resulted in program deviations.

For instance, as LAAA's Middle School RTI Coordinator, I planned to ensure that students scoring within the 10th to 25th percentile on the winter 2018 administration of the MAP Reading assessment would be placed in Tier 2 reading intervention, but two students who scored in the 8th and 9th percentile, and should have received Tier 3 intervention, became a part of my intervention group. This happened because LAAA ran out of space for middle school students in specific tiered intervention levels, so students were diverted into alternate interventions. Placing students in intervention levels not tailored to their achievement levels could result in decreased efficacy and it may have impacted assessment scores for particular students.

Stage II Reflection

Because students of lower reading abilities were placed in my reading intervention, it was difficult for me to teach to students of a wider spread in reading ability than anticipated. While all students received instruction according to my Curriculum Map (see Artifact 6, Appendix G) and Instructional Map (see Artifact 7, Appendix H), students who scored below the 10th percentile on the MAP Reading assessment may not have received as much individualized instruction as expected in a Tier 3 reading intervention because of the standardization of my intervention approach. To avoid this issue, I gave these particular students increased individualized support on

challenging reading activities (e.g. Stretch Articles, Stretch Activities, and Thought Questions).

I believe that selection of the reading intervention program based on results from my research, survey, and interviews contributed immensely to choosing an intervention aligned to evidence-based features of reading interventions and an intervention program that met the needs of teachers and students. While the recommended weekly timeframe for the 5-Step Literacy Routine was not ideal for LAAA, modifying the intervention pacing while keeping the sequence of activities the same allowed for opportunities to challenge students while providing teachers with the sustainable intervention program they asked for.

For the most part, students appreciated and benefited from my productive feedback in response to performance on all parts of the 5-Step Literacy Routine, including more challenging activities (e.g. Stretch Articles, Stretch Activities, and Thought Questions). I found that feedback given by me and their partners during the process may have contributed to improvements in their Thought Question responses and other assessment scores. As their final evaluator, I used the teacher comments area to provide written feedback to each student on his or her submission every week when submitted.

Using the student responses from my Summary of Interview Results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F), I a point to include reading activities and materials that challenged students (e.g. Stretch Article and Stretch Activity) and improved their writing in response to reading (e.g. Thought Questions) as they expressed a need for challenging texts and

writing exercises to improve their reading abilities. All eight students were committed to “stretching” their reading abilities by engaging in these challenging components of the Curriculum Map (see Artifact 6, Appendix G). These challenging activities may have contributed to students’ reading growth and should remain within the Instructional Map (see Artifact 7, Appendix H) to provide additional reading practice, challenging reading and writing in response to reading exercises, and motivation for reading as six out of eight students believed, as evidenced in my Presentation of Post Interview Results (see Artifact 9, Appendix J), that the Thought Question, Stretch Article, and Stretch Activity were particularly useful in improving their reading scores.

According to post-interview results from my Presentation of Post-Interview Results (see Artifact 9, Appendix J), what significantly motivated students was receiving awarded points through a grading toolbar embedded in the intervention program. I used the toolbar to award grades, points, and achievements. When students submitted Activity submissions and Thought Question responses, they were awarded points to be added to previously earned points; these points translated to program achievements which students used to compare their weekly achievements to each other’s. I observed students discussing their achievements at the beginning and end of class several times each week which I believe motivated them to improve their Activity scores and Thought Questions responses. Awarding program achievements based on students’ adequate use of reading strategies and skills, which had points associated with them, meant students valued the reading process, assessment process, and writing in response to reading process.

There were also fidelity issues in which students who required both a math and reading intervention received Tier 2 reading intervention on a different schedule than students who required just the reading intervention. In some instances, this process resulted in less frequent instruction, which could have impacted the efficacy of the intervention for those students.

Due to discrepancies in student intervention placement (e.g. inconsistent adherence to strict benchmarks) and loss of instructional time for students needing both reading and math intervention, there was an added layer of difficulty in evaluating the efficacy of the reading intervention; although on average, students still made reading gains on all outcome measures.

Stage III Reflection

I expected positive outcomes from the fidelity observation protocol and student interview responses. I really appreciated the feedback from the Assistant Head of School as it was validation of the efficacy and feasibility of my intervention implementation. While scores were not perfect on either evaluation, there is room for improvement on reading intervention implementation in specific indicators. Still, the relatively high ratings on the intervention and my implementation of the intervention are an indication of effective implementation and feasibility of instruction that could be replicated in other Tier 2 reading classrooms at LAAA to reinforce effective intervention practices.

Likewise, without an increased focus on evaluation of intervention practices, it may be challenging to identify potential fidelity issues, and without an opportunity to collaborate and receive feedback, teachers are left to deal with challenging situations

individually unless feedback is informally solicited using a tool that tracks RTI and intervention fidelity. The purpose of this Intervention Fidelity Observation Protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I) is to provide practitioners with a model for using the RTI process to make decisions on interventions for students with reading difficulties. This document is intended to provide guidance, provoke discussion, and further current efforts at implementing effective reading interventions for older students with reading problems.

The Tier 2 reading intervention showed promise as evidenced in my Presentation of Interview Results (see Artifact 9, Appendix J) and RTI Scorecard (see Artifact 10, Appendix K). Still, results cannot be attributed directly to the intervention because of the lack of a control group. Additional research is needed that measures students' reading progress at multiple points along the course of a longer, more sustained intervention when compared with a control group to determine how such an intervention improves reading for adolescents over time. Results along with information gathered from other artifacts can be used to reflect on intervention practices and determine recommendations that address best practices related to Tier 2 reading intervention within an RTI framework at LAAA.

Recommendations

The ELP project demonstrated the promise of the selected reading intervention as a potential Tier 2 reading intervention that meets the needs of adolescents at-risk for reading failure at LAAA. Further investigation of my improvement efforts revealed areas for improvement that were utilized to determine five recommendations that address LAAA's organizational, instructional, and assessment needs for implementing a highly

effective Tier 2 reading intervention within an RTI model for adolescent students. My recommendations for LAAA are to implement the following changes related to the needs outlined above.

1. Adopt a Standard Intervention Protocol RTI model that provides a systematic approach to supporting adolescents at-risk for reading failure.

I recommend the LAAA administration utilize a Standard Intervention Protocol or blended approach to RTI in order to improve tiered instruction. A dual approach to RTI that combines the team approach of the Problem-Solving model (e.g. problem identification, intervention selection, implementation, and evaluation) and the standardized intervention and instructional decision-making process of the Standard Intervention Protocol RTI model could benefit LAAA. With a dual approach RTI model, student placement is determined by an RTI team of experts that improve RTI decision-making while ensuring that the intervention and instructional strategies utilized are standardized for students of similar reading profiles and delivered by a trained reading interventionist.

LAAA has an RTI team and engages in the problem-solving approach but should incorporate the Standard Intervention Protocol model in its RTI approach in order to establish and utilize a highly effective, standardized Tier 2 reading intervention. In addition, the LAAA administration should continue to improve and monitor schoolwide Tier 1 literacy instruction as a means of prevention that operates in tandem with, and in support of, Tier 2 reading intervention, which is an important implication from my

Secondary RTI program evaluation (see Artifact 2, Appendix C) that should be included in LAAA's RTI approach.

Reed et al. (2012) argue that in order to close the achievement gap between adolescents who are at-risk for reading failure and adolescents who are not, all leaders, specialists, and teachers must have specific goals and procedures for developing a multi-tiered RTI framework that meets the professional needs of secondary school staff and learning needs of students. Such a model would include structuring RTI interventions to ensure fidelity of intervention sessions, providing supplemental, age-appropriate interventions to meet students' reading *and* vocabulary needs, and monitoring their progress through ongoing assessment. These RTI features are also supported by my white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) and book review of RTI structures (see Artifact 4, Appendix E) and the most effective contexts for delivering reading interventions to adolescents at-risk for reading failure. That said, my first recommendation is derived from the results of these artifacts and the results of my intervention implementation.

2. Utilize data to make accurate and consistent decisions about tiered placement and monitor reading growth for students needing reading intervention.

I recommend that LAAA establish and enhance organizational, instructional, and assessment components that improve overall RTI implementation. This means all students will receive statewide and benchmark assessments to screen for intervention eligibility with agreed-upon benchmarks that are adhered to. Specifically, the LAAA RTI team should continue to utilize statewide achievement tests and screener/diagnostic assessments to make data-based decisions for students identified as at-risk.

The RTI team should also monitor and assess growth over time so that the level of student performance and rate of improvement are comprehensible and useful for making decisions about continuing or modifying the intervention. Incremental progress-monitoring of long-term reading growth should be monitored by the RTI team so that the level of student performance and rate of improvement are accessible, comprehensible, and useful for making decisions about continuing or modifying the Tier 2 intervention. Students who have consistently scored at or above proficiency on progress monitoring tools, have met mid-year or end-of-year benchmarks, and no longer identify as at-risk based on benchmark assessment or state assessment cut scores or percentile ranks should be removed from Tier 2 intervention by the RTI team. If a student is not on trajectory towards grade-level proficiency, then instruction should be modified and matched to students using assessment data.

3. Adopt a reading intervention that incorporates reading comprehension strategy and vocabulary instruction in combination with instructional strategies that best improve student reading outcomes.

I recommend the LAAA administration adopt a feasible comprehensive reading intervention, such as the one used in this ELP project, that incorporates instructional strategies and protocols that align with evidence-based teaching practices and can be used with fidelity. My synthesis of survey data described in my infographic (see Artifact 1, Appendix B) and literature described in my white paper (see Artifact 3, Appendix D) and book review (see Artifact 4, Appendix E) helped me determine features of reading interventions most effective for a Tier 2 reading intervention which were then used to

select the intervention used for this ELP project. Once students were determined eligible for Tier 2 intervention, they were placed in homogeneous groups, or groups based on similar reading profiles. Then, they were provided scientific, research-based, standardized intervention with strategies, protocols, and routines effective for struggling adolescents.

While the intervention incorporated many of these features (e.g. technology-enhanced instruction, the B, D, A reading framework, engaging texts with embedded opportunities for reading strategy instruction), the scope and pacing for which students received instruction was also important. My Curriculum and Instructional Maps (see Artifacts 6 and 7; Appendices G and H) addressed these needs as they incorporated resources and instructional strategies offered in the reading intervention program that are aligned with best practices for teaching adolescents needing reading comprehension and vocabulary intervention. It is important to note that instruction should be differentiated based on pacing, skills, support provided, or text level to ensure students' individual reading needs are being met outside of what the instructional framework of the Tier 2 intervention requires in order to individualize instruction for students.

In addition to adopting an intervention that adheres to an instructional framework, intervention curriculum, and differentiation aligned with evidence-based practices, I recommend interventionists provide research-based, direct, and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction that addresses student reading outcomes. Adolescents with reading difficulties require adequate instruction to become proficient in each

strategy before combining strategies in a to self-regulate their use of strategies across school contexts.

To further support this targeted reading intervention approach, I recommend interventionists provide explicit instruction in high utility academic vocabulary needed to understand a specific text by offering simple definitions prior to reading, graphic organizers to extend knowledge of words, and multiple opportunities to use words in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. A routine that is integrated within the intervention should be used to reinforce best practices for vocabulary acquisition. Given struggling adolescents' often delayed acquisition of vocabulary, instruction should be differentiated based on words that will help them understand each text and improve their overall reading ability.

4. Improve student motivation and engagement in reading.

My fourth recommendation is that LAAA interventionists target increased student motivation and engagement in reading activities through social interactions around interesting topics in texts, goal-setting for students to take ownership of their learning, and technology-enhanced instruction that provides engaging accessible texts for all students. After collecting and analyzing student interview responses, I knew my selection of intervention, teaching strategies, reading activities, and materials (e.g. texts, technology, graphic aids) had the potential to impact students' motivation to engage in the reading process. Research from post interview results used in my Summary of Interview Results (see Artifact 5, Appendix F) revealed that students were most engaged in the reading intervention when they found it incorporated instruction of transferrable

reading strategies that could be used in their English Language Arts classes. They were also motivated to read when they felt challenged by reading activities and their learning addressed real-world issues (e.g. teen issues, human rights, violence, drug use) and improved their reading assessment benchmark scores.

I recommend that the selected Tier 2 reading intervention incorporate activities that reflect adolescents' need for engagement in learning content from culturally-relevant, authentic texts that improve their knowledge and challenge them to think critically about society and their identities. A technology-based reading intervention program also captures students' attention because the programs are interactive and prompt students to improve their assessment scores, thus improving their reading. But, in order to be effective, technology-enhanced instruction should be integrated with reading.

5. Ensure RTI and intervention fidelity.

Last, I recommend the LAAA administration perform routine fidelity observations to evaluate Tier 2 intervention implementation. The Fidelity Observation Protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I) was designed to facilitate the gathering of baseline information regarding current resources and practices addressing the organizational structure of RTI, evidence-based Tier 2 reading intervention and corresponding instruction, and ongoing assessment at LAAA. Interventionists should subsequently use the results of the protocol to reflect on their intervention practices and seek experts or resources in improving the category with which they need the most support. The protocol results should also assist the LAAA RTI team in determining which interventionists are most in need of additional

support or professional learning to plan for and implement Tier 2 reading intervention within an RTI model.

The Intervention Fidelity Observation Protocol (see Artifact 8, Appendix I) contains sections that reflect these components needed for an effective three-tiered model of instruction. The protocol is intended to stimulate conversations between administrator and interventionist after evaluating the RTI model in its current state and the interventionist's current level of implementation for each indicator. The protocol allows the administrator to document specific needs in organizational, instructional, and assessment processes as well as record information on how closely interventionists are adhering to critical components and procedures of the intervention that is being used.

To improve RTI fidelity, the LAAA RTI team must coordinate a robust decision-making process not only for placement of students in Tier 2 reading intervention, but also to monitor progress of intervention fidelity using multiple measures that help determine intervention effectiveness. To further determine the effectiveness of RTI implementation, the LAAA administration should use an RTI intervention fidelity protocol to gather baseline information regarding current resources and practices addressing the organizational, instructional, and assessment factors that support effective Tier 2 reading intervention implementation.

Instructional factors should be observed weekly or biweekly, whereas organizational and assessment factors can be documented less frequently and when necessary. Organizational and assessment factors should be assessed before intervention implementation. The LAAA administration should assess instructional factors by making

routine fidelity observations in reading intervention classes to record information on how closely teachers are adhering to the critical components and procedures of the intervention being used.

Next Steps

Following my recommendations previously discussed, I suggest that LAAA consider providing ongoing support and professional learning for teachers utilizing Tier 2 reading intervention. This can take place in the form of a Professional Learning Webinar hosted by a program consultant who shares components and instructional requirements of the intervention and associated instructional strategies and protocols. If using a commercial product, this should also include working with an intervention implementation manager in advance of implementing the first cycle of RTI to establish an account, set up classes, review instructional frameworks and associated resources, and learn more about customer support services. Teachers should access my curriculum and instructional frameworks on a platform where they will have continued access to materials.

Schoology, a learning management system for teachers and students, should host those materials and serve as a digital tool for accessing frameworks, sharing resources, and communicating effective strategies and routines that are suitable for adolescents using the intervention. I created a Schoology site with directions for administering the LevelSet assessment, using the program's options to motivate students to track and invest in their own reading growth, and directions for students to complete a reader interest survey, and other instructional supports.

Other next steps include ongoing fidelity observations by LAAA administration in order to determine which teachers are most in need of additional support to plan for and implement Tier 2 reading intervention within the RTI model. For teachers needing additional support, the LAAA administrator who observed the teacher should meet with the teacher to facilitate reflection on their intervention practices and seek experts (e.g. literacy coach or consultant) or resources to improve Tier 2 reading intervention.

Final Thoughts

Taken together, my ELP findings supported the feasibility of the intervention used in this ELP project. The results suggest that developing standardized protocols for addressing the needs of adolescents placed in a Tier 2 reading intervention at LAAA may have promise for addressing students' reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. If developing standard RTI intervention techniques was complemented by an increased focus on fidelity of implementation and standardized Tier 2 reading intervention, LAAA could improve adolescents' reading achievement over time and potentially reduce the need for Tier 2 reading interventions, but such an undertaking was outside the scope of this ELP project. When intervention is necessary, this ELP indicates that the Tier 2 reading intervention was feasible when implemented within a 30-minute RTI block at LAAA and may contribute to improved reading outcomes for adolescents.

Chapter 6

REFLECTION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

My journey in education began 15 years ago in UD's Elementary Teacher Education program. I never imagined how that decision would set the course for my life; a course that would expand my network of professionals and opportunities in K-12 and higher education. I didn't expect to pursue a master's degree, let alone continue on to pursue a doctoral degree, but I became inspired to make my mark on the field of education, when I began to notice a trend in the needs of students I served.

The primary reason I decided to pursue Educational Leadership was so I would have the opportunity to teach and advise future generations of teachers and reading interventionists. As a former reading specialist and literacy coach, serving the greater community of educators is near and dear to my heart. In order to equip myself to do what I loved, I first had to improve my own expertise in reading research by immersing myself in direct experiences in the field of education and studying best practices in reading instruction. These experiences would guide my improvement efforts and research interests like never before.

When I set off on my doctoral journey in 2014, I had recently taken a new position as reading specialist at POLYTECH High School. In that position, I was tasked with establishing their intensive reading program for adolescents at-risk for reading failure. The previous year, I also proposed several reading intervention programs, but I

did not have the research background or evidence to build a case for using them. Additionally, at that time, our school's major focus was to improve research-based methods of literacy instruction in Tier 1 core instruction. As a part of this initiative, I helped design and deliver workshops on literacy instruction, but concern for my struggling readers never wavered, as our lack of established strategies, protocols, and routines within our RTI framework did not sufficiently address students' reading difficulties. My growing concerns helped me make connections between why our students were falling further behind in reading and scoring poorly on standardized assessments of reading. While the instruction and supports they received in Tier 1 core instruction were effective in those contexts, it did not address their specific reading difficulties, which meant that students were not receiving the targeted reading instruction they needed and deserved in their limited time left in the K-12 setting.

Towards the end of my doctoral journey, and before refining my topic for this ELP, I took a job as the middle school literacy coach and RTI Coordinator at LAAA. I noticed that the RTI program that serves adolescents was in need of improvement, particularly for students needing Tier 2 reading intervention. Both LAAA and POLYTECH had similar needs. Both required an enhanced RTI model through intervention that addresses the reading needs of adolescents with reading difficulties. These needs suggested that Tier 2 reading intervention was the point at which students became at-risk for reading failure, and, therefore, should be my focus of research. I became determined to expand my field's vision for addressing instructional and contextual factors most needed for preventing reading failure. I decided to take the

challenge, as most of my career has involved teaching adolescents who were at-risk for reading failure. This meant I needed to refine the LAAA multi-tiered system of supports to ensure that at each tier, Tier 2, specifically, adolescents' reading needs were being addressed effectively.

As a certified reading specialist, I considered myself uniquely capable of enhancing RTI in reading for our adolescents considered at-risk for reading failure. Then, I recognized almost immediately upon starting my doctoral studies that I had more to learn about research-based reading instruction. I decided I needed to use lessons learned and research conducted in Dr. Amendum and Dr. Coker's classes, my first and last face-to-face classes. Their teaching helped to enhance my understanding of reading development and instruction. When I defended my ELP proposal, I gained even more direction in research and focus of my problem of practice from Dr. Walpole who further guided the focus of my research and studies. She agreed that I should focus on adolescents needing Tier 2 reading instruction and helped me define my most informative study—a study focused on determining what features most effectively address the reading needs of adolescents placed in Tier 2 reading intervention. The knowledge I gained in my doctoral program and from my ELP proposal defense enhanced my research, study implementation, and my intervention instruction. Designing my project based on research and the recommendations of my committee members, helped me determine the perfect methodology for finding reliable and valid evidence that addresses issues related to reading intervention for adolescents.

Through the teaching and guidance that I have received from my ELP committee and professors, I have transformed my understanding of effective instructional practices to deliver reading instruction for adolescents. I am now able to share my reading research with school leaders that oversee RTI programs so that they can effectively address the needs of adolescents with reading difficulties. As the POLYTECH reading specialist, LAAA Middle School Literacy Coach, and LAAA Middle School RTI Coordinator, I have been able to share my knowledge in a leadership capacity by developing and guiding teachers in professional learning that is focused on effective reading instruction for adolescents at the Tier 1 level. Moreover, I have had several opportunities to share my new understandings and findings with educators and scholars nationally, as an adjunct instructor, convention speaker, and scholar. These roles allowed me to share my findings at the national level on how to implement evidence-based practices for improving RTI for adolescents and address teachers' needs for improving reading intervention for adolescents.

Growth as a Scholar

The research I have conducted in pursuit of my Educational Leadership doctorate degree has had a substantial impact on my scholarship and practice throughout my time in the doctoral program. In 2015, I was recognized for academic excellence with a Certificate of Academic Distinction from UD. That same year, a curriculum unit I designed for Dr. Mouza's EDUC 897: Curriculum Planning and Design course was published on the Yale National Initiative website, so teachers across the U.S. and beyond could engage their students in complex texts through research-based instructional strategy

instruction. The curriculum writing and research skills I acquired from being a part of the Yale National Initiative, improved my academic performance and leadership ability needed to succeed in the Educational Leadership program.

The scholarly activities that had the greatest impact on my scholarship can be attributed to my Ed.D. coursework. In Dr. Amendum's EDUC 802: Reading Development and Instruction course, I developed an appreciation of empirical research as I filled in the gaps in my understanding of early literacy. Without knowing it, he tapped into my interest in analyzing research findings, making connections among scholars' works, and applying it to my own developing research. Two years later, in Dr. Coker's EDUC 822: Critical Issues in Literacy Development course, I added new research to the knowledge I already obtained about reading in order to begin refining my research topic. As a result, I created artifacts that address gaps in research related to reading interventions designed for adolescents. My research and writing skills developed with each course taken in the doctoral program, but it was the literacy courses, specifically, that addressed my strong desire to learn more about reading research and how to conduct it, myself.

While utilizing the feedback I received on my research and writing from Dr. Amendum and Dr. Coker's classes, Dr. Bailes presented me with the opportunity to apply for the UCEA University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Convention. Dr. Bailes' guidance helped me structure my proposal for the annual convention in order to analyze and present my findings on most effective reading interventions for adolescents at UCEA. One of my doctoral professors and UD's Director of the School of

Education, Dr. Mouza, approved funding through the Graduate and Professional Education Professional Development Award given by the School of Education and Office of Graduate and Professional Education in support of sharing my research with a national audience.

As a candidate nearing the end of my journey in UD's Educational Leadership doctoral program, I presented the results of my study and related research on intensive interventions for adolescents at-risk for reading failure to address instructional leadership and educational opportunity gaps. It was an enlightening experience sharing evidence of what protocols, strategies, and routines used within the context of an RTI framework have the highest impact on the reading achievement of adolescents at-risk for reading failure. This entire experience deepened my ability to conduct reading research since I was able to share it through the lens of a scholar and advocate for effective reading interventions in RTI programs. The opportunity to converse with and learn from other graduate students at different stages in the research process, post-doctoral fellows actualizing their career paths, and established professors willing to share their recommendations and experiences in the field, gave me insight into life in academia and the progression of a career in higher education, for which I am exceedingly grateful.

In addition, I became the Lydia C. Dunlap Scholarship recipient for the 2018-19 school year. This award was given to me in recognition of my scholarship and promise in the field of education, a proud accomplishment that encouraged me to pursue academia even further. Now, I feel equipped to contribute to the greater UD education community and continue sharing my research with other leaders in education, locally and nationally.

In my nine years as an undergraduate and graduate student in UD's School of Education, the faculty has always been dedicated to my growth as a citizen, scholar, and professional. My professors provided me with opportunities that inspired me to investigate my interests, challenge critical issues in education, and pursue my passions through capstone projects. Because of my learning experiences and collaboration with UD faculty and staff, my research skills, networking opportunities, and expertise in the field of education have improved. As a scholar, I have experienced significant growth in learning research methodologies, data collection, analysis procedures, literature syntheses, and research presentations. I am grateful for the critical role that scholarship played in my journey in Educational Leadership and I now understand that research is the best catalyst for addressing issues related to school improvement.

Growth as a Problem-Solver

As a doctoral candidate, I enjoyed conducting research in literacy development and learning problems by considering multiple perspectives in solving a problem at my own school and in the field of literacy. While studying adolescent literacy under the guidance and mentorship of nationally renowned professors and researchers, I appreciated the opportunity to use data in defining my problem of practice, assessing my own improvement efforts, and using the results to align my improvement strategies to my findings.

While in the Educational Leadership doctoral program, I expanded my career path by pursuing opportunities in higher education, a passion of mine that I have engaged in during my ten years teaching in K-12 education. I became an adjunct instructor in

Wilmington University's reading specialist graduate education program, and towards the end of my journey, Holy Family University's reading specialist graduate education program. These roles required I use the content learned from my professors to improve my instruction of graduate students who had varying degrees of understanding about reading instruction. In my work with graduate students, I used many of my Educational Leadership courses as a basis for how I would provide feedback, recommendations, and instructional activities for my students to aid in their understanding of issues related to reading intervention. To be able to use my learning experiences for the benefit of aspiring reading teachers and specialists has been nothing short of rewarding.

As I reflect on my career as a practitioner and problem-solver at both the K-12 and higher education levels, I find myself tracing my growth as a problem-solver back to my experiences at UD. As a student, my professors taught me the importance of remaining current in academic fields by belonging to professional organizations, reading leadership and literacy-specific journals, studying pedagogy, attending conferences, and delivering presentations in order to address issues related to reading interventions for adolescents. They also taught me the importance of remaining active in the greater education community, advice that has manifested in my opportunities to become a Yale National Fellow to improve teacher instruction at the state and national levels and serve on the ETS (Educational Testing Services) National Advisory Committee (NAC) for the Reading Specialist Praxis in order to advocate for adolescents with reading difficulties. The opportunity to engage in the problem-solving process and use this collaborative work to improve my understanding of adolescent reading development has shaped my

approach to K-12 and higher education instructional and leadership experiences. I could not be more grateful for the positive impact my professors have had on my progression of a career in K-12 and higher education.

Growth as a Partner

In my five years teaching in higher education, I have taken full advantage of opportunities to strengthen my partnerships with university and K-12 stakeholders to improve teacher education and student learning. My vision has always been to prepare future teachers for the field of education and improve teacher instruction for a positive impact on student learning. While I have had plenty of opportunities to prepare educators for teaching literacy in classrooms, both in and out of state, I have desired the opportunity to prepare pre-service teachers for a successful career in education. Just recently, my prayers were answered as my network of UD partners and I decided I was the right person for a new position as Associate in Arts Elementary Teacher Education (AA ETE) Program Coordinator for the University of Delaware's Wilmington campus. This position provides me with the opportunity to strengthen the partnership between the University of Delaware and New Castle County Teacher Academies which will positively impact teacher preparation and student learning in Delaware, a goal I am most passionate about.

As AA ETE Program Coordinator for UD's Wilmington campus, I have the pleasure of recruiting Delaware high school seniors who aspire to become elementary, middle school, or special education teachers, just as I did many years ago. As a graduate of UD's ETE program, it gives me great joy and pride to engage undergraduate students through innovative teaching, scholarship, and community-based partnerships. I plan to

create a dynamic learning environment that prepares our ETE students to serve a diverse society and foster lifelong learning in children, just as my instructors at UD did for me.

In partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Palmer, Elementary Teacher Education Program Coordinator for the Newark campus, Dr. Kotch-Jester, Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Mouza, Director of the School of Education, and I are together coordinating a program designed to strengthen teacher preparation for AA ETE students in northern Delaware. I could not be prouder of the work we are accomplishing together. I would like to express sincere gratitude to the University of Delaware School of Education esteemed professors and staff that encouraged and supported my academic and professional growth, which informed my ELP research and broadened my perspective of my future work in K-12 and higher education.

Finally, as I reflect on my Ed.D. experience, I recall Dr. Amendum sharing a very powerful message with me that framed my perspective for why I was embarking on this academic journey. He stated that completing the ELP would allow me to leverage my strengths in academia so that I could pursue my career passions when finished the Ed.D. program. This statement resonated with me as it helped motivate me in the final stages of this program. His assertion has become even more meaningful to me as I transition into my new role as UD's AA ETE Program Coordinator for the Wilmington campus, an ideal conclusion to my doctoral candidacy and a perfect beginning to my new journey as Teresa Rush, Doctor of Education.

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Appendix A

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL

Response to Intervention for Adolescents:

Intensive Interventions for Students At-Risk for Reading Failure

Teresa Rush

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Response to Intervention for Adolescents: Intensive Interventions for Students At-Risk for Reading Failure

Overview

To demonstrate leadership for my Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP), I propose to choose and implement an effective reading intervention for adolescents needing Tier 2 intervention in grades 7 and 8 at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA). Currently, I am LAAA's Middle School Response to Intervention Coordinator and Literacy Coach. It is a challenge for me and the other middle school reading interventionists to deliver effective reading interventions, and for students to receive those interventions after experiencing reading failure for an extended time period. Therefore, I will investigate effective reading interventions for adolescents and use this research to adopt a reading intervention that can be utilized within the scheduled intervention class period.

In the ELP, I will utilize and produce artifacts that (a) help me to understand issues related to the reading intervention, (b) demonstrate how I address the intervention, and (c) assess the progress of the intervention implementation. To further understand this issue, in part, I will use survey information, investigate the literature, and complete an evaluation of the current reading intervention program, in order to inform the creation and implementation of an effective reading intervention for adolescents. Then, to address the intervention issue, I will choose an intensive reading intervention for students in grades 7 to 8, many who have been reading below grade level for multiple years. The intervention framework will be in the form of a 12-week curriculum map and daily lesson

structure. Finally, to assess the progress of the intervention project, I will create and use a fidelity observation protocol to monitor implementation and interview students in order to gain further perspective into the effectiveness of the implementation; these artifacts will be used to analyze student results both quantitatively and qualitatively and incorporate in a program review of the effectiveness of the designed reading intervention for administrators.

Organizational Context

LAAA currently serves a diverse student population of 739 students with a growing English Language Learner (ELL) population currently at 30% and our low-income population at 46%. The demographics of LAAA necessitate a wide range of programs to meet the needs of our students. LAAA aims to foster a culturally-inclusive community that honors and helps all K-8 students (including ELLs) realize their full potential in English and Spanish content area classrooms and beyond. LAAA accepts students based on a lottery system to ensure that all New Castle County, Delaware students have an equal opportunity for admission. Preferences are not given to students based on academic prowess as at other schools; instead, LAAA conducts its lottery based on a first come first served basis with no attention given to gender, race, socioeconomic status, educational needs, district of residence, extracurricular participation, or any other applicant characteristic. LAAA's student body consists of 13.1% African American, 0.1% American Indian, 1.5% Asian, 0.1% Hawaiian, 60.3% Hispanic, 23.9% White, and 0.9% multi-racial students (see Table A1).

Table A1

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2016-2017	2017-2018
African/American	15.3	13.1
American Indian	0.1	0.1
Asian	2.1	1.5
Hawaiian	0.1	0.1
Hispanic/Latino	57.7	60.3
White	23.6	23.9
Multi-Racial	0.9	0.9

Note. Enrollment values represent percentages.

Additionally, English learners comprise 34.5 % of the student population, 25.4% are from low income households, and 8.6% are students with special needs (see Table A2).

Table A2

Selected Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Student Characteristics

Characteristics	2016-2017	2017-2018
English Learner	27.5	34.5
Low Income	27.1	25.4
Special Education	8.7	8.6

Note. Enrollment values represent percentages.

The Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) has a diverse administrative and instructional staff of 64 members, including one Head of School, two Assistant Heads of

School, one Director of Instruction, 54 teachers, and eight paraprofessionals. At LAAA, 58.5% of teachers hold a master's degree or more. For the 2017-2018 school year, I was recruited to help lead schoolwide efforts in improving the reading growth of middle school students. Much of this change is a direct response to changing state accountability influenced by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) ELA standards and Response to Intervention (RTI) requirements set by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE, 2011).

Reed et al. (2012) recommend implementing RTI as an ongoing process for improving teaching and learning in *all* subject areas. This is expected, as a result, to reduce the number of students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 intensive interventions in reading. RTI is not an end goal, but a means to an end—that end being sufficient literacy improvement for all students through the work of all faculty. To fulfill this purpose, all teachers in each content area at LAAA engage in professional learning opportunities around literacy instructional strategies delivered by our team of instructional coaches.

The LAAA Instructional team has been instrumental in creating buy-in with regard to designing and delivering professional development in Tier 1 literacy instruction to improve schoolwide instruction. Because of this initiative, students at LAAA have made gains towards the state average on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) English Language Arts (ELA). However, students needing Tier 2 intervention have a history of inadequate reading scores on standardized tests, including the NWEA MAP Growth Reading Assessment, a formative assessment used at LAAA.

RTI has been conceptualized as a set of processes for preventing and remediating student academic difficulties through universal screening, ongoing progress monitoring and/or curriculum-based measurements with research-based classroom instruction (Tier 1) and increasingly intensive secondary interventions (Tier 2) to meet students' instructional needs or more intensive instructional demands through tertiary (Tier 3) reading interventions (Reed et al., 2012; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003). To achieve this, the Delaware Department of Education set standards for all school districts in Delaware around the frequency, length of time, and intensity of interventions to ensure instruction and interventions are of high-quality and matched to student math and reading needs within their statewide RTI regulations (Delaware Department of Education, 2014). The LAAA adopted RTI into its academic program in 2011 in order to comply with state regulations and serve students with severe academic deficiencies. This same year, they developed an RTI team consisting of an assistant principal, the special education coordinator, the instructional coordinator, the reading specialist, and all mathematics interventionists.

As the Middle School RTI Coordinator and Literacy Coach serving on the RTI team, I administer a school-wide screener, called the NWEA MAP Reading assessment to all middle school students each trimester to identify students who are not meeting CCSS English language arts and literacy benchmarks. The LAAA adopted the NWEA MAP Growth assessment system in order to gain screening, diagnostic, and progress-monitoring data on students' reading skills according to their progress towards mastery of the CCSS in ELA-Literacy (NWEA, 2019a). The RTI team works together to identify

and analyze at-risk students' NWEA MAP Growth outcomes and other extant data in a data tracking software system called iTracker, in order to place them in their appropriate reading intervention classes. The goals of the RTI team are to:

1. Give referring teachers an opportunity to discuss each student's program and to brainstorm possible solutions to their concern(s);
2. Provide input regarding appropriate interventions to students at-risk for reading failure;
3. Provide ongoing support to the interventionist to ensure fidelity and effectiveness; and
4. Conduct a follow-up meeting to review the results of intervention implementation.

For students who are not on a trajectory towards end of year benchmarks in Tier 1 core instruction, the RTI team works to determine a higher tier of instruction with a corresponding reading intervention class placement that will be most appropriate for students reading below grade level. According to Fuchs, Fuchs, and Compton (2010), this decision should be based on the severity of the students' reading deficits as evidenced by an array of reading data in a data tracking system (e.g. criterion-referenced assessments, previous diagnostic assessments, and state reading assessments). As it stands, there are limited resources (i.e. interventions, teachers, funding, time, etc.) that have been dedicated to severely challenged readers who read significantly below grade level. Such constraints may prevent the effective implementation of any and all reading interventions—regardless of their quality or potential.

Delaware's RTI Regulations

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, a discrepancy model should no longer solely be used to identify students struggling to make adequate educational progress (IDEA 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Instead, it is expected that schools use a process that determines if a child responds to systematic, research-based instruction. Some states mandate that RTI be implemented in all K-12 schools as an initiative to improve academic achievement across all grade levels (Zirkel & Thomas, 2010). RTI effectively allows all schools to meet these legislative requirements, and they were adopted into Delaware state regulations in 2011 in order to hold all schools accountable for implementing instructional strategies that meet the educational needs of *all* students (Delaware Department of Education, 2014).

According to Delaware's RTI regulations, struggling readers who score at or below the 25th percentile on a norm referenced test or the designated cut point on a curriculum-based measure for a given reading screener, should be provided a Tier 2 reading intervention along with progress monitoring every two weeks. Tier 2 reading interventions must supplement core literacy instruction in the general education curriculum, must be delivered in a small group setting, and at a minimum of ninety minutes per week and for no less than two sessions per week for at least six school weeks. If the Tier 2 intervention is unsuccessful after a total of 12 school weeks (i.e. has made no progress or is not on trajectory towards end-of-year benchmarks) the student must be given a Tier 2 reading intervention as designated by a team of experts.

RTI regulations recommend the same stipulations for Tier 2 reading interventions, except that if after 24 weeks, the student is not on a trajectory to meet end of the year benchmarks or is making no progress, he or she should be evaluated for special education services. Tier 3 reading interventions must be monitored on a weekly basis and must continue even after a student is referred for an initial special education evaluation. If the student is given an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), his/her IEP should include RTI interventions and results and interventions should be designed based on students' reading needs (Delaware Department of Education, 2004). Tier 2 intervention will be the focus of my ELP project.

The Need for Reading Intervention at the Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Because of the lottery process utilized at LAAA, the school's student body is diverse, especially with regard to students' educational needs. Students with the most intensive reading needs will need effective interventions to improve their literacy development.

The growing body of literature addressing the effectiveness of interventions for adolescent struggling readers targets specific components of literacy development that have the highest impact on adolescents' reading success (Torgesen et al., 2007). They assert that Tier 2 and 3 reading interventions in early grades focus heavily on the five critical areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension (Pyle & Vaughn, 2012). While most of these components should still be addressed within the time and curricula allocated for reading interventions targeting adolescents, Reed et al. (2012) note that RTI for adolescents must have focus shifted

from phonemic awareness and phonics to multisyllabic word recognition while all other reading components remain important areas of reading instruction for older struggling readers.

Student Reading Performance at the Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Below, I provide information about the student reading performance at LAAA. First, I discuss results related to the Smarter Balanced Consortium Assessment (SBAC). Then, I provide relevant results from the NWEA MAP Growth Reading assessment.

Then, I provide relevant results from the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment. The NWEA MAP assessment data compare student achievement among peers at a statewide or national level. Additionally, these data play an important role in understanding and standardizing conditions, under which students may need additional reading interventions. By comparing student achievement to peers, teachers can better intervene in the education of students falling behind and explain to parents the potential need for personalized educational planning (McKenna & Stahl, 2003).

At LAAA, teachers did not appear to collect or use those data in student assessments. In addition to improving student learning and understanding educational gaps, NWEA MAP assessment data were important for teacher and school accountability. These data were a useful resource for judging student improvement and the ability of teachers to help students progress. Monitoring the success of interventions requires benchmarking, and without adequate data collection prior to interventions, teachers and

school leaders will struggle to judge the progress of their students or the success of intervention techniques adequately.

The SBAC is a Common Core standards-aligned, criterion-referenced assessment that measures third to eighth grade students' abilities to understand content knowledge more deeply, think more critically, and apply their learning to real world contexts. The SBAC utilizes computer-adaptive tests that require students to complete selected responses, constructed responses, brief writes, and performance tasks to measure their achievements in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics.

For this assessment, students are assigned achievement levels based on their overall performance. According to the SBAC (2018), "Achievement levels are defined by Achievement Level Descriptors, the specifications for what knowledge and skills students display at each level (i.e., Level 1-Below Standard, Level 2-Near Standard, Level 3-At Standard, and Level 4-Above Standard)" (para. 4). Students performing at Levels 3 and 4 are on track toward achieving college and career readiness by the conclusion of Grade 12.

Figure A1 accentuates the need for effective reading interventions for LAAA's adolescent students. The graph shows the results of the 2017 administration of the SBAC to sixth to eighth grade students. Results indicated that only 25% of all sixth-grade students, 16% of all seventh-grade students, and 29% of all eighth-grade students did not meet the benchmark set for the SBAC reading claim (see Figure A1). A significant number of students in each middle school grade level were performing "below standard" on the CCSS ELA benchmarks or were approaching these marks. Either way, neither

group met the benchmark, thus supporting the need for effective intervention strategies that targeted LAAA’s middle school students’ reading needs.

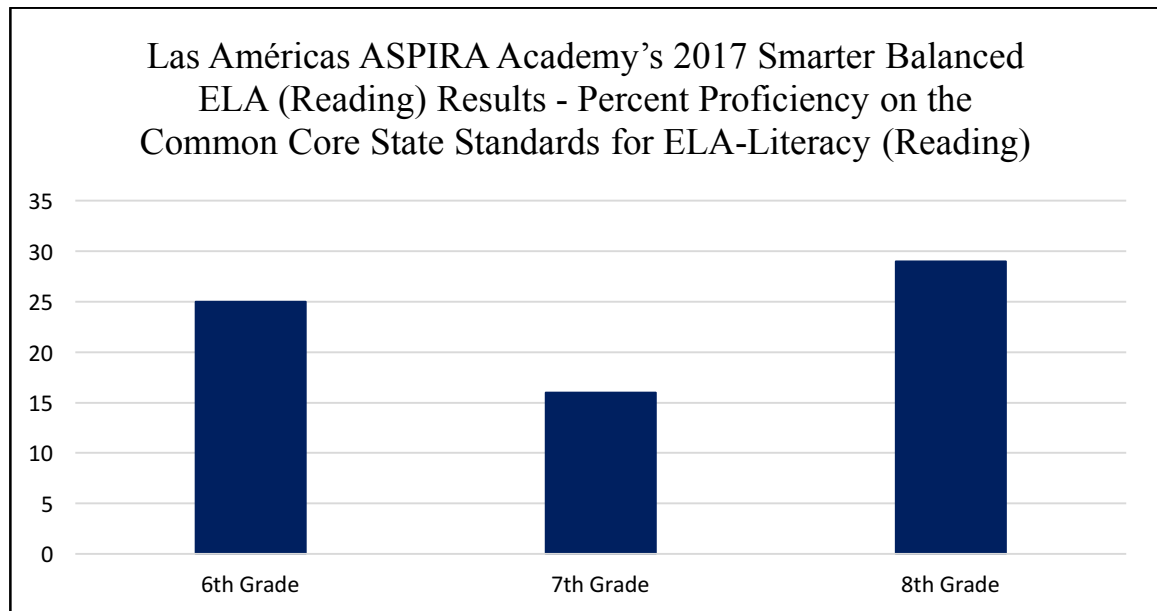


Figure A1. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy’s 2018 Smarter Balanced ELA Results - Percent Proficiency on the Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading Claim) in each grade level.

NWEA MAP Reading Assessment

The NWEA MAP assessments, called Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA, 2019b), are each a computerized adaptive test, designed to provide schools with accurate, reliable, and valid data on students’ reading achievement levels. The NWEA MAP assessments are also used to predict students’ understandings of the CCSS in ELA-Literacy (reading) and mathematics, thus providing predictive validity for students’ performances on Delaware’s Common Core-Aligned Accountability (NWEA, 2019b); LAAA uses the NWEA MAP assessments for this stated purpose.

The NWEA MAP assessments help LAAA teachers screen students to determine which should be placed in math or reading interventions; the NWEA MAP assessments are also used to track students' reading proficiency over time, specifically to identify students at high risk for failing classes that require CCSS proficiency. These types of ongoing assessments are crucial to an effective schoolwide reading program, as data obtained from assessments can be used to identify and instruct students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

The LAAA staff use students' NWEA MAP Reading Assessment's Rasch Unit Scale (RIT) scores and intervention curriculum-based measurement (CBM) progress monitoring data to determine whether students move between the appropriate tiers of RTI and receive the most appropriate instruction and intervention, if necessary, when their reading scores are below appropriate benchmarks. A RIT score measures a student's level of achievement in a particular subject. If a student has a particular RIT score, that student is about 50% likely to correctly answer an item calibrated at the RIT level; therefore, topics at this RIT level are likely to be topics that the student is ready to learn.

To determine which students are not reading proficiently and are in need of reading interventions, the LAAA teachers use the norm-referenced benchmark percentile scales provided. These benchmarks are based on the existing NWEA MAP Reading Assessment national norms and the nationally accepted recommendations, as defined as follows (MAP Growth, 2010): High = above 80th percentile, High-Average = 61st to 80th percentile, Average = 41st to 60th percentile, Low-Average = 21st to 40th percentile, and Low = Below 21st percentile.

Figure A2 shows the results of the LAAA winter 2017 administration of the NWEA MAP Reading Assessment to students in grades 6 to 8. Results indicated that 23% of all sixth-grade students, 7% of all seventh-grade students, and 50% of all eighth-grade students scored in the “Lo” RIT score range for the NWEA MAP Reading Assessment and were in need of reading interventions (see Figure A2).

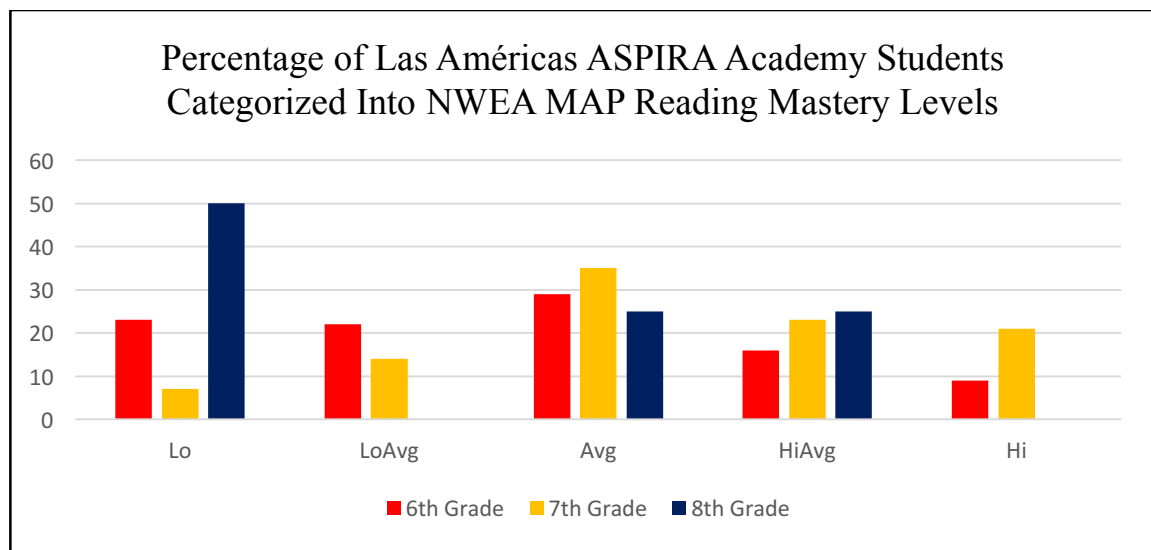


Figure A2. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy’s Winter 2018 NWEA MAP reading results: Percentage of students in each grade level at each proficiency level of the Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading).

A significant portion of the students in both sixth and eighth grades qualified for intervention (Tier 2 reading support) or urgent intervention (Tier 3 reading intensive support), according to the results of the winter 2018 NWEA MAP Growth Reading assessment. In seventh grade, significantly less students qualified for intensive reading intervention; however, this group of students remained in need of intensive reading interventions to close the reading achievement gap to meet grade level reading

proficiency on benchmark and state-level reading assessments. As it stands, The LAAA RTI model does not allow for all of these students to receive the appropriate reading instruction that they deserve, due to lack of effective reading interventions, trained staff, and blocks in the daily schedule needed to serve students with severe reading difficulties. Currently, students receiving math intervention and need reading intervention will not receive reading intervention until the next 6-week cycle. If leaders improved the reading instruction delivered and scheduling designed within the secondary RTI framework, LAAA would likely be able to serve struggling readers more effectively.

Currently, there are eight, 7th to 8th grade students in my Tier 2 reading course receiving interventions in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Their growth in overall reading ability is tracked using NWEA MAP Reading assessment as the progress monitoring tool (see Figure A3).

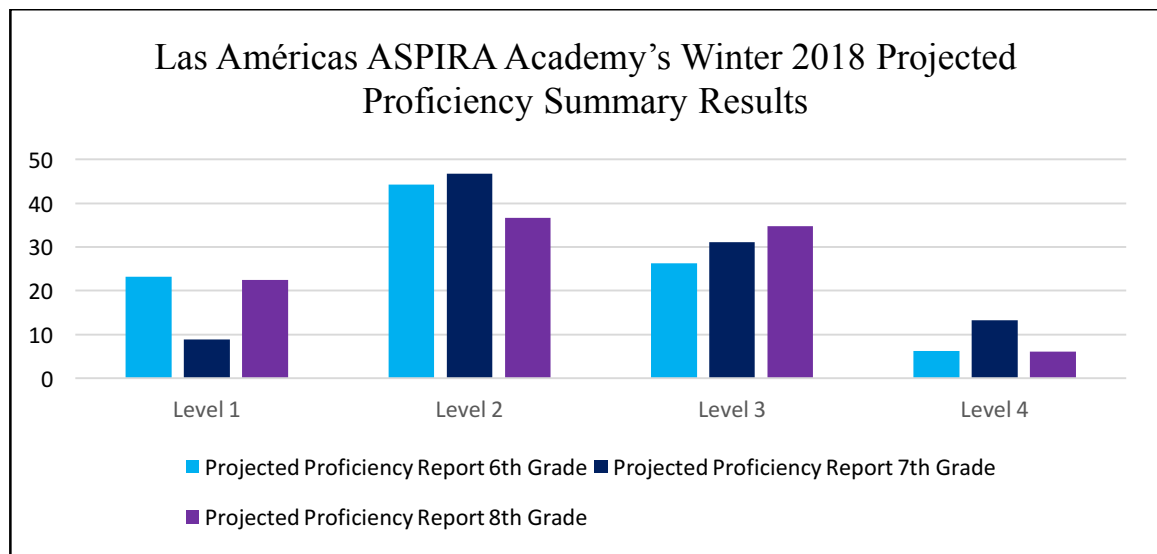


Figure A3. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's Winter 2018 projected proficiency summary results: Projected percent proficiency on the Spring SBAC 2018 Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading) in each grade levels

Figure A3 shows estimates in the probability of students scoring at Level 3 or higher on the Smarter Balanced in the spring, based on an observed MAP score from the winter term. Results indicated that 67.4% of sixth grade students, 55.6% of seventh grade students, and 59.1% of eighth grade students would not meet the proficiency on the SBAC ELA assessment due to their Lo to LoAvg Winter MAP Reading Assessment RIT scores.

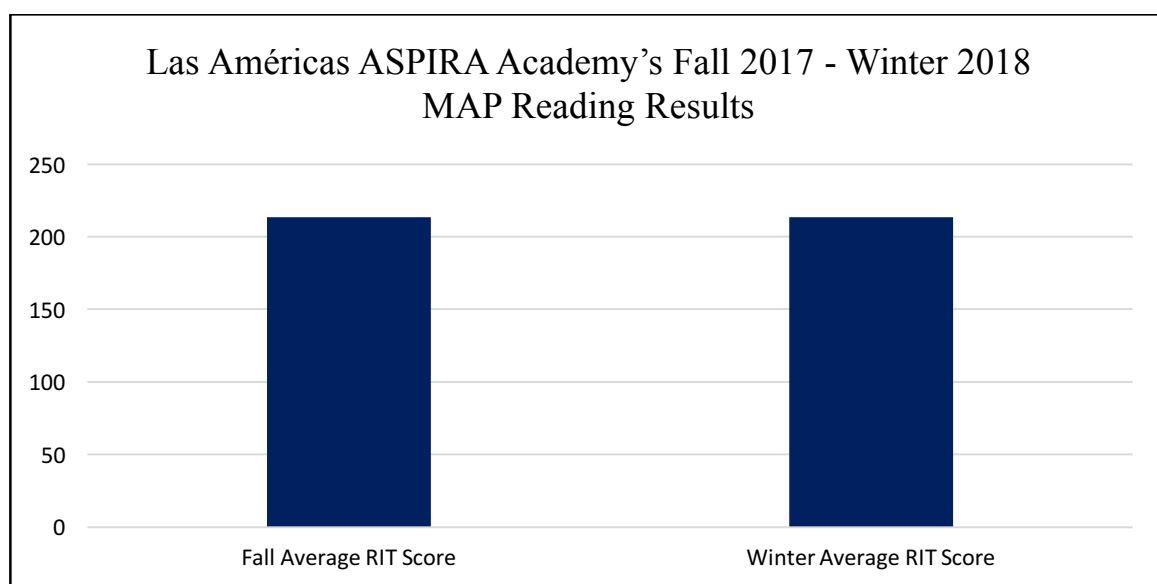


Figure A4. Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's Fall 2017 - Winter 2018 MAP reading results: Average RIT score growth in Common Core State Standards for ELA-Literacy (Reading) from before Tier 2 Reading Intervention to after Tier 2 Reading Intervention.

I attribute students' lack of reading growth to students' wide variety of reading difficulties and lack of reading interventions available within our RTI model that will significantly improve their overall reading abilities. To reach desired outcomes in reading, students receiving Tier 2 intervention may require additional or unique reading

interventions beyond what is currently available in our school. I aim to address the reading achievement gap at LAAA by using research on the most effective instructional practices and interventions to develop and implement a reading intervention for students at-risk for reading failure who receive Tier 2 intervention to address needs in reading comprehension, vocabulary, oral reading fluency, and word reading.

This Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP) will add to my skills and knowledge needed to provide effective instruction to older, struggling readers. Becoming an expert in education during a time when change is constant and necessary will help me to develop professionally and thereby help me to actualize my goals to improve my educational and leadership practice in reading education to benefit my students.

Organizational Role

In 2017, I was hired as the Middle School Literacy Coach and RTI Coordinator at LAAA to help improve the reading development of students in grades 6-8 and teacher instruction. In this role, I have proposed and subsequently, tried new, seemingly promising, reading intervention programs this school year at LAAA, specifically for Tier 2 struggling readers, but students still failed to make adequate reading progress during the first two trimesters of the school year. Tier 2 interventions are currently provided to students in a semester-long, 30-minute period called ‘enrichment.’ I have proposed and subsequently tried new, seemingly promising, reading intervention programs this school year at LAAA, specifically for Tier 2 struggling readers, but students still failed to make adequate reading progress during the first two trimesters of the school year.

During this block, or the first trimester, I used the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt *What's Happening*[®]? supplementary nonfiction reading intervention program that was specifically designed to improve the reading proficiency and test scores of Tier 2 adolescents. The Student Edition includes high-interest, relatable nonfiction articles with before, during, and after-reading scaffolding and activities that promote student engagement. The Teacher's Guide offers a variety of resources, including assessment supports and Lexile[®] levels for each selection. *What's Happening?* instruction focuses on comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Students appreciated the content focused on social issues and culturally-relevant topics, but this was not enough to engage them in the content, as they frequently expressed their concerns about completing "packets" too often.

For the second trimester, I used a digital reading program called CommonLit, which offers high-quality, free instructional materials aligned to the CCSS created by teachers to support literacy development for students in grades 3-12. I used the CommonLit digital Reading program to engage my 7th and 8th grade struggling readers in literary texts that was meant to improve their reading comprehension; unfortunately, the program failed to target students' vocabulary acquisition skills, provided very few progress monitoring reports, and students expressed their concerns about their lack of interest in the content of the texts in CommonLit. While the programs and strategies I've used with students during the first two trimesters are all research-based, they have led to inadequate reading growth for students.

This year, I have been a catalyst in progressing our schoolwide literacy initiative; however, our middle school RTI program is incomplete due to a lack of reading intervention program that targets the remedial reading needs of adolescent struggling readers. Moving forward, I hope to determine a more effective reading intervention for Grades 7-8 students who qualify for Tier 2 reading supports, all within our RTI framework.

Problem Statement

LAAA is a K-8 charter school that does not belong to a school district, meaning, there are no successful RTI models matched to the needs of adolescents and worthy of replicating within our scope of reach. So, LAAA faculty has followed a very predictable pattern by utilizing resources inadequately or failing to acquire the right resources for addressing the needs of struggling adolescent readers. At LAAA, students at-risk for reading failure need effective Tier 2 reading interventions; unfortunately, this problem is compounded by the limited number of evidence-based reading interventions available to students that have a demonstrated positive impact on reading growth in comprehension, fluency, word reading, and vocabulary, over time.

Many of the adolescents attending LAAA are challenged by the academic literacy demands prevalent in middle and high schools. Such demands are prominent in high stakes testing which can limit students' college and career readiness. Researchers have limited knowledge about effective interventions for struggling adolescent readers in grades 6-12 thereby making adolescent literacy a legitimate challenge (Wanzek et al., 2013). Many adolescents do not have the reading strategies to read and comprehend

complex texts, which places many adolescents at-risk for ongoing reading problems (Lang et al., 2009).

In a high-stakes educational environment such as this, it is of utmost importance that educators support the reading development of all students within a model aligned to evidence-based practices outlined in research for adolescent literacy. If research shows that Tier 2 intervention within an RTI framework is the most effective means to provide students with severe reading deficits the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels, it is essential that such a framework not only be utilized as an instructional framework in the elementary grades, but also for adolescent students in later grades in need of Tier 2 reading interventions. Due to the differing nature of early and later grade schedules, the recommendations that arise from much of the RTI research may not transfer easily. Therefore, it is imperative to address the gap in the literature by investigating the most effective instructional strategies and Tier 2 interventions within an RTI framework for adolescents with reading problems.

The Case for Reading RTI for Adolescents

Planning, developing, implementing, and sustaining an RTI model for adolescent students is a complex endeavor. Middle and high schools serve adolescents who exhibit varying degrees of reading achievement and even more diverse reading needs (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). The challenge these schools face is how to best utilize resources (i.e. programs, staff, instructional strategies) to improve students' reading proficiency within the confines of a complex school schedule and limited remaining school years as students

get older. For these reasons, a systemic framework is needed to maximize opportunities for reading intervention.

RTI at the elementary level has been conceptualized as a multi-tiered framework designed to meet the educational needs of all children in grades K-5 (Reed et al., 2012). The same is true for RTI at the middle and high school levels, especially with regard to reading development. However, there are key differences between RTI for reading at the elementary and secondary levels (Fuchs et al., 2010). While both address the needs of students struggling with reading by providing effective, evidence-based Tier 1 instruction and high-quality reading interventions for students with reading difficulties, prevention is the focus in early elementary grades whereas remediation is often the focus in upper elementary, middle, and high school grades (Reed et al., 2012).

A key benefit of RTI models for improving the reading development of adolescents is the delivery of increasingly more intensive interventions for students who have demonstrated insufficient response to intervention or difficulties in reading achievement for an extended time (Reed et al., 2012). The purpose of RTI is to systematically provide struggling students with the additional time and support needed to learn the skills needed to be successful in grade school and beyond (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). Because older students' reading needs vary, teachers must provide each student with targeted, supplemental instruction designed to meet each student's individual reading needs (Reed et al., 2012).

Another reason for implementing an RTI model in reading at the secondary level is that it provides for a school-wide framework for improving core (Tier 1) instruction in

order to keep Tier 2 and Tier 3 populations of struggling readers relatively low. There is an increased awareness of groups of students who don't meet end-of-year reading benchmarks, thus creating a need for teachers to improve their instructional strategies across the content areas to assist in improving literacy for all students. The initiative to improve core instruction across the content areas includes monitoring student progress so that if students who were not previously identified as needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading instruction meet criteria for one of these placements, they will be served accordingly as mandatory within an RTI model.

Establishing an RTI framework to address the individual reading needs of adolescents, places special emphasis on the importance of designing reading interventions around older students' specific reading difficulties because their reading problems are much more explicitly defined than those of younger struggling readers. I have taught younger and older students with reading deficits; it has become clear the variety of reading programs available to younger students as opposed to adolescents with reading difficulties. In order to accelerate their progress towards grade-level standards, Tier 2 reading interventions must be rigorous, intense, and specifically targeted to their individual reading needs. It is clear that the interplay between reading achievement and post-high school success is very strong, but with the right reading intervention program designed to meet the needs of adolescents with severe reading problems, they will be more capable of achieving extensive reading growth giving them more independence, choice, and agency in their lives, post-high school.

Improvement Goal

While research often addresses the RTI process and reading intervention separately, research minimally addresses the effectiveness of reading interventions conducted within a response to intervention model (Wanzek et al., 2013). Given that only a small number of robust studies has focused on effective response to intervention models with adolescent students at-risk for reading failure, addressing this problem may be cumbersome, but a much-needed process at LAAA.

The purpose of this Education Leadership Portfolio is to build LAAA's intensive reading program in order to maximize students' reading growth and establish highly effective Tier 2 reading interventions for adolescents. This portfolio has one fundamental aim; to research and implement the best instructional strategies and interventions needed to address the reading needs of adolescents at-risk for reading failure.

Below, I provide an outline of the ELP activities and artifacts in three clusters: understanding effective reading interventions for adolescents, addressing/implementing effective reading intervention for adolescents, and evaluating the effectiveness of the reading intervention. Additionally, Figure A5 provides a graphic representation of the series of actions I will take, followed by Table A3, which presents a detailed timeline of when each action will be completed, with an end date for all actions at the end of December 2017. Finally, I provide a narrative description of each ELP artifact.

Understanding Effective Reading Interventions for Adolescents

Goal: Review current research on effective reading interventions for adolescents.

To address this goal, I will:

1. Evaluate POLYTECH High School Tier 1 reading program and provide a program evaluation report that clarifies the need for reading interventions for adolescents. (*Artifact 1: RTI in Reading Evaluation Report*)
2. Review the results of the Secondary Reading Programs survey administered to secondary reading interventionists and program coordinators throughout the state of Delaware; create an infographic summarizing the results with teachers, interventionists, and administrators as the audience. (*Artifact 2: Infographic from Secondary Reading Programs Survey*)
3. Conduct a literature review focused on the effectiveness of reading comprehension and vocabulary instructional strategies and interventions designed for adolescents. (*Artifact 3: Literature Review: Reading Interventions for Adolescents*)
4. Conduct a book review on the recommendations for intensive reading programs within an RTI model for adolescent struggling readers. Create a 1-2-page brief for administrators illustrating the key recommendations from the book review. (*Artifact 4: Brief from Book Review of RTI for Reading in Secondary Schools*)
5. Interview English teachers and students needing Tier 2 reading intervention regarding their views on the needed components of an effective remedial reading program for adolescents. Create a 1-2-page summary of results to inform the Tier 2 intervention selection. (*Artifact 5: Summary of Results from Interview of English Teachers' and Adolescents' Perspectives on Most*

Implementing Effective Tier 2 Reading Interventions for Adolescents

Goal: Develop reading program curriculum materials and instructional strategies for the selected Tier 2 reading intervention program. To address this goal, I will:

6. Design a 12-week, Tier 2 reading program curriculum map overview with recommended instructional strategies, materials, learning goals, standards, assessments, and skills along with a framework for daily lesson implementation. (*Artifact 6: Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Curriculum Map and Overview of 12-Week Intervention Curriculum, and Daily Lesson Framework(s)*)
 - a. Determine Common Core Anchor Standards in Reading and targeted reading problems for intervention curriculum (e.g., reading comprehension and vocabulary).
 - b. Determine learning goals and essential questions for each lesson outline.
 - c. Determine units for lesson outlines. (i.e., theme, genre of reading, topic, etc.)
 - d. Determine diagnostic, formative, and progress-monitoring assessments to be used.
 - e. Purchase and obtain leveled texts and materials to be included in curriculum.
 - f. Design lesson outlines in curriculum (i.e., differentiated activities, interventions, instructional strategies, specific skills, resources, etc.).

- g. Determine progress-monitoring tool(s).
 - h. Create a daily lesson framework for implementing lessons within the constraints of the school schedule.
7. Prepare 12, week-by-week plans informed by the steps listed above. (*Artifact 7: Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Week-by-Week Plans for 12 weeks*)
 8. Create a fidelity observation protocol based on the daily lesson framework and weekly plans. (*Artifact 8: Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Fidelity Observation Protocol*)
 9. Implement selected reading intervention with small group of adolescents for 12 weeks:
 - a. Teach daily lessons.
 - b. Assess students' reading progress, weekly, using progress monitoring tools determined above.
 - c. Graph results to determine students' reading growth/trajectory towards end-of-year benchmarks.
 - d. Collect evidence, such as literature and materials used to design the curriculum map and students' weekly reading assessment scores.
 - e. Work with a colleague(s) to collect bi-weekly fidelity observations.

For Assessing the Progress of the Tier 2 Reading Intervention Program

Goal: Evaluate the success of LAAA's Tier 2 reading intervention implementation. To address this goal, I will:

10. Conduct post-interview of adolescent readers qualifying for Tier 2 reading

intervention on their perspectives of the success of the reading intervention implementation; share the results with students and administrators in a brief PowerPoint presentation. (*Artifact 9: Presentation from Post-Interview of Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Intervention*)

11. Complete a reading intervention Program Review. (*Artifact 10: Program Review of Tier 2 Reading Intervention Implementation*)
 - a. Collect and analyze evidence from the intervention-related student data, fidelity observation protocol data, and interview data
 - b. Include all data in a program review report, written for school administrators, and able to be presented to them; the report will include recommendations for redesigning effective Tier 2 intervention to make it more effective for serving adolescents with reading problems.

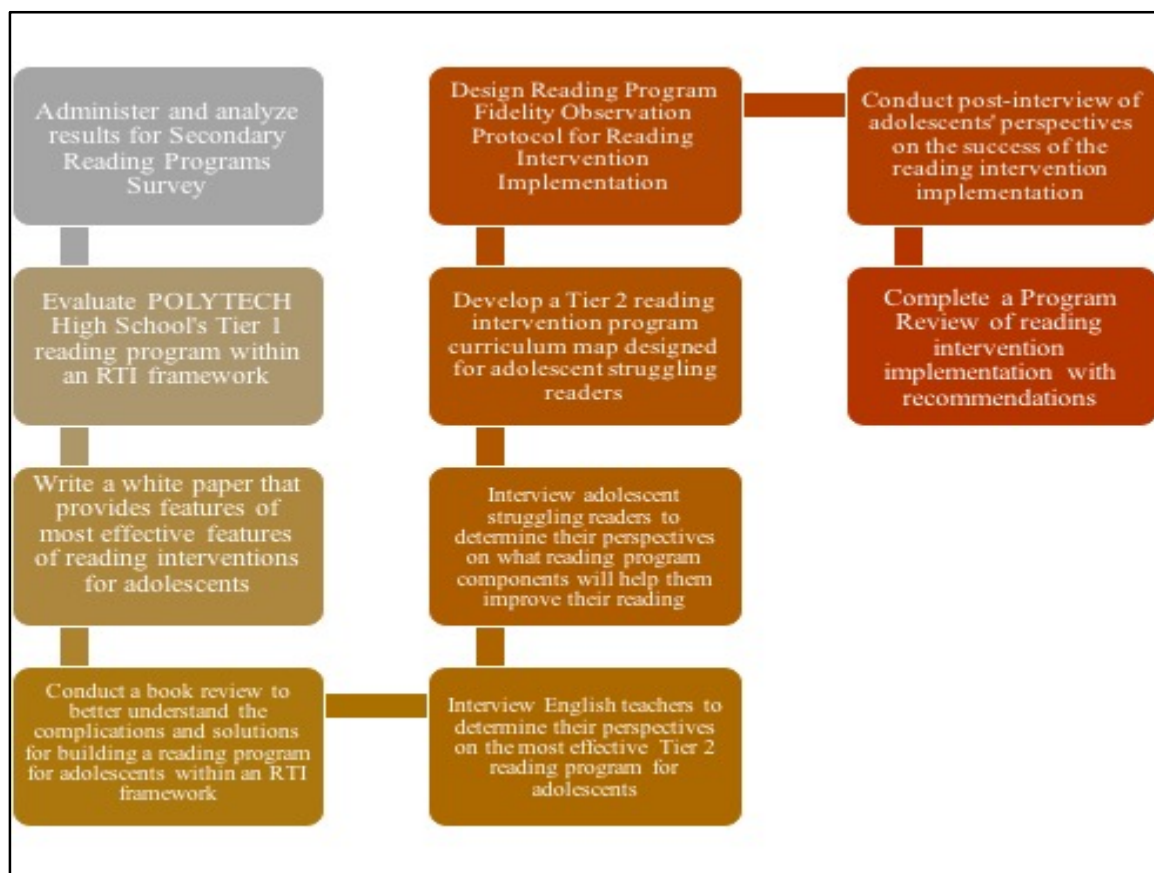


Figure A5. Illustration of planned action.

Table A3

Description of Planned Artifacts

Artifact	Type	Audience	Description	Timeline (Completion Date)	Status
1	Infographic from Secondary Reading Programs Survey	ELP Committee, Delaware reading interventionists, specialists, literacy coaches, teachers and administrators	A survey of middle and high school reading interventionists' perspectives on challenges and successes of their current remedial reading programs within an RTI framework	August, 2017	Survey completed; Infographic to be done
2	RTI in Reading Evaluation Report	ELP Committee and school administrators	An evaluation of the POLYTECH High School content area reading program within an RTI framework from the 2016-2017 school year	August, 2017	Needs Revision; Tier 2 data to be added
3	White Paper: Reading Interventions for Adolescents	ELP Committee, School administrators	A review of the literature on the features of reading interventions that target adolescents' deficits in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition	August, 2017	Completed; Edits pending
4	Brief from Book Review of RTI for Reading in Secondary Schools	ELP Committee, School administrators, specialists	A review of <i>RTI for Reading at the Secondary Level: Recommended Literacy Practices and Remaining Questions (What Works for Special-Needs Learners)</i> by Reed et al., (2012) and a 1-2-page brief for administrators illustrating the key recommendations from the book review	August, 2017	Needs Revision; Brief to be done

(continued)

Table A3 (Continued)

Description of Planned Artifacts

Artifact	Type	Audience	Description	Timeline (Completion Date)	Status
5	Summary of Results from Interview of English Teachers' and Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Interventions	ELP Committee	An interview of English/ language arts teacher's opinions about adolescents' learning needs and desired components of a Tier 2 reading intervention; interviews of selected high school students' perspectives on what materials, instructional strategies, books, etc. should be in a secondary reading program	September, 2017	To-do
6	Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Curriculum Map and Overview of 12-week Intervention Curriculum, and Daily Lesson Framework	ELP Committee, reading interventionists, and struggling readers	A 12-week, Tier 2 reading program curriculum map overview with recommended instructional strategies, materials, learning goals, standards, assessments, and skills along with a framework for daily lesson implementation	September, 2017	To-do
7	Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Week-by-Week Plans for 12 weeks	ELP Committee, reading interventionists, and struggling readers	A week-by-week outline of reading lessons and activities targeting adolescents' deficits in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition; all plans and materials will be housed on Schoology for interventionist use	October, 2017	To-do
8	Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Fidelity Observation Protocol	ELP Committee, reading interventionists, literacy coaches	A tool that reading interventionists and administrators can use to evaluate the quality of the reading intervention implementation	August, 2017	To-do

(continued)

Table A3 (Continued)

Description of Planned Artifacts

Artifact	Type	Audience	Description	Timeline (Completion Date)	Status
9	Presentation from Post- Interview of Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Intervention	ELP Committee and administrators	An interview of struggling readers' perspectives on the successes and needed improvements of the reading intervention implementation process	November, 2017	To-do
10	Program Review of Tier 2 Reading Program Implementat ion	ELP Committee and school administrators	A review of results from reading program student growth and observation protocol; recommendations for future intervention implementation within an RTI framework will be provided based on results	December, 2017	To-do

Narrative of Planned Artifacts

1. **Infographic from Secondary Reading Program Survey:** This artifact is an infographic depicting results from a survey of Delaware middle and high school reading interventionists' and program coordinators' perspectives on challenges and successes of their current remedial reading programs within an RTI framework. Survey questions reveal teachers' use of instructional strategies, books and materials, and their overall ratings of their reading programs.
2. **RTI in Reading Evaluation Report:** This artifact is an evaluation report of

POLYTECH High School's Tier 1 core reading program within an RTI framework from the 2016-2017 school year. It will report the effectiveness of the Tier 1 reading program (i.e. instructional strategies and materials) already established at POLYTECH High School.

3. **White Paper: Reading Interventions for Adolescents:** This artifact is a comprehensive analysis of existing research on the effectiveness of reading interventions that target students' deficits in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition on the reading growth of adolescents. Studies were conducted with samples of students in 4th - 12th grades who were well below grade level expectations for reading.
4. **Brief from Book Review of RTI for Reading in Secondary Schools:** This artifact is a review of *RTI for Reading at the Secondary Level: Recommended Literacy Practices and Remaining Questions (What Works for Special-Needs Learners)* by Reed et al. (2012). This book is tailored to leaders in literacy education who provide practical advice for providing intensive reading interventions for adolescents given the challenges and logistics of middle and high school RTI implementation. This artifact will be a 1-2-page brief for administrators illustrating the key recommendations from the book review on implementing RTI for adolescent struggling readers.
5. **Summary of Results from Interview of English Teachers' and Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Interventions:** This artifact will be a summary of two sets of interviews meant to achieve the same

purpose. The interview for English teachers will be conducted with eight teachers of adolescents to determine their perspectives on what learning goals, instructional strategies, materials, and texts, should be in a remedial reading program for adolescents. The interview for students will be conducted with ten adolescents to determine their perspectives on what materials, instructional strategies, and texts should be in a reading program that is specifically meant to help them improve their overall reading abilities. English teachers will be chosen for the teacher interview based on their history providing intensive reading interventions to adolescents with severe reading problems. Students who fall below the 25th percentile in reading ability will be targeted to participate in the student interview.

6. **Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Curriculum Map and Overview of 12-week Intervention Curriculum, and Daily Lesson Framework:** This artifact is a 12-week, Tier 2 reading program curriculum map overview with recommended instructional strategies, materials, learning goals, standards, assessments, and skills along with the framework for daily lesson implementation.
7. **Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Week-by-week Plans for 12 weeks:** This artifact is a more in-depth, week-by-week outline of reading lessons and activities targeting adolescents' deficits in reading comprehension, vocabulary, oral reading fluency, and word reading. It will be housed on Schoology, an online learning management system for K-12 educators and

students. Instructional strategies incorporated in the plans will be taken from research on the most effective reading interventions for adolescent struggling readers, including reading research from literature on RTI models for adolescents with reading problems.

8. **Tier 2 Reading Intervention: Fidelity Observation Protocol:** This artifact is a tool that administrators and reading interventionists can use to evaluate adherence to effective reading intervention implementation based on the intervention's goals, instructional strategies, content, duration, and curriculum specifications.
9. **Presentation from Post-Interview of Adolescents' Perspectives on Tier 2 Reading Interventions:** This artifact is a presentation of my findings from interviewing struggling readers on their opinions about the successes and needed improvements of the reading intervention implementation process; Students will be asked about their motivation to read, strategies they use to read and understand texts, their ratings of their overall experience with the reading program, and what improvements they would like to see made in the reading intervention.
10. **Program Review of Tier 2 Reading Intervention Implementation:** This artifact is a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative review of students' reading growth and proposed recommendations for implementing a reading intervention for older struggling readers within an RTI framework after intervention implementation. Recommendations will be based on results from

intervention implementation, the fidelity observation protocol, and teacher/student interview responses. This review will be made user-friendly for administrative use.

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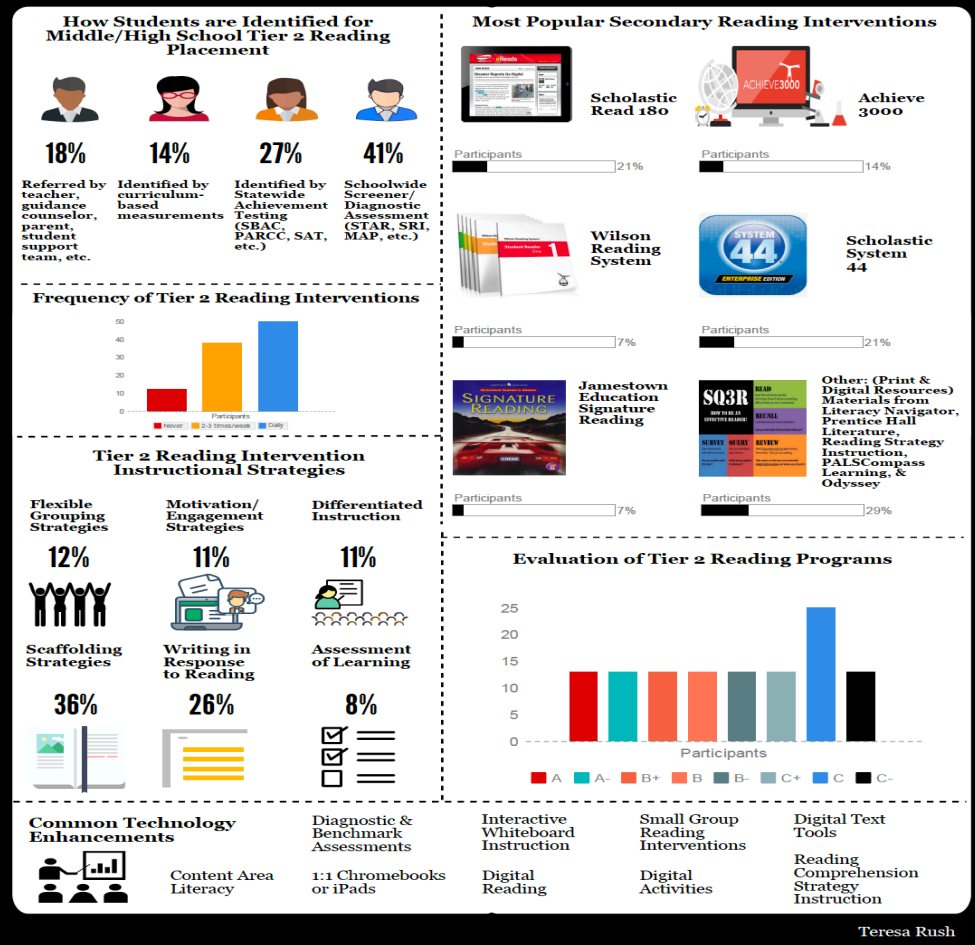
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Appendix B

INFOGRAPHIC

Secondary Reading Intervention Programs in Delaware: Program Review

This artifact is an infographic depicting results from a survey of Delaware middle and high school reading interventionists and program coordinators' perspectives on challenges and successes of their current remedial reading programs within an RTI framework. Survey questions reveal teachers' use of instructional strategies, books and materials, and their overall ratings of their reading programs.



Appendix C

PROGRAM EVALUATION FOR THE RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION IN READING PROGRAM

Teresa Rush

University of Delaware

Executive Summary

A program evaluation was conducted to gather information related to the fidelity of implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) reading program at POLYTECH High School. This evaluation was completed prior to my current position at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA), a K-8 charter school. However, this program evaluation can be used to inform RTI implementation at LAAA as well, because LAAA serves adolescents with similar reading needs. This evaluation will clarify the need for literacy to be addressed in all RTI programs serving adolescents through quality, core instruction that not only *improves* literacy levels among all adolescents, but in addition, provides evidence that Tier 1 literacy instruction is important for *prevention* of the number of students demonstrating risk for reading failure. The expectation is that quality, core literacy instruction will lead to fewer students requiring intervention but core literacy instruction should not replace intervention. For adolescents already needing reading intervention, Tier 1 literacy instruction will provide them with additional opportunities to practice, or transfer effective reading skills into all contexts of school

reading.

Because the instructional needs of high school adolescents are similar to those of middle school adolescents, the results of this program evaluation from POLYTECH can inform the RTI needs of LAAA middle school students. Adolescents at both POLYTECH and LAAA experience similar difficulties acquiring literacy skills needed for grade level proficiency, so it is important to determine recommendations for secondary RTI in reading that could improve generalizability across both school contexts.

POLYTECH teachers have struggled with using literacy instructional strategies to support learning outcomes of all students, especially those with reading difficulties who are “at-risk” for school failure. POLYTECH High School’s overarching goal for RTI is to improve the literacy instructional practices of teachers in order to improve the reading proficiency of adolescents. In order to influence change, the RTI program must be evaluated on its ability to strengthen the literacy instruction of content area teachers and improve the literacy development of diverse learners.

The program evaluation considered the following two questions to determine the success of POLYTECH’s current RTI reading program:

- a. *Process Question:* To what extent are content area teachers using literacy instructional strategies?
- b. *Outcome Question:* To what degree has students’ reading outcomes improved through content areas teachers’ use of literacy instructional strategies?

The first question was measured by an evaluator-created literacy survey that measured teachers’ use of literacy instructional strategies after they attended a literacy

workshop. The results suggested that 95% of respondents improved their perception, knowledge, and use of literacy instructional practices. The mean for the pre-survey responses is 18.2, while the mean for the post-survey is 21.9. A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to measure the statistical significance between both means; the increase between means was revealed to be statistically significant ($p < .01$).

The second question was measured by students' pretest and posttest STAR Reading scaled scores. The results indicated that students performed uniformly well on this assessment compared to their scores before, as evidenced by their STAR Reading growth reports. Analysis of the STAR Reading pretest and posttest results showed that 97% (29 of 30) of students' literacy development improved as a result of teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies. The mean for the STAR Reading pretest is 1,102.5, while the mean for the STAR Reading posttest is 1,112.5. A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to measure the statistical significance between both means; the increase between means was revealed to be statistically significant ($p < .01$). The implications of the findings and corresponding recommendations for action are provided.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to gather information related to the fidelity of implementation of POLYTECH High School's Response to Intervention (RTI) reading program. The findings will be used to determine if the professional development in literacy instructional strategies that have been provided to our content area teachers have been used in the classroom and how much they have impacted the reading growth of adolescents. If the findings show that the literacy instructional strategies used do not have a positive impact of student reading achievement, the results will be used to improve future professional development sessions on literacy instructional strategy use and school-wide student reading outcomes.

Description of the Evaluation

POLYTECH High School is the only K-12 school in the POLYTECH School District, and as a result, serves students in multiple feeder schools. We receive roughly 300 students from 11 feeder middle schools in Kent County, Delaware with a variety of academic needs and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our population is changing because of our new "lottery" system for admission. Every year, a lottery is conducted to accommodate completed ninth grade applications. This gives all students who meet minimum requirements an equal chance of acceptance upon completion of their applications. In fall 2014, the POLYTECH administration developed and implemented an RTI plan in order to address the academic needs of our changing population of students. POLYTECH High School restructured its daily schedule to provide extra time for a daily

forty-minute “enrichment period” that allowed for more flexibility in how RTI was implemented, thus addressing the needs of all students. RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction to all students based on data-driven decision-making within a multi-tiered model (Reed, Vaughn, & Wexler, 2012). Unfortunately, this model has not been effective in supporting students’ literacy development, despite establishing an Instructional Support Team (IST) and Common Ground for the Common Core Guiding team (CGCC Guiding Team) that were established to help drive RTI initiatives that support student learning.

The first step to improving literacy for adolescents is to improve literacy instruction as a schoolwide effort (Tier 1) through ongoing professional development for content area teachers in literacy instructional strategies that are associated with improved outcomes in vocabulary and comprehension. With this concept in mind, the CGCC Guiding team developed a series of workshops called “content literacy workshops” and engaged POLYTECH English, social studies, science, and career/technical education teachers in professional development around literacy strategy instruction in hopes of preventing further reading failure in adolescents. Requiring content area teachers to provide Tier 1 literacy instruction suggests that content area teachers can help their students improve their content knowledge and literacy skills by providing discipline-specific strategy instruction in their classes.

Making Tier 1 literacy instruction the responsibility of all teachers gives the POLYTECH instructional staff the potential to prevent further reading failure. Tier 1 literacy instructional strategy instruction further provides all adolescents more

opportunities to achieve success in literacy and prevents adolescents from becoming at-risk for reading failure. The program evaluation considered the following two questions to determine the success of POLYTECH's RTI program:

Evaluation Questions

As part of my preliminary evaluation, I have identified one process and one outcome question, as follows:

- a. *Process Question:* To what extent are content area teachers using literacy instructional strategies?
- b. *Outcome Question:* To what degree has student' reading outcomes improved through content area teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies?

The process question is intended to determine if content area teachers are using the literacy instructional strategies that they were taught in the content literacy workshop they attended. The process question will also inform the connection between teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies and the impact of instruction on students' reading outcomes, a question applicable to the LAAA context as well. The outcome question tests whether students improved their reading skills once their content area teachers used literacy instructional strategies to help them read and learn information. The results for both questions will be used to provide evidence that supports the concept that the first step to improving literacy for adolescents is to improve reading instruction as a schoolwide effort (Tier 1) through ongoing professional development and this will, in turn, prevent further reading failure. Focusing on Tier 1 not only for improvement but also prevention provides more opportunities for students to apply newly learned reading

skills through multi-tiered instruction, a concept which applies to adolescent literacy instruction, regardless of school.

Design and Methodology

Sample

The sample for the evaluation of my process question consists of 20 content area teachers who teach 9th to 12th grades in a variety of content areas: English, social studies, science, and career/technical education (see Table A4). The sample is representative of the teacher population at POLYTECH High School seeing as its population is approximately 50% male and 50% female. The sample includes attendees of the literacy workshop held on February 15, 2016. The teachers in this sample teach multiple grade levels and represent different genders, races, content areas, and years in teaching service. The sample chosen is a “sample of convenience” because it was convenient to administer the pre- and post- workshop surveys to these teachers considering we all teach at the same school. The relatively small size of the sample ($N = 20$) serves to limit the generalizability of the findings.

Table A4

Demographic Characteristics of POLYTECH Teacher Sample

Teacher Demographics	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Female	10	50
Male	10	50
Race		
African American	3	15
Hispanic/Latino	1	5
White	16	80
Years Teaching		
0-5	0	0
6-10	2	10
11-15	9	45
16-20	7	35
21+	2	10
Grade/s		
Ninth	5	25
Tenth	3	15
Eleventh	4	20
Twelfth	3	15
All	5	25
Students Taught		
Regular Ed	16	80
Special Ed	4	20
Primary Subject		
English	5	25
Social Studies	5	25
Science	5	25
Career/Technical	5	25

Analysis of the demographic characteristics of the sample suggests that the sample is representative of the teacher population at the school with regards to sex, years of experience, and ratio of regular education to special education teachers. However, this does not hold true for race. In the sample, the percentage of minority teachers is 20%, whereas the overall percentage of minority teachers at POLYTECH is 11%. The percentage of special education teachers at POLYTECH is 8%, whereas in the sample it is 20%. Fifty percent (50%) of the teachers for this sample are male and 50% are female. This is roughly proportionate with the larger teacher population at POLYTECH High School. Only 10% of the teachers in the sample have ten or less years of teaching experience. This is identical with the overall teaching population at POLYTECH, in which only 10% of teachers have less than ten years of teaching experience. The reasonably small size of the sample ($N = 20$) limits the generalizability of the findings.

The sample for the evaluation of my outcome question consists of 30 students who were taught by social studies teachers who received professional development in literacy instructional strategies. The sample of students chosen were from the social studies teachers, specifically because I helped design and deliver a literacy workshop to the social studies instructional staff and am, therefore, more aware of the type of professional development they received and could support them throughout the implementation process. Literacy instructional strategies included before, during, and after reading strategies, writing strategies, and vocabulary instructional strategies.

The sample of students is representative of the POLYTECH student population in special education status, grade level, gender, and previous STAR Reading scores. Students chosen represented low, proficient, and advanced STAR Reading scaled scores. The distribution of STAR Reading scores is representative of the greater student population. This is a “sample of convenience” because I have easy access to these students, as they are students attending POLYTECH High School. The relatively small size of the sample ($N = 30$) serves to limit the generalizability of the findings.

Table A5

Demographic Characteristics of POLYTECH Student Sample

Student Demographics	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Female	15	50
Male	15	50
Grade		
Ninth	10	33.3
Tenth	10	33.3
Eleventh	10	33.3
Type		
Regular Education	16	80
Special Education	4	20
Social Studies Class		
One	10	33.3
Two	10	33.3
Three	10	33.3

The sample used for this study is likely representative of the greater population of adolescents because (a) all students receive core curriculum in general education classes much like the greater population of adolescents and (b) the percentage of students with learning disabilities is relatively small. Findings related to this sample can be used to address the reading needs of adolescents at LAAA because of similarities in their demographics.

The POLYTECH sample is representative of the LAAA student population in gender, grade level distribution, and regular/special education ratio. Across both schools, all students included in this study and the LAAA population of adolescents are (a) students of similar ages (e.g. 13-17), (b) predominantly regular education students, and (c) diverse in reading achievement as evidenced by their state accountability assessment results (e.g. SAT and SBAC ELA).

Instruments

The process question was measured by the pre- and post-session surveys and the outcome question was measured by comparing students' scaled scores after administering the Renaissance Learning STAR Reading assessment (2014). The process question was measured by two content area literacy surveys administered by the Supervisor of Student Services before and after the literacy workshop. Both surveys were created using SurveyMonkey® (2018). POLYTECH's Supervisor of Student Services has created two content area literacy surveys: one that had already been administered to attendees before they attended the content literacy workshop and one that was administered after they

were given eight weeks to implement the literacy instructional strategies they were taught. Teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies was evaluated based on their perceptions of the content literacy workshop, understanding of literacy instructional strategies, frequency of literacy instructional strategies used in their instruction, and perceptions of the impact the literacy instructional strategies had on student learning.

The pre-workshop survey asked six questions using a 4-point Likert-type scale regarding teachers' self-report of their understanding of literacy instructional strategies, frequency of literacy instructional strategies used in their instruction, and perceptions of the impact their instruction has on student learning. The post-session survey included these same six questions, as well as a 4-point Likert-type scale question regarding their impressions of the effectiveness of the content literacy workshop. It is important to note as a limitation that the questions and question types that are on the pre- and post-workshop surveys were pre-determined by the Supervisor of Student Services. As a result, the information retrieved is in response to his survey questions.

The STAR Reading assessment was administered to thirty students, or ten students each from one of three different social studies classes, in order to make comparisons between their scaled scores and grade equivalents. The STAR Reading assessment reports student reading outcomes in grade equivalents (GE) and scaled scores. It assesses students' informational reading skills, literature reading skills, and vocabulary skills. Most questions require students to read informational texts. This assessment is computer-adaptive and can be completed in roughly forty minutes. One limitation is that students may rush through the assessment in an effort to complete it in time for their next

classes, as they only have forty minutes to complete the assessment. This could skew results making the assessment results invalid.

Data Collection

To collect data on the process question, the Supervisor of Student Services emailed the pre-workshop content literacy survey to all content area teachers who received professional development on literacy instructional strategies, including English, social studies, science, and career/technical teachers. The Supervisor of Student Services administered a literacy survey to workshop participants prior to the literacy workshop using SurveyMonkey (2018). He retrieved results from all teachers and shared results with me because I have agreed to report my findings and recommendations to him as we move forward with our schoolwide literacy professional development initiative. Teachers had approximately one week to complete the survey before the content literacy professional development was given. The post-workshop survey was administered eight weeks after the workshop in order to give teachers ample time to implement literacy instructional strategies. According to the supervisor, there was a quick and adequate return of completed surveys in SurveyMonkey (2018) for both administrations. One limitation is that I couldn't pilot the survey with a few teachers before the Supervisor of Student Services administered it to content area teachers.

To collect data on the outcome question, students were required to report to my class during the enrichment period and complete the STAR Reading assessment in one or two, forty-minute blocks. Enrichment is a forty-minute class period in which students can receive interventions, tutoring, testing, or enriched instruction during the school day.

Student appointment passes were placed in their teachers' mailboxes with the day and time of testing for each student. The entire staff was emailed with students' dates and times for testing so that they know when they will miss their enrichment classes. STAR testing took place from March 18 to March 24. For five days, I set up thirty laptops on my classroom tables in order to create a testing center for all students. Each day, only six students were tested in order to reduce distractions that could interfere with STAR Reading outcomes.

Data Analysis

To evaluate the process question, I entered all numerical data (responses on the 4-point Likert-type scale) into an Excel spreadsheet in order to calculate frequencies of responses for each teacher. I used the results of the literacy practices pre-workshop survey and the literacy post-workshop survey in two sets of data. The means of each set of data was calculated. Then, the workshop means were compared to determine if teachers' knowledge and use of literacy instructional strategies increased and had greater impact on students' reading outcomes as perceived by the teachers who received the literacy professional development (see Table A6). A *t*-test was conducted to determine if the difference between the pre-workshop survey mean and post-workshop survey mean was statistically significant. The *p*-value was the determining factor in whether or not the literacy workshop had the desired impact on teachers' perceptions and knowledge of literacy instructional strategies.

To evaluate the outcome question, I recorded all students' STAR Reading scaled scores in two data sets. The first set reflects their scores before strategies were

implemented in the classroom. The second set reflects their scores after content area teachers used literacy instructional strategies to teach them their content. The mean of each set of data was calculated and compared in order to determine the amount of growth or lack thereof as a result of the literacy workshop (see Table A7). A *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the STAR Reading scaled scores before, and eight weeks after, teachers used literacy instructional strategies to teach the sample. Their amount of reading growth was a critical factor in determining to what extent teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies impacted students' reading growth.

Table A6

POLYTECH Teachers' Perceptions and Use of Literacy Instructional Strategies Pre- and Post- Survey Results

Statistic	Literacy Workshop Survey	
	Pre	Post
Mean	18.2	21.9
Standard Deviation	2.4	1.8

Note. Pre and Post categories reflect the frequency of Likert-type scale responses given by each teacher. Only six questions are included in table because the seventh question was not on the pre-workshop survey. Mean and standard deviation reflect survey averages and variance. A paired-sample *t*-test showed statistical significance at $p < .01$.

Table A7

POLYTECH High School's Social Studies Students' STAR Reading Growth

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	1,102.5*	1,112.5
Standard Deviation	89.6	89.9

Note. Scaled scores were used to calculate means and standard deviations. A paired-sample *t*-test showed statistical significance between pretest and posttest outcomes ($p < .01$).

Results

The results of the literacy workshop show that the post-training mean is larger than the pre-training mean, indicating improved perception, knowledge, and use of literacy instructional practices. The mean for the pre-workshop survey responses is 18.2, while the mean for the post-survey is 21.9 (possible range, 6 – 24). This increase indicates that the literacy workshop had the desired impact expected on teachers' perceptions and use of literacy instructional strategies. Because the standard deviation for the post-workshop survey data is smaller than the pre-survey standard deviation *and* the post-survey mean is larger than the pre-survey mean, it can be determined that teachers were more identical in their perceptions about literacy instructional strategies and their benefits. Furthermore, a paired sample *t*-test revealed the increase in the post-survey mean to be statistically significant ($p < .01$). Because the *p*-value is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest means. The *p*-value was the determining factor in whether or not the literacy workshop had the desired impact on teachers' perceptions and knowledge of literacy instructional strategies.

Overall, all teachers reported satisfaction with the literacy workshop as they all gave a score of “3” or “4” on question #7 (see Appendix D). All of this indicates a correlation between professional development in literacy instructional strategies and improved teacher perceptions and use of literacy instructional strategies. The results are uniformly high, as all teachers but one indicated an improvement from pretest to posttest. Regarding the process question, “To what extent are content area teachers using literacy instructional strategies?” analysis of the pretest and posttest results show that 95% (19 of 20) of teachers improved their use of literacy instructional strategies.

Data analyses reveals that the post-training mean is larger than the pre-training mean, indicating improved scaled scores on the STAR Reading assessment. The mean for the STAR Reading pretest is 1,102.5, while the mean for the STAR Reading posttest is 1,112.5. This increase indicates that teachers’ use of literacy instructional strategies had the desired impact expected on students’ literacy learning. Because the standard deviation for the posttest is significantly smaller than the pretest standard deviation *and* the mean is larger than the pretest mean, it can be determined that overall, students benefitted from the literacy instructional strategies employed by their social studies teachers. Furthermore, a paired sample *t*-test revealed the increase in the posttest mean to be statistically significant ($p < .01$). There is a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest means. The *p*-value was the determining factor in whether or not the literacy instructional strategies used on the sample of students had the desired impact on their learning of content.

Overall, students made significant gains on their STAR Reading assessments after

taking the posttest. An analysis revealed that only 1 out of 30 students did not improve on the STAR Reading assessment from pretest to posttest. This shows a connection between teacher-used literacy instructional strategies and improved student literacy. With regard to the outcome question, “To what degree has student reading outcomes improved through teachers’ use of literacy instructional strategies?”, analysis of the STAR Reading pretest and posttest results show that 97% (29 of 30) of students’ literacy improved.

Limitations

One limitation is that I had no authority over the time in which the pre- or post-surveys were administered to teachers. This is because the Supervisor of Student Services did not administer the post-assessment to teachers until eight weeks after the literacy workshop, the teachers could have forgotten their perceptions and new understandings gained from the workshop that would have been easy to remember if administered directly after the professional development. The pre- and post- STAR Reading assessments were administered in forty-minute increments. Students complete the 34-question assessment in the allotted time, which removed the possible limitation of students rushing through the assessment to finish before their time limit ended. While students were offered two days of testing, none of them needed the additional time.

Discussion

Conclusion

POLYTECH High School continues to enhance its response to intervention program to improve teacher instruction and student literacy outcomes. As noted above, the uniformity of survey responses shows the improvement in teachers’ perceptions and

use of literacy instructional strategies as evidenced by higher means from pre-survey to post-survey. Examination of differences indicated a statistical significance between the pre-workshop mean and post-workshop mean.

Examination of differences indicated a statistical significance between the STAR Reading pretest mean and STAR Reading posttest mean, which lead to the following conclusion: students' literacy improves as a result of teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies. Given this conclusion, it can be said that teachers should continue using literacy instructional strategies with fidelity because of the positive impact it has on students' literacy skills. It remains to be seen if this pattern of performance will hold true for other content area teachers and their students.

It is important to note a limitation regarding the validity of pre- and post-workshop survey responses. Because the survey was administered and reviewed by the supervisor of student services, teachers may feel obligated to express having implemented the literacy instructional strategies without having used them in the classroom—given that he is their supervisor *and* evaluator. Although I tried to avoid this potential conflict by choosing teachers whom I've observed or worked with closely and were more likely to implement strategies, the level of commitment the social studies teachers have for literacy instructional strategies cannot be determined with 100% accuracy.

The results from this program evaluation can clearly inform the LAAA context as well. Across both sites, even with quality, core literacy instruction, adolescents with persistent reading difficulties will need more targeted, intensive strategies that address

their gaps in reading. This evaluation indicates that adolescents with various reading comprehension abilities can benefit from literacy instruction, but research indicates that students with reading comprehension difficulties will benefit most from reading comprehension interventions (Edmonds et al., 2009). Students who are not provided intervention may experience significant declines in their reading performance over time whereas students provided reading interventions maintain reading skills and do not experience this same decline. Findings contribute to the concept of providing increased, quality literacy instruction understanding for content learning (e.g., science, social studies), which can be addressed and intensified in tiered (Tier 2) reading intervention in order to provide more opportunities for literacy development and close the performance gap between low achieving adolescents and students meeting grade level reading expectations.

Recommendations

- Provide feedback to the administration and content area teachers regarding the findings of the evaluation, evaluation methods (e.g., logic model, survey, etc.), and STAR Reading growth. Student growth should be provided to each social studies teacher, individually, who offered his/her students for this evaluation.
- Increase teacher knowledge and skills in literacy instructional strategies because it has proven critical to adolescent literacy development.
 - Continue training and support in literacy instructional strategies to maintain fidelity and encourage ongoing buy-in from all content

area teachers.

- Observe content area teachers to ensure that literacy instruction in the content areas remains aligned in approach across grades.
- Continue tracking teacher knowledge and perceptions of literacy instructional strategies through surveys, observations, and interviews.
 - Continue administering pre- and post-workshop surveys to review the impact professional development has on teachers and share with the CGCC Guiding Team.
 - Improve professional development that targets gaps in teachers' understanding, perceptions, and use of literacy instructional strategies as they arise.
 - Conduct observations and/or interviews to see firsthand which teachers successfully implement strategies.
 - Train expert teachers to coach identified, less successful teachers.
- For adolescents who do not respond to Tier 1 core literacy instruction, alone, determine what protocols, routines, and strategies within an RTI context address their reading needs in order to accelerate reading growth for adolescents at-risk for reading failure.

Implications and Further Research

This program evaluation yields implications for enhancing core instruction at schools serving adolescents and what future research is needed to address the reading needs of students who need reading remediation in addition to quality literacy instruction.

Because schools serving adolescents are usually departmentalized, every teacher must play a necessary role in providing literacy instruction and support within content area classrooms. This is one way in which Tier 1 for RTI at the secondary and elementary levels are dissimilar. This implication does not mean that content area teachers should neglect their content standards to teach literacy. Rather, they should interweave these instructional approaches into content area instruction in order to help all students access complex texts, improve student learning, prevent reading failure, and support students who are at-risk for reading failure.

Because Tier 1 instruction does not provide adolescents with more severe reading difficulties with targeted instruction, it is vital that schools also incorporate reading remediation opportunities for adolescents who continue to struggle with reading. More research is needed to determine how this can be accomplished within an RTI framework and what strategies, protocols, and routines are most effective for adolescents at-risk for reading failure.

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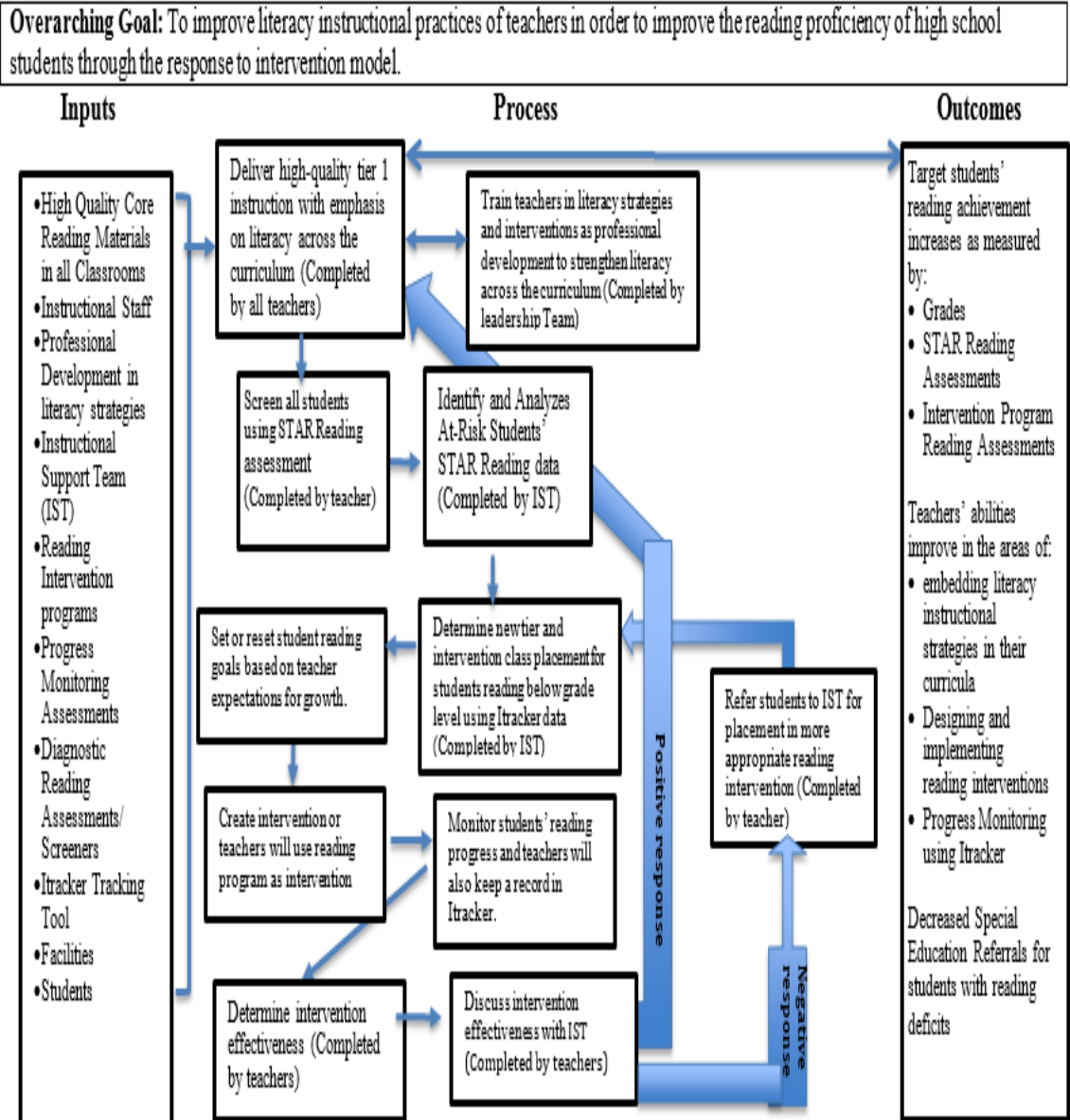
Table A8

POLYTECH Reading Program Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation Question		Sample	Variables/Instrument	Data Collection Procedures	Data Analysis	Timeline
Process	To what extent are content area teachers using literacy instructional strategies?	Potential sample includes 20 content area teachers employed at POLYTECH High School. Includes approximately 50% males and 50% females. Teachers will be from the English, science, social studies, and career/technical departments.	Both the pre- and post-workshop surveys were created by the supervisor of student services. Some questions will be asked on a Likert-type scale and some will be open-ended. Questions will target teachers' knowledge and use of literacy instructional strategies in their content area classrooms.	The pre-survey was administered through SurveyMonkey and prior to the content literacy workshop. The post-survey will be administered through SurveyMonkey after teachers have been given ample time to implement literacy instructional strategies.	I will tally frequency of each response and calculate mean responses for each teacher. Compare means for pre- and post-session surveys by employing a paired sample t-test to determine if the difference in means is statistically significant.	February 7 – 14: Supervisor administers pre-workshop survey February 15: Common Ground Team delivers literacy workshop February 16 – March 17: Content teachers implement literacy instructional strategies March 18 – 24: Supervisor administers post-workshop survey March 25 – April 15: Analyze data April 16 – May 6: Write final report
Outcome	To what degree have student' reading outcomes improved through teachers' use of literacy instructional strategies?	Potential sample includes approximately 30 students from three social studies classes. 10 students will be chosen per social studies class and will span from 9 th – 11 th grade. They will roughly be 50% males and 50% females.	STAR Reading Assessment comprised of 34 multiple-choice, comprehension questions will reveal students' levels of reading comprehension based on fiction and nonfiction texts. This instrument is computer-adaptive. Scores are reported in grade equivalents.	I will retrieve STAR Reading assessment data from the online Renaissance Learning program. I am the administrator for the STAR Reading program and can access any and all data by creating a report with the data I am seeking.	I will compare the mean of all students' STAR Reading scaled scores before teachers implemented literacy strategies to their mean score after content area teachers used literacy instructional strategies. I will employ a paired sample t-test to determine if the difference in means is statistically significant.	January 15: Administer STAR Reading pre-assessment February 15: Common Ground Team delivers literacy workshop March 18 – 24: Administer STAR Reading post-assessment to teachers' social studies classes. March 25 – April 15: Analyze data April 16 – May 6: Write final report

Appendix A

LOGIC MODEL



Appendix B

POLYTECH TEACHER LITERACY PRE-WORKSHOP SURVEY

Directions: The following questions will give me a better understanding of your experiences with implementing literacy instructional strategies in the classroom. Please complete the survey.

1. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Including this year, how many full-time years of teaching experience do you have?

_____ years

3. Ethnicity/Race

- a. African-American/Black
- b. Asian-American
- c. Caucasian American
- d. Latino/Latina/Hispanic
- e. Native-American
- f. Other

4. What grade level(s) or area(s) are you currently teaching? (*choose all that apply*)

- 1. Ninth Grade
- 2. Tenth Grade
- 3. Eleventh Grade
- 4. Twelfth Grade
- 5. Regular Education
- 6. Special Education

5. What subject areas do you teach?

- a. English

- b. Social Studies
- c. Science
- d. Career/Technical Education (Please specify):

6. For this survey, talented readers are defined as those students who read two or more years above the average reader in your classroom. If you do not have any talented readers in your class this year, think about those you have taught in the past.

- I have adequate understanding of how to use literacy instructional strategies in my classroom.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

- I use literacy instructional strategies daily in my classroom.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

- I use vocabulary strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

- I use before, during, and after reading strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

- I use writing strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

- I believe literacy instructional strategies improve learning of content.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Thank you very much for filling out this survey!

Appendix C

POLYTECH TEACHER LITERACY POST-WORKSHOP SURVEY

Directions: The following questions will give me a better understanding of your experiences with implementing literacy instructional strategies in the classroom now that you have received professional development on implementation practices. Please complete the survey.

1. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Including this year, how many full-time years of teaching experience do you have?

_____ years

3. Ethnicity/Race

- g. African-American/Black
- h. Asian-American
- i. Caucasian American
- j. Latino/Latina/Hispanic
- k. Native-American
- l. Other

4. What grade level(s) or area(s) are you currently teaching? (*choose all that apply*)

- 7. Ninth Grade
- 8. Tenth Grade
- 9. Eleventh Grade
- 10. Twelfth Grade
- 11. Regular Education
- 12. Special Education

5. What subject areas do you teach?

- e. English

- f. Social Studies
- g. Science
- h. Career/Technical Education (Please specify): _____

6. For this survey, talented readers are defined as those students who read two or more years above the average reader in your classroom. If you do not have any talented readers in your class this year, think about those you have taught in the past.

a. I have adequate understanding of how to use literacy instructional strategies in my classroom.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

b. I use literacy instructional strategies daily in my classroom.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

c. I use vocabulary strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

d. I use before, during, and after reading strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

e. I use writing strategies effectively to help my students learn new content in my class.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

f. I believe literacy instructional strategies improve learning of content.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

g. Overall, my training on literacy strategies has helped me strengthen my ability to improve students' reading.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Thank you very much for filling out this survey!

Table A9

POLYTECH Teachers' Perceptions and Use of Literacy Instructional Strategies Pre- and Post- Survey Results

Teacher	Sum of Likert Scale Survey Responses	
	Pre	Post
1	23	24
2	17	24
3	24	24
4	20	23
5	19	23
6	19	23
7	19	23
8	19	23
9	18	23
10	17	22
11	17	22
12	16	22
13	15	22
14	21	21
15	17	21
16	17	21
17	17	20
18	17	19
19	14	19
20	18	18
Mean	18.2	21.9
Standard Deviation	2.4	1.8

Note. Pre and Post categories reflect the frequency of Likert-type scale responses given by each teacher. Only six questions are included in table because the seventh question was not on the pre-workshop survey. Mean and standard deviation reflect survey averages and variance.

Table A10 *POLYTECH High School's Social Studies Students' STAR Reading Growth Scores*

Student Demographics	Grade Level	STAR Reading Scores				Scaled Score Growth
		Pretest Grade Equivalent		Posttest Grade Equivalent		
		Scaled Score	Grade Equivalent	Scaled Score	Grade Equivalent	
Class 1 Students	<i>n</i>					<i>n</i> = points
1	9	970	8.6	993	8.8	+23
2	9	1,078	9.8	1,095	10.0	+17
3	9	920	8.1	935	8.2	+15
4	9	1,010	9.0	1,024	9.1	+14
5	9	980	8.7	990	8.8	+10
6	9	911	8.0	921	8.1	+10
7	9	1,110	10.2	1,118	10.3	+7
8	9	910	8.0	916	8.1	+6
9	9	1,110	10.2	1,112	10.2	+2
10	9	1,117	10.3	1,119	10.3	+2
Class 2 Students						
11	10	1,078	9.7	1,110	10.2	+32
12	10	1,161	10.9	1,190	11.5	+29
13	10	1,111	10.2	1,136	10.5	+25
14	10	1,157	10.8	1,179	11.2	+22
15	10	1,124	10.3	1,143	10.6	+19
16	10	1,180	11.2	1,196	11.6	+16
17	10	1,170	11.1	1,182	11.3	+12
18	10	1,175	11.1	1,184	11.3	+9
19	10	1,164	11.0	1,172	11.1	+8
20	10	1,077	9.7	1,022	9.1	-55
Class 3 Students						
21	11	1,043	9.3	1,062	9.6	+19
22	11	1,077	9.7	1,089	9.9	+12
23	11	1,163	10.9	1,175	11.1	+12
24	11	1,181	11.3	1,193	11.5	+12
25	11	1,193	11.5	1,201	11.8	+8
26	11	1,175	11.1	1,179	11.2	+4
27	11	1,200	11.7	1,203	11.8	+3
28	11	1,169	11.0	1,172	11.1	+3
29	11	1,145	10.6	1,147	10.6	+2
30	11	1,216	12.2	1,217	12.3	+1
Mean		1,102.5		1,112.5		
SD		89.6		89.9		

Appendix D

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION FOR ADOLESCENTS: A WHITE PAPER
SYNTHESIS OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE READING INTERVENTIONS FOR
STUDENTS AT-RISK FOR READING FAILURE**

by

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Executive Summary

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tiered framework aimed to improve student outcomes among all grade levels through tiered levels of intervention. However, minimal research on RTI for students in grades 4 through 12 exists. Therefore, this white paper aims to address the following research question: What features of vocabulary and reading comprehension interventions (e.g. instructional strategies, protocols, and routines) improve the reading comprehension outcomes of adolescent students at-risk for reading failure? The main conclusions were that features aimed at improving reading comprehension outcomes for adolescent students at-risk for reading failure should address adolescent diversity (e.g., reading profiles, language proficiency, reader interests) and fit within a reading framework for instruction suitable for adolescents within an RTI framework. Features include (a) a dual approach RTI model, (b) reading comprehension strategy instruction, (c) academic vocabulary instruction, (d) technology-enhanced instruction, and (e) instruction to promote motivation. Ultimately, this research is intended to help administrators, educators, and policymakers improve reading comprehension outcomes for struggling adolescent readers.

Introduction

Response to Intervention (RTI) at the primary level has been conceptualized as a multi-tiered framework designed to meet the academic needs of all children in grades K-5 (Reed, Wexler, & Vaughn, 2012). The same can be said for RTI for adolescents, especially for the purpose of reading development. However, there are key differences between RTI for reading at the primary grades K-5 verses for adolescents. First, while

both address the needs of struggling students with reading by providing effective, evidence-based Tier 1 instruction and high-quality reading interventions, prevention is the focus in early elementary grades, whereas remediation is the focus for adolescents (Reed et al., 2012). A key component of RTI models for improving reading achievement for adolescent struggling readers is the delivery of increasingly more intensive interventions for students who have demonstrated increasingly insufficient responses to intervention or have not narrowed the reading achievement gap between themselves and their reading-proficient peers.

When compared to studies focused on elementary RTI in reading, few studies address the components of reading interventions designed for adolescents in grades 4-12 (Wanzek, Vaughn, Roberts, & Fletcher, 2011). For students with reading difficulties, understanding outcomes and the associated features of interventions that contribute to those outcomes can inform instructional practices and assist interventionists in making decisions regarding students' response to intervention (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003). Therefore, it is important to address effective ways to intensify interventions for adolescents with reading difficulties, especially those with the most intractable reading difficulties. It is also important to note that states mandate RTI systems in elementary, and more recently, middle and high schools to ensure adequate reading progress for all students in kindergarten through high school (Reed et al., 2012). Because of this, it is crucial to synthesize this growing body of research intended to help administrators, educators, and policymakers improve reading comprehension outcomes for those struggling readers.

Given that RTI for adolescents is a fairly new practice, there are few studies addressing the effectiveness of Tiers 2 and/or 3 reading interventions conducted within an RTI model. The growing body of literature addressing the effectiveness of interventions for adolescent struggling readers includes the following domains of adolescent reading: reading comprehension, vocabulary, word reading, and reading fluency (Pyle & Vaughn, 2012). Some studies used multiple outcome measures in these domains of reading, whereas, others used only one which made coding articles based on their reading domains much less complex.

This white paper will investigate features of reading interventions that best address reading interventions for adolescents with reading comprehension and vocabulary difficulties. The main research question that guided this review was: What features of vocabulary and reading comprehension interventions (e.g. instructional strategies, protocols, and routines) improve the reading comprehension outcomes of students at-risk for reading failure? Below, findings are grouped around main topics which include response to intervention, reading comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, technology enhanced instruction, and motivation. Each section begins with an overview, followed by a synthesis of existing research, noting positive, mixed, or negative results. The white paper concludes with implications for practice and an overall summary of key points and findings.

Research Synthesis

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tiered educational framework aimed at improving outcomes for both primary and adolescent students, especially among students

who exhibit academic difficulties (Berkeley, Bender, Gregg Peaster, & Saunders, 2009; Reed et al., 2012). RTI focuses on problem solving through research-based interventions for struggling students by defining the reading difficulty, creating an intervention, and evaluating the progress through consistent and thorough periodic assessment made within a protocol and a specific timeframe.

RTI is not a singular concept; instead, it relies upon multiple tiers, with Tier 1 offering core instruction that focuses on prevention and pro-action and is applied to all students. Tier 2 focuses on promoting high-efficacy, increasing motivation, and rapid response to learning and reading for risk students as well as those with LDs. Tier 3 is based on intensive instruction over a long duration with a specific focus often on students with learning disabilities (LDs) (Berkeley et al., 2009; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Hart & Stebick, 2016). Students must be identified for the correct tier and provided reading intervention based on diagnostic assessments that demonstrate there is a reading need (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

Reading interventions should include specific components that are effective for adolescents with reading difficulties. These features can include changes in intensity, frequency, duration, group size, teacher's knowledge and familiarity with the subject, and the intervention itself (Berkeley et al., 2009; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Reed et al., 2012). These features are addressed below within RTI, reading comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, technology enhanced instruction, and motivation sections.

Therefore, RTI should be designed to pair students with the correct reading intervention (Ciullo et al., 2016; Reed et al., 2012). Once students are provided with reading intervention, interventionists must measure students' reading skills through ongoing assessment to evaluate their improvement (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). While much of the research on the utilization of RTI is positive, some scholars reported negative results when implementing reading interventions making it important to clarify how RTI should be designed for adolescents with reading comprehension difficulties.

Response to Intervention

Numerous studies demonstrated the positive effects of reading interventions on adolescents' reading comprehension (Archer, Gleason, & Vachon, 2005; Edmonds et al., 2009; Scammacca et al., 2007; Solis et al., 2012; Townsend & Collins, 2009; Vaughn, Cirino et al., 2010; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012; Vaughn, Wanzek et al., 2010; Vaughn, Wexler et al., 2011; Wanzek et al., 2011) when implemented within a multi-tiered framework (RTI) that utilizes the Standard Intervention Protocol model (and its features). The positive effects ranged from small to large. Below I explain how RTI protocols and RTI contextual features for reading intervention implementation improve the effectiveness of reading interventions designed for adolescents. RTI programs that focus on reading comprehension have shown positive results for adolescents with reading comprehension difficulties.

One feature of reading interventions that improves its effectiveness for adolescents is the type of RTI framework or protocol used to implement it. There are multiple protocols for RTI implementation that a school can adopt. The *Problem-Solving*

protocol utilizes a team which analyzes the problem, deduces its cause, conceives an appropriate approach, implements that approach, and continues to monitor its progress. Another RTI protocol, the *Standard Intervention* protocol, focuses on a standard approach to addressing students' reading needs, and is not singularly designed for individual students, but for groups of students with similar reading difficulties.

In an exemplary multi-year study conducted by Vaughn, Wexler et al. (2011), researchers focused reading intervention on seventh and eighth graders in urban environments, using a three phased Tier 3 intervention that focused on word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students were assigned to standardized or individualized treatments for 50 minutes a day, in group sizes of five, for an entire school year. Treatment duration was 20-25 lessons over 6-7 weeks and began with word study and fluency and then instruction in vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

The standardized protocol for instruction addressed daily vocabulary instruction by teaching the meanings of words from text being read. *Before* reading, students were provided with student-friendly definitions along with examples and non-examples of the proper use of new words. Teachers then modeled active thinking, guided students in reading the text, asked questions to check for understanding all *during* the reading process. While students read, they completed a graphic organizer in order to summarize main ideas *after* reading was complete.

Students receiving the individualized protocol received instruction tailored to their reading needs in a scope and sequence of research-based comprehension strategy instruction (e.g., strategies for finding main ideas and summarizing text) similar to the

standardized protocol treatment students. Teachers utilized a Before-During-After reading framework and could scaffold and modify pacing, instruction, and materials to further individualize instruction of narrative and expository texts.

The results indicated that the three-phased intervention saw an increase in word identification, spelling, sight word knowledge, and passage comprehension while having a slight decrease in word attack and phonemic decoding. Students in the Standard treatment protocol achieved significant gains in reading comprehension, as evidenced by a moderately high effect size in comparison to students receiving the individualized treatment.

Similarly, in a separate study by Vaughn and Fletcher (2012), researchers conducted a multi-tiered, three phased yearlong reading intervention with sixth and seventh graders that offered 50-minute individualized, daily instruction in groups of 2-4 students with a teacher providing instruction and supervision. The results from this study found that targeted, small group interventions should rely upon systematic, tiered instruction and practice as they improved reading comprehension strategies and vocabulary development significantly among adolescents (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012).

However, not all study results were positive as some had mixed results. Ciullo et al. (2016) also studied RTI (Tiers 2 and 3 reading intervention implementation) where teachers focused on paired reading activities and performance feedback. An RTI model did increase reading comprehension, however, it was dependent on multi-tiered instruction and the amount of time that teachers devoted to the more intensive tiers,

making the success of RTI more dependent on intensity and protocols used within the RTI framework for grouping and teaching students.

To summarize, Response to Intervention models that incorporated a standard intervention protocol for small groups of students with similar reading profiles and intensifying instruction in tiers, resulted in significant improvements in reading comprehension (Ciullo et al., 2016; Scammacca et al., 2013; Townsend & Collins, 2009; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012; Vaughn, Wexler et al., 2011). It is also important to incorporate other organizational factors that intensify tiers of instruction (e.g. time, group size, and intensity)

Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction

Several studies demonstrated the positive effects of reading interventions on adolescents' reading comprehension (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012; Vaughn, Wexler et al., 2011; Scammacca, Roberts, Vaughn, & Stuebing, 2013; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012; Solis, Miciak, Vaughn, & Fletcher, 2014). The positive effects ranged from small to large. In further analyzing the interventions from the studies showing positive effects on comprehension, several intervention features were common across the studies. These included: building background knowledge, reading comprehension strategy instruction, texts matched to reading comprehension strategies, writing in response to reading exercises, opportunities for application of reading strategies, and professional development for teachers that improves fidelity of instruction. Below I further explain these features of reading interventions and what makes them effective for adolescents who struggle with reading comprehension.

Many studies have found success with reading comprehension interventions. Both Edmonds et al. (2009) and Solis, Ciullo et al. (2012) investigated how reading comprehension strategy interventions for middle school students with LD affected their reading comprehension. The authors uncovered that the majority of reading comprehension lessons that focused on reading strategy instruction (e.g. previewing, clarifying, generating questions, summarizing, and knowledge of text structure, main idea, and self-monitoring) had the best results (Edmonds et al., 2009; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012).

In a separate study, Solis, Miciak et al. (2014) studied the effectiveness of reading comprehension outcomes within an RTI framework for sixth through eighth grade students who had difficulty with reading comprehension. The interventions that relied upon texts that reinforced background knowledge and offered content learning had the most success (Solis, Miciak et al., 2014).

It is clear that adolescents' reading comprehension difficulties can be improved through targeted reading interventions, explicit instruction, and reading comprehension strategy instruction. However, not all studies for reading comprehension were positive as some had mixed results.

However, intervention success depends upon the instructors' ability to implement the intervention and inclusion of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (Faggella-Luby & Wardwell, 2011; Hart & Stebick, 2016). Faggella-Luby and Wardwell (2011) focused on reading interventions that included instruction in story structure and reading strategy instruction, typical practice, and silent sustained learning within an RTI

framework; they found that instruction in story structure and reading strategies (e.g. self-questioning and summarization) improved reading comprehension more than silent sustained learning. Due to the number of variables that determine intervention success the results of this study were at best mixed.

In summary, reading comprehension strategy instruction proved to be somewhat successful when improving adolescent reading outcomes (Edmonds et al., 2009; Faggella-Luby & Wardwell, 2011; Hart & Stebick, 2016; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012). Previous studies have indicated multiple variables and conditions that call into question how efficient and effective reading comprehension strategies are (Faggella-Luby & Wardwell, 2011; Hart & Stebick, 2016). Still, it is evident that adolescents' reading comprehension difficulties can be remediated through targeted, explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction. Therefore, when implementing a reading intervention, reading comprehension strategy instruction should incorporate evidence-based reading instruction practices for the best results possible (NICHD, 2000).

Academic Vocabulary Instruction

Pullen, Tuckwiller, Konold, Maynard, and Coyne (2010) stated that teaching vocabulary at an early age is imperative, as it instructs children how to decode what is written and how to interpret that knowledge. However, adolescents with poor vocabulary knowledge may not have had opportunities for vocabulary development. Several studies demonstrated the positive effects of vocabulary instruction on adolescents' overall reading comprehension (Baumann, Edwards, Boland, Olejnik, & Kame'enui, 2003; Faggella-Luby & Wardwell, 2011; Hart & Stebick, 2016; Kelley, Lockley, Foster, &

Kelley, 2015; Kennedy, Deshler, & Lloyd, 2015; Pullen et al., 2010; Vaughn, Fletcher, Francis et al., 2008). The positive effects ranged from small to large. Below I further explain particular features of vocabulary instruction – focus on mnemonics; word associations; morphemic/contextual analysis; incidental exposure; direct, robust, and contextualized vocabulary instruction – and what makes them effective for adolescents who struggle with reading comprehension.

For example, Kennedy et al. (2015) focused on the effects of content acquisition podcasts (CAPs) for vocabulary lessons given to ninth through twelfth grade students in large groups. Students watched CAPS, wrote vocabulary definitions for Tier 2 words, and provided a synonym/antonym for each word and other related information to exhibit understanding. Results indicated that high school students with LDs who received vocabulary instruction through CAPs and a keyword mnemonic strategy for learning and memorization scored higher than simple multimedia instruction, thereby demonstrating CAP as an important vocabulary tool for preteaching vocabulary, use of mnemonics to improve memory of word learning strategies, and academic vocabulary instruction, especially for adolescents with LDs (Kennedy et al., 2015).

Both Baumann et al. (2003) and Hawkins, Hale, Sheeley, and Ling (2011) concluded from their studies that there is some support for teaching morphemic analysis and specific vocabulary learning strategies to aid in informational text comprehension. For instance, Baumann et al. (2003) investigated whether morphemic and contextual analysis (MC) was a better tool than vocabulary instruction (VI) in eight fifth-grade classrooms and found no statistical significance between techniques. VI students

demonstrated increased proficiency with learning textbook vocabulary, while MC students had an increased ability to infer meanings based on their affixes. Hawkins et al. (2011) added that introducing words before having students read aids them in interpreting the context and meaning of chosen words and that vocabulary building tools, often used in interventions have demonstrated success for increased reading comprehension.

There are countless other techniques that can be utilized to improve vocabulary for all students including those with LDs (Kelley et al., 2015; Vaughn, Fletcher, Francis et al., 2008). Intervention tools such as CAP, repeated reading, and vocabulary previewing were all beneficial for optimal student outcomes (Hawkins et al., 2011; Kennedy et al., 2015; Reed et al., 2012). The gathered research has provided evidence for practices (e.g. focus on mnemonics; word associations; and morphemic/contextual analysis) to improve adolescent reading development.

Technology-Enhanced Instruction

Several studies demonstrated the positive effects of technology integration on adolescents' reading comprehension (Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Musti-Rao, 2017; Nordström, Nilsson, Gustafson, & Svensson, 2018; Smith & Okolo, 2010; Tanimoto, Thompson, Berninger, Nagy, & Abbott, 2015). The positive effects ranged from small to large. In further analyzing the interventions from the studies showing positive effects on comprehension, technology strategies and protocols were common across the studies. They include: technology-enhanced comprehension strategy instruction, mnemonic devices, web-based supports, technology-based paired reading activities, and progress

monitoring tools. Below I explain how these features of reading interventions are effective for adolescents who struggle with reading comprehension.

Many of the tenants of RTI can be supported with the use of technology. As RTI focuses on evidence-based classroom instruction, technology can provide student assessment, improved student focus, and progress monitoring (Smith & Okolo, 2010). Musti-Rao (2017) asserted that the specialization of teaching that technology provides eliminates much of the guesswork involved in RTI. Any RTI environment should offer technology supports that enhance instruction, especially for students with LD and ELL students (Basham, Israel, Graden, Poth, & Winston, 2010; Jozwik & Douglas, 2017). Despite the benefits of literacy technological programs such as text to speech (TTS) or speech to text (STT), technology has not been a strong focus within RTI literature (Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Nordström et al., 2018). Existing research has provided mixed insight into technology-enhanced instruction within literacy and RTI.

For example, both Jozwik and Douglas (2017) and Proctor, Dalton, and Grisham (2007) implemented technological reading comprehension interventions targeting ELL fourth-grade students. The intervention focused on reading comprehension strategy instruction accompanied by technological resources, such as narrative and informational texts, web-based tools that aided in text interpretation, explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction, web-linked assessments of learning, and paired reading activities. The measure of success varied among the students as there were small gains between the pre- and post-test, with some students exceeding their reading comprehension when

compared to others, providing beneficial evidence for each intervention's use (Jozwik and Douglas, 2017; Proctor, Dalton et al., 2007).

Kim et al. (2006) investigated the Computer-Assisted Collaborative Strategic Reading (CACSR) protocol on sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students with LDs. Researchers found that when instructors used technology-enhanced guided practice, comprehension strategy instruction (e.g. main ideas and question generation, specifically), and built-in recording to monitor student progress, students became more cognizant of what they read, thereby increasing reading comprehension and making mnemonic devices a promising tool for larger groups of adolescents (Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Kim et al., 2006). However, while these studies were largely positive, other research provided more mixed results.

The use of technology in reading interventions can be limited by poor teacher understanding of the tools, limited access, and lack of tailoring to adolescents or the RTI program (Musti-Rao, 2017; Tanimoto et al., 2015). It is vital for instructors to be well acquainted with any technological tools available through professional development. Despite these caveats, technology-enhanced instruction has been successfully used to improve reading interventions for adolescents, even in RTI models when paired with specific protocols and strategies.

To summarize, technology-enhanced learning provides students with new avenues for instruction through direct student assessment so that teachers can augment their reading programs (Kim et al., 2006; Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Proctor, Dalton et al., 2007). Many studies found technology to be beneficial for LDs, ELLs, and typically

developing students as it improved their reading competence (e.g., Kim et al., 2006; Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Proctor, Dalton et al., 2007; Smith & Okolo, 2010). However, other authors found mixed results, and downplayed the benefits of a reading intervention that utilized new technology (Nordström et al., 2018; Smith & Okolo, 2010; Tanimoto et al., 2015). The research synthesis indicated practical implications, including incorporating technology-enhanced comprehension strategy instruction, mnemonic devices, web-based supports, technology-based paired reading activities, and progress monitoring tools.

Motivation

Motivation is an important variable for learning, as it can affect a student's interest and performance. Many scholars have directly connected motivation to effective reading skill use (Gibbon, Duffield, Hoffman, & Wageman, 2017; McGeown, Duncan, & Griffiths, 2015; Shen & Troia, 2017; Toste, Capin, Vaughn, Roberts, & Kearns, 2017). McGeown et al. (2015) and Shen and Troia (2017) stated that motivation is a multi-dimensional construct where some characteristics are more important to vocabulary development and reading comprehension than others. Confidence, text characteristics (age appropriateness, subject, representation, etc.), students' ability levels, and interest in reading are motivational features of reading interventions that have positive effects on adolescents' reading abilities (McGeown et al., 2015; Shen & Troia, 2017). Unfortunately, a lack of motivation can have negative effects on adolescents as reading achievement occurs through willingness to practice difficult reading tasks. Diminished

motivation can cause a student to lose interest, thereby decreasing their willingness to practice (Shen & Troia, 2017; Vinterek, Winberg, Tegmark, Alatalo, & Liberg, 2018).

Scholars have found that motivation often directly corresponds to a student's cognitive ability. Therefore, teachers must develop a student's knowledge in the topic being read about to increase their outcomes and in-class responsiveness (Shen & Troia, 2017; Toste et al., 2017). According to studies related to the impact of motivation on reading, adolescents with high motivation placed more effort into reading, persevered through challenges, independently sought out help, and actively engaged in the learning process (Toste et al., 2017). Interventions that incorporate motivational techniques can help students persevere through challenges, independently seek help, and increase active engagement in the classroom (Toste et al., 2017). In addition, concept-oriented reading and attribution retention increased student outcomes in reading among those with LDs (Toste et al., 2017). After an intervention to increase motivation among students for reading, participants noticed an increase in student outcomes.

In summary, the conclusions drawn from the review of motivation were largely uniform. The reciprocal relationship between motivation and interest can determine reading capabilities in adolescents (McGeown et al., 2015; Shen & Troia, 2017; Vinterek et al., 2018). Although some scholars debate the importance of age and gender for reading motivation, the studies were uniform in their findings that motivation is an important component of reading intervention (McGeown et al., 2015; Shen & Troia, 2017). Features related to reading motivation that improve reading comprehension in

adolescents include text selection, confidence, text characteristics (e.g., age appropriateness, subject, representation), students' ability levels, and interest in reading.

Implications for Practice

The contextual and instructional features that constitute an effective reading intervention and implementation can be divided into the following categories: (a) Response to Intervention Model, (b) Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction (c) Academic Vocabulary Instruction (d) Technology-Enhanced Instruction and (e) Motivation. Reading interventions designed for adolescents at-risk for reading failure benefit from implementation that adheres to key, evidence-based features of instruction that address adolescent diversity (e.g., reading profiles, language proficiency, reader interests) and fit within a reading framework suitable for adolescents and are practical for an RTI framework. Features should also include components that improve vocabulary development and engaging activities and resources that motivate adolescents. With fidelity data, the observer and interventionist can also determine whether these strategies, routines, and protocols were effective or ineffective because the intervention was poorly implemented or the intervention was not well matched to students' reading profiles (Reed et al., 2012).

Use a Dual Response to Intervention Model

There is a strong case for improving the effectiveness of reading interventions through an RTI framework. Adolescents with the most intractable reading difficulties are in need of structured time, targeted interventions, and tiered placements that offer remediation based on their specific reading needs (Edmonds et al., 2009; Reed et al.,

2012). An RTI model is the best context for implementing reading remediation for students with reading difficulties and enhancing reading comprehension for all students (Hart & Stebick, 2016; Kamhi & Catts, 2017; Reed et al., 2012). One feature of reading interventions that improves effectiveness for adolescents is the type of framework or protocol used to implement it. There are multiple protocols for RTI implementation that a school can adopt. The *problem-solving* method analyzes the problem, deduces its cause, conceives an approach accordingly, implements that approach, and continues to monitor its progress. Another RTI protocol, the *standard intervention* protocol, focuses on a standard approach to addressing students' reading needs, and is not singularly designed for individual students, but for groups of students with similar reading difficulties. This is the recommended protocol for Tier 2 reading intervention.

A standard intervention protocol that focuses on reading comprehension remediation is appropriate for Tier 2 students who are unable to receive individualized interventions. Several studies utilizing an RTI model relied on either standardized treatments or individualized treatments within a problem-solving approach to reading intervention. These studies provide convincing data that standardized approaches might be at least as effective as more individualized approaches for adolescents with intensive reading difficulties, and it would be worth considering utilizing effective practices from both RTI protocols, or a dual approach, in order to best serve adolescents with reading difficulties (Archer et al., 2005; Edmonds et al., 2009; Scammacca et al., 2007; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012; Townsend & Collins, 2009; Vaughn, Cirino et al., 2010; Vaughn, Wexler et al., 2011; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012; Wanzek et al., 2010; Wanzek et al., 2013).

It is also important to consider limited group sizes in RTI models, as there is strong evidence to support smaller group sizes when implementing reading interventions (Berkeley et al., 2009; Ciullo et al., 2016; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Vaughn, Wexler et al., 2011). The studies reviewed in this white paper suggest that reducing group size in reading interventions may be one way to increase the intensity of the intervention. Reed et al. (2012) recommend homogeneous grouping, or grouping based on similar reading profiles. However, when this is difficult, differentiation based on similar reading profiles, pacing, skills, or text level are practices that can ensure fidelity of RTI intervention structures. Smaller group sizes allow for interventionists to more successfully provide targeted instruction by dividing their time among students (Reed et al., 2012). Thus, reducing group size when delivering reading interventions may be sufficient to improve the reading outcomes of adolescents.

Provide Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction

Students' ability to use reading comprehension strategies successfully has been shown to be effective in improving the reading outcomes of adolescents (Edmonds et al., 2009; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012). Teachers in the studies reviewed taught students how to use various reading comprehension strategies (e.g., summarizing, asking questions, making connections, coding the text to monitor for meaning, questioning, previewing, determining the main idea, and self-monitoring of texts for comprehension). Targeted and systematic instruction in these reading comprehension strategies may be a critical element of decreasing high-risk adolescents' reading comprehension difficulties (Kamhi & Catts, 2017; Scammacca et al., 2007; Solis, Ciullo et al., 2012).

Provide Instruction Focused on Academic Vocabulary and Morphemic Analysis

Harrison (2015) noted that when a student reaches middle school, there needs to be an increased focus on vocabulary so that students can keep up with the reading comprehension required for advanced lessons. Vaughn et al. (2008) reiterated this point, proclaiming that as students advance through the education system, they require a larger vocabulary for further schooling and that explicit vocabulary instruction is imperative for reading development. Fortunately, there are vocabulary lesson plans embedded in reading interventions designed for adolescents that can address these issues. Vocabulary instruction is not a uniform process as any number of outside influences can determine the success of a vocabulary building strategy. Studies have provided further understanding into the best practices of vocabulary instruction that improves reading comprehension (Baumann et al., 2003; Faggella-Luby & Wardwell, 2011; Hart & Stebick, 2016; Kelley et al., 2015; Kennedy et al., 2015; Pullen et al., 2010; Reed et al., 2012; Vaughn et al., 2008).

Like reading comprehension, vocabulary is also an important construct of instruction for adolescents (Hawkins et al., 2011). The best vocabulary techniques are built upon a solid reading comprehension foundation (Baumann et al., 2003; Hawkins et al., 2011; Kelley et al., 2015; Kennedy et al., 2015; Pullen et al., 2010; Vaughn, Cirino et al., 2010). Academic vocabulary acquisition and morphemic knowledge, specifically, have also been shown to be of crucial importance in predicting reading comprehension outcomes among adolescent struggling readers. Pullen et al. (2010), Vaughn, Fletcher, Francis et al. (2008), and Kelley et al. (2015) noted that low- and middle-income students

experience a slump in vocabulary in early childhood due to socioeconomic conditions as early as the first grade with high performing students understanding almost twice as many words as those from lower income areas. Learning vocabulary intervention strategies (e.g. mnemonic devices, morphemic analysis, structural analysis, etc.) and academic vocabulary meanings were shown to have improved student outcomes for adolescents, while all students, regardless of age, benefit from receiving vocabulary instruction that is explicit and theoretically sound.

Vocabulary instruction should provide student-friendly definitions and opportunities for learning new words. This reinforcement helps students better understand the texts in which they were found and retain knowledge of those words. Overall, adolescents at-risk for reading failure benefit from improved knowledge of vocabulary analysis strategies, word meanings, and concepts.

Provide Technology-Enhanced Instruction

Another potential solution to improving the reading achievement of adolescents is technology-enhanced instruction. While peer tutoring, collaboration, and reading interventions have been shown to aid students with LDs, technology has also shown demonstrable results (Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Smith & Okolo, 2010; Tanimoto et al., 2015).

Technology can be beneficial for all students by offering multiple components related to reading, such as addressing vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, and technology-enhance reading activities can help students build connections between ideas in texts (Jozwik & Douglas, 2017; Musti-Rao, 2017; Smith & Okolo, 2010; Tanimoto et al.,

2015). For instance, tablets have been shown to equip teachers with an efficient way to monitor progress at the student level, provide instant feedback, reduce negative feelings towards testing, and increase reading motivation, all vital when utilized within an RTI framework (Musti-Rao, 2017; Tanimoto et al., 2015).

Provide Instruction to Promote Motivation

The connection between motivation and struggling students is imperative to understand. That is, struggling students are used to having difficulty in reading, thereby creating negative emotions and motivational beliefs when compared with their peers (Toste et al., 2017) and faced with reading tasks. Shen and Troia (2017) explained this concept by declaring that motivation grows from a student's self-assessment as feelings of judgment about their reading skills limit the student's ability to overcome challenges. Toste et al. (2017) supported this assessment by proclaiming that self-concept and identity are key components for reading motivation and student outcomes. Motivation for reading can be especially difficult for ELLs or students with LDs as they, on average, underperform in reading (Proctor, Daley, Louick, Leider, & Gardner, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative to build and support a student's motivation for reading. Increasing reading motivation for students can be challenging for teachers, however, they are not without recourse.

When reading is easy for a child they tend to be motivated to read more. As a result, avid, 'good' readers continue reading at high rates and build reading comprehension skills and attain vocabulary growth over the years. As struggling readers get older, they read less which minimizes their opportunities to develop good reading

comprehension and vocabulary skills in comparison to their peers. Using texts that encourage motivation can target the reading instructional needs of adolescents. Without interventions that incorporate motivational features, adolescent students may remain discouraged from reading and participating in the overall reading experience.

Conclusion

This white paper was undertaken to provide information about which features (e.g. instructional strategies, protocols, and routines) of vocabulary and reading comprehension interventions contributed to positive reading comprehension outcomes for adolescents at-risk for reading failure. A range of needed components was identified. Evidence supporting the use of multi-tiered reading instruction within an RTI framework suggested beneficial outcomes for improving the reading outcomes of adolescents with reading difficulties and learning disabilities. However, some of the studies reviewed were not conducted within an RTI framework, so continued investigation is needed and these conclusions should be interpreted with caution.

In addition, findings suggested that reading comprehension interventions delivered within the RTI framework support reading gains for struggling adolescents due in part to the RTI framework, which employs a targeted approach to reading remediation. Additionally, results demonstrate that adolescents need to work through RTI tiers of interventions over time. When adolescents have more time engaging in reading interventions that incorporate reading comprehension strategy instruction, vocabulary and technology-enhanced instruction with embedded motivation strategies, they experience reading comprehension gains.

Overall, these studies provide a compelling case for continued research on the effectiveness of reading interventions for adolescents with reading comprehension difficulties and the context for enhancing reading performance for these adolescents. While students with reading difficulties in 4th to 12th grades will likely continue to demonstrate reading difficulties throughout middle and high school despite receiving effective interventions, certain reading interventions are more effective than others and are, therefore, a much better investment of time and resources.

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Appendix E

BOOK REVIEW BRIEF: RTI FOR READING AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL

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**Recommendations for Implementing Reading Interventions
with an RTI Model Designed for Adolescents At-Risk for Reading Failure**

**Recommendation 1: Provide Administrative Leadership Needed to Build an RTI
Structure that Maintains a Conducive Learning Environment for All Tiers of
Instruction**

RTI implementation will only be successful with the strong leadership and guidance of a knowledgeable administration dedicated to student growth. Below are recommendations to ensure administration has effectively organized leadership and structures to support the desired changes:

- a. Adjust the schedule to provide teachers with protected time during the day to plan high-quality literacy lessons based on grade-level, subject area, and/or instructional team.
- b. Procure the necessary resources to improve literacy instruction in the content areas such as textbooks and materials with student-friendly, multi-tiered vocabulary support, reading skill-based lesson plans, discussion prompts about key concepts, and high-interest texts and activities to use before, during, and after reading.
- c. Provide leadership for, and guidance in, implementing the RTI model; ensure that all key personnel are involved in planning the model and are informed about policies and procedures.

**Recommendation 2: Design and Implement Intervention Classes and Instruction
with Fidelity and Perform Routine Fidelity Observations**

Reading interventions should be implemented by reading interventionists who are trained to deliver instruction for older, struggling readers with evidence-based routines. Tier 2 reading intervention should be designated for students whose reading performance is at least two years below grade-level expectations, or meet the conditions below:

- d. The student tests at an at-risk level on a schoolwide screening later in the school year based on specified cut scores or percentile ranks; or
- e. The student has not met end-of-year grade level benchmarks on the most recent benchmark and/or state level assessment and is identified as ‘at-risk’ based on specified cut scores or percentile ranks.

To further define the organizational factors of Tier 2 reading intervention, classes should be 30-50 minutes per day and class size should range from 10-12 students to increase intensity of instruction, provide more opportunities for students to receive instructional feedback, and maximize opportunities for differentiation. To ensure fidelity

of remedial reading instruction, Reed et al. (2012) proposed that school leaders perform routine fidelity observations, described below:

1. The observations record information on how closely teachers adhere to critical components and procedures of the intervention used;
2. The observations utilize external consultants or technical assistance providers with expertise in the components and instructional requirements of an adopted commercial intervention program; and
3. The observations develop a system for organizing and reviewing data.

Recommendation 3: Provide Effective Instruction in Both Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension for Students with Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Because understanding words that are read is essential to reading comprehension, most successful methods of instruction with older struggling readers combine vocabulary learning with evidence-based reading comprehension strategy instruction. Reed et al. (2012) recommended the following practices:

- Keep students on task and provide multiple guided opportunities for them to practice learned reading strategies.
- Provide modeling and immediate explicit feedback so that students understand the rationale behind a particular strategy and how/when to use it.
- Allow students opportunities to work with partners to provide each other explicit feedback and correction during application of strategies within texts.
- Provide students with opportunities for teacher *and* peer support for comprehension and vocabulary strategy application in all content area classrooms.

Recommendation 4: Build Student Motivation and Engagement

Students who are motivated, on average, are willing to work for reading comprehension improvement, but may only comply with teacher directions to read and complete reading activities. Teachers can motivate students with the following strategies:

1. Teachers can offer encouraging, timely feedback in a positive, supportive environment;
2. Teachers can involve students in individualized goal-setting;
3. Teachers can keep students' attention with quick-paced lessons; and
4. Teachers can provide relevant, authentic, high-interest texts to improve text accessibility and authentic tasks to improve engagement and learning.

While motivation is a defining factor in older struggling students' reading progress, it is not the same as *engagement*. These terms should not be used

interchangeably. Students who are engaged are deeply and meaningfully involved in processing information (Reed et al., 2012). Teachers can engage older, struggling readers in specific ways:

1. Teachers can explain how and when strategies are useful;
2. Teachers can link performance to effort, rather than ability;
3. Teachers can include social interaction during lessons; and
4. Teachers can create opportunities for choice (e.g., choices among texts, topics, or activities).

Recommendation 5: Monitor Progress and Assess Growth Over Time to Make Data-Driven Decisions

Unlike diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring does not involve a lengthy battery of assessments; instead, a few short measures capable of generating the pertinent information are recommended (Reed et al., 2012). These authors recommend use and review of appropriate progress monitoring data should be done by reading interventionists every 2-4 weeks. If a student is not on trajectory towards grade-level proficiency, instruction should be modified in specific ways:

1. Teachers can use reteaching techniques that break strategies down into smaller steps;
2. Teachers can provide a tool that allows students to self-check whether they have followed all the steps of a strategy; and
3. Teachers can provide instruction in reading skills that might be needed to improve students' ability to comprehend texts.

Progress monitoring tools should be valid, reliable, quick, and easy to administer and interpret. Further, these tools should be informal and sensitive enough to show students' reading progress over time and practical enough to make instructional decisions that benefit students' reading growth.

Summary

The recommendations, based on Reed et al. (2012), are most successful within an RTI framework because students' reading needs vary. Educators must provide each student with targeted instruction designed to meet her/his individual learning needs. Also, students' rates of learning differ; some may need more time to learn. The goals outlined above address the needs of *all* students regardless of placement in Tier 1, 2, or 3 classes.

That is the purpose of RTI—to systematically provide every student with the time and support needed to learn skills for success in grade school and beyond.

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Appendix F

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM INTERVIEW OF ENGLISH TEACHERS’ AND ADOLESCENTS’ PERSPECTIVES ON TIER 2 READING

INTERVENTIONS

Teacher Interview Data

Eight, 5th to 8th grade English Language Arts teachers at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy participated in one-on-one semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) that supported my efforts to select an effective reading intervention for my ELP on supporting adolescent struggling readers. As I developed the interview questions, I determined how they aligned to the purpose of my study as to ensure teacher responses would be useful in informing the selection process and other ideas for improving instructional delivery (i.e. instructional strategies, protocols, and intervention). Although the interview questions were determined beforehand, the semi-structured format allowed opportunities to probe participants about their responses for additional information and clarifications as needed.

I expected all participants to openly and honestly address each question thoughtfully, incorporating relevant experiences when prompted. I was curious to learn teachers’ perceptions of interventions implemented with adolescent struggling readers and which intervention components produce desirable outcomes. I also wondered if there was a direct connection or disconnect between intervention components and lack of teacher satisfaction or student progress evidenced by the low reading achievement in state

mandated standardized and local assessments. My questions allowed participants to address their perceptions of this issue, in detail.

In Table A11, I coded each question based on the order in which it was asked during the interview. After asking each question to the teachers, I transcribed the audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews and determined themes that emerged from interview responses. I developed a table to represent five major themes that were recommended by the teachers most often as being important components of reading intervention. Table A11 is a description of the themes found in the semi-structured, open-ended teacher interview responses. In the paragraphs following Table A11, I also summarized how the participants' interview responses addressed intervention effectiveness for adolescent students at-risk for reading failure.

Table A11

Semi-Structured Open-Ended Teacher Interview Responses

Themes	Examples	<i>n</i>	%
1. Comprehension & Vocabulary Strategy Instruction	Skill/Strategy Instruction; Selective Highlighting; Note-taking; Vocabulary Frontloading; Constructed Responses, Summarizing; Determining Main Idea; Visualizing; Annotating; Modeling/Think-Alouds using Reading Skills	8	100
2. Scaffolded Instruction	Leveled Texts; Shared Reading Experiences; Building Background Knowledge Fiction & Nonfiction	8	100
3. Engaging Activities/Materials that Improve Motivation & Self-Efficacy	Interactive Reading Activities; Authentic Reading Experiences; High Interest Texts; Goal-Setting; Real-World Texts; Paired Reading	8	100
4. Technology Integration for Differentiation	Selective Highlighting; Note-taking; Shared Reading Experiences	5	62.5
5. Assessment for Placement, Diagnostic, & Progress Monitoring	Screener for Tier/Intervention Placement; Benchmark Assessments to track long-term progress; Diagnostic Assessment for Level of Risk and Placement	5	62.5

Note. The third column (*n*) refers to the number of teachers who addressed the theme in her/his responses. The fourth column (%) is the percentage of teachers represented by the number in the third column.

The most common teacher responses to my questions about which instructional strategies, protocols, and interventions would be most effective for incorporating in a Tier 2 reading intervention for adolescent struggling readers were Comprehension/Vocabulary

Strategy Instruction, Scaffolded Instruction, Engaging Activities/Materials that Improve Motivation and Self-Efficacy, Technology Integration for Differentiation, and Assessment for Progress Monitoring. In regards to delivering a reading intervention within an RTI model, 100% of teachers expressed the necessity of ensuring that reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction are incorporated in Tier 2 reading intervention implementation. When I further inquired about what elements of reading should be taught in a Tier 2 reading intervention program more than half of teachers expressed reading comprehension as being the focus of instruction because students “already know how to read and are typically fluent readers.” Nearly half of the participants expressed comprehension as being inclusive of academic vocabulary instruction, as one teacher even cited it as the number one element of instruction in a Tier 2 reading intervention program. One hundred percent of teachers also expressed the importance of scaffolding instruction of reading comprehension and vocabulary skills and strategies in order to account for reading and vocabulary achievement gaps between students.

When asked about the types of texts and activities that should be incorporated in a Tier 2 reading intervention program, 100% of teachers expressed the necessity of engaging students in reading activities including goal-setting; using developmentally appropriate texts that match students’ reading levels; teaching fiction and nonfiction texts that are high-interest, authentic, and engaging texts that create enjoyable reading experiences; frontloading students with needed background knowledge and target vocabulary found in texts; and coordinating paired reading experiences that promote discussion of texts. When discussing high-interest texts, one teacher stated, “they’re

geared towards students' ages in order to capture their interests and serve a purpose in their lives.”

When asked about instructional strategies or activities necessary in a Tier 2 reading program for adolescents that targets reading comprehension deficits, there were three common responses. Some teachers (62.5%) expressed technology use as an instructional strategy and tool that can be used to enhance students' reading experiences and learning process. Several teachers expressed that selective highlighting should be taught to students, as one teacher expressed students should “learn how to highlight important ideas in the text in order to craft main ideas and paraphrasing.” Equally, teachers believe note-taking is important to teach to students because of its utility in other content area classes. Some teachers cited interactive reading activities where students engage with each other through paired reading and other interactive text-based tasks. Several teachers cited having success with specific reading intervention programs because they incorporated embedded technology-enhanced reading tasks that significantly improved differentiation of instruction and learning (e.g. CommonLit, Actively Learn, ReadWorks, & NewsELA).

Some teachers (62.5%) also believe that the assessments are vital for a Tier 2 reading intervention program. They described the use of assessments as screeners for placement in a tiered intervention class, diagnostic assessment that identifies students' reading weaknesses, and progress monitoring tools that help teachers track student progress and therefore improve the effectiveness of the intervention.

Student Interview Data

Eight, 7th to 8th grade students at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy participated in one-on-one semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B) that required they answer eight questions that supported my efforts to select an effective reading intervention for my ELP on supporting adolescent struggling readers. As I developed the interview questions, I determined how they aligned to the purpose of my study as to ensure student responses would be useful in informing the selection process and other ideas for improving instructional delivery (i.e. instructional strategies, protocols, and intervention). Although these interview questions were determined beforehand, the semi-structured format allowed opportunities to probe participants about their responses for additional information and clarifications as needed.

I expected all student participants to also openly and honestly address each question thoughtfully, incorporating relevant experiences when prompted. I was curious to learn students' perceptions of reading interventions and what components produce desirable outcomes. I also wondered if there was a direct connection or disconnect between intervention components and dissatisfaction or disengagement evidenced by the low reading achievement in state mandated standardized and local assessments. My questions allowed student participants to address this issue, in detail.

In Table A12, I coded each question based on the order in which it was asked during the interview. After asking each question to the students, I transcribed the audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews and determined themes that emerged from interview responses. I developed a table to represent the data in a clear format to support readers.

Table A12 is a description of the themes found in the semi-structured, open-ended student responses. In the paragraphs following Table A12, I also summarized how the participants' interview responses answered addressed intervention effectiveness for adolescent students at-risk for reading failure.

Table A12

Semi-Structured Open-Ended Interview Responses

Themes	Examples	<i>n</i>	%
1. Writing in Response to Reading	Selective Highlighting; Making Inferences Note-taking; Summarizing; Annotating; graphic organizer	7	87.5
2. Scaffolded Instruction and Reinforcement of Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Words	Building background Knowledge; Leveled Texts; Shared Reading Experiences; Re-reading Skill Level Differences; Partner Work; Word Study; Context Clues	8	100
3. Engaging Activities/Materials that Improve Motivation & Self-Efficacy	Nonfiction; Realistic Fiction; Interactive Reading Activities; High Interest Texts; Challenging Texts; Goal-Setting; Real-World Texts; Social Issues; Paired Reading; Technology Integration	8	100
4. Technology Integration for Learning and Self-direction	Incorporate technology; Selective Highlighting; Note-taking; Research topics; Research vocabulary definitions; Building background about the topic	6	75

Note. The third column (*n*) refers to the number of teachers who addressed the theme in her/his responses. The fourth column (%) is the percentage of teachers represented by the number in the third column.

The most common student responses to my questions about what instructional strategies, protocols, and interventions would be most effective for incorporating in a Tier 2 reading intervention for their needs were Writing in Response to Reading, Scaffolded

Instruction and Reinforcement of Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Words, Engaging Activities/Materials that Improve Motivation and Self-Efficacy, and Technology Integration for Learning and Self-Direction. One hundred percent of students needing Tier 2 reading intervention expressed a desire to receive reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction in a variety of ways, but all through a scaffolded approach (e.g. building background knowledge as needed, discussing topics and difficult content in the texts, adjusting pacing as necessary, and sharing reading experiences with the class and partners).

When I further inquired about what elements of reading students perceived as necessary in a Tier 2 reading intervention program designed for them, 100% of students expressed the need to be engaged in texts and materials that help them improve their reading. When prompted to express one thing they believe their teachers should know about how to improve their reading one student stated, “What would help me is more interaction and discussions and technology would make reading more engaging.”

When asked about the types of texts and activities that should be incorporated in a Tier 2 reading intervention program, 75% of students expressed technology as an instructional strategy *and* tool that can be used to enhance their reading experiences (e.g. learning process and ability to track their reading, independently). Several students expressed note-taking and researching topics and important vocabulary words as being important to their reading growth. Several students also expressed the desire for their teachers to engage them in reading through technology-enhanced instruction (e.g. videos, online articles, research activities).

Appendix A

INTERVIEW OF ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON TIER 2 READING INTERVENTIONS

1. Describe your view of the optimal reading lesson for an adolescent with reading problems,
 - a. What do you feel is important in facilitating an engaged learning environment?
2. How many hours and days per week, and for how many weeks, should be dedicated to teaching adolescents with reading difficulties?
3. What should be the teacher: student ratio for a Tier 2 reading lesson?
4. What elements of reading should be taught in a Tier 2 reading intervention program?
5. What types of texts should be included in a Tier 2 reading intervention program?
6. Please provide an instructional strategy or activity that you believe should be incorporated in a Tier 2 reading program for adolescents that targets reading comprehension deficits.
7. What knowledge do you have regarding the following approaches/programs:
 - a. Scholastic Read 180,
 - b. CommonLit,
 - c. Guided Reading,
 - d. Others approaches/programs you find useful
 - e. What do you believe is most effective about these programs?
 - f. What do you believe is least effective about these programs?
8. What types of reading assessments should be included in a Tier 2 reading program and how should they be used to inform instruction?
9. Please share what experiences you have had with *Response to Intervention* (RTI).
 - a. How have Tier 2 students been served within this model at your school?
 - b. How has the RTI framework helped you serve this population of students?

10. What component of a Tier 2 reading intervention developed for adolescent struggling readers is most important? Why?

Appendix B

INTERVIEW OF ADOLESCENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TIER 2 READING INTERVENTIONS

1. On a scale of 1-10, how difficult is it for you to understand the texts you read in your classes? What is the reason for this rating?
2. As a reader, what would you like to improve?
3. Which reading skills are most difficult for you?
4. What would help you to read more?
5. What types of activities help you to improve your reading when your teacher helps you in reading? What activities don't help you as much?
6. What types of books help you to improve your reading when your teacher helps you in reading? What books don't help you as much?
7. What helps you figure out a word you don't understand? A sentence? A paragraph?
8. If you could tell your teachers how to help you improve your reading, what would you say to them?

Appendix G

LAS AMÉRICAS ASPIRA ACADEMY CURRICULUM MAP

Grades 7 & 8
30-Minute Daily RTI Block

Intervention: TeenBizBoost®

Interventionist: _____

Week of: _____

Instructional Model: Before, During, After Reading Framework & 5-Step Literacy Routine

Unit of Study	<p>In 7th & 8th grades, students are studying nonfiction texts for the first time this school year. Every four weeks, for 12 weeks, students will read and apply taught reading strategies to their understanding of relevant, high-interest informational texts all centered on a specific theme that deepens their understanding of related topics. As students move through the 5-Step Literacy Routine, work with Activities, write Thought Question responses, and complete text-dependent Activity questions, they will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become aware of their thinking as they read; 2. Detect obstacles and confusion that derail understanding; 3. Understand how strategies can help them repair meaning when it breaks down; and 4. Select and apply active reading strategies that support and enhance comprehension.
Units	<p>Unit 1: Crime & Social Justice (Overview): Middle and high school mark a time in the lives of adolescents in which they have new choices to make as they grow up. Throughout the course of four weeks, students extend their exploration of the role of personal voice in speaking, listening, and writing in response to reading. They learn foundational reading skills that help them analyze and build meaning from digital texts. Through consistent practice and learning reading strategies, students continue to hone their vocabulary knowledge and reading abilities to improve their reading comprehension of engaging,</p>

	<p>nonfiction texts. Teachers utilize instructional strategies, reading frameworks (e.g., the Before-During-After Reading process & 5-Step Literacy Routine) in order to build background knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, a purpose for reading, engagement, and students' ability to read and comprehend texts.</p> <p>Units 2: Technology and Our Society (Overview): This unit utilizes technology in order to teach students about the world of technology and how it can be a positive contribution to their lives or destructive when used recklessly or with bad intentions. Students will understand that informational texts can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of the skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas. Students will understand that writing in response to reading includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts through nonfiction reading skills.</p> <p>Units 3: Teen Spotlight on Choices & Change (Overview): 7th and 8th grades are defined by having new choices to make as they enter high school. This unit focuses on the theme of choices and their effects on people's lives, and theirs. Throughout the course of four weeks, students extend their exploration of the role of personal voice in thinking, reading, and writing. They question their own knowledge about important topics that affect teens and consider choice they should make when presented with difficult situations. The interventionist will continue to use instructional strategies that best help students understand informational texts through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, writing in response to reading, and the development of the skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.</p>
CCSS	The Common Core State Standards provide clear and consistent learning goals to help prepare students for college, career, and life. The standards for each unit and lesson of study will demonstrate what students are expected to learn at each grade level.
Text	The Common Core language arts and literacy standards for grades 6-12 place more emphasis on reading nonfiction texts . In higher grades, students are expected to develop reading skills across content areas with a strong focus on informational texts.

Enduring Understandings	Enduring understandings are statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom. They synthesize what students should understand—not just know or do—as a result of studying a particular content area.
Key Concepts	Key concepts are the ideas and terms that are central to the main points of the text. These concepts help students understand where to focus their attention in the text.
Skills & Objectives:	As required by the Common Core State Standards, students will learn nonfiction reading skills necessary for college and career readiness and reading proficiency. Objectives define the skills & and strategies students will learn and achieve throughout the duration of the lesson.
Assessments	Assessment is embedded in the TeenBizBoost [®] program as an 8-question <i>Activity</i> for the independent-level article and Stretch article.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Reading Process/ Instructional Framework (BDA):	Before Reading	During & After Reading	After Reading	Before & During Reading	After Reading
5-Step Literacy Routine	I. Pre-reading Activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before Reading Poll 2. Build Background Knowledge 3. Pre-teach Vocabulary 4. Preview Thought Question/ Purpose for Reading II. Article: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer 	II. Article: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paired Reading 2. Discuss Article III. Activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity (CBM), After Reading Poll 	IV. After Reading Poll: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to previous poll question using new understandings and ideas V. Thought Question: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to Thought Question and 'Save for Later' 	VI. Stretch Article (Whole Group): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer 2. Paired reading VI. Stretch Article cont'd: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paired reading 2. Independent reading 	VII. Stretch Activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity (CBM) 2. Revise Thought Question (Use Vocab Words & new understandings for revision)

Monday

1. Before beginning the lesson, students will complete the **Before Reading Poll** in order to introduce and engage them in the topic of the article. Students will be introduced to the *Sentence and Paragraph Frames* that help frame their responses before, during, and after reading. Before we begin to model a strategy, we capture our kids' enthusiasm and activate their prior knowledge.
2. Then, the interventionist will review the lesson's subject matter to build students' **background knowledge** by offering some basic information about the topic in a class discussion, video, or picture activity. Additionally, the interventionist will review and explain the *Thought Question* to students so they have a clear understanding of their **purpose for reading** and project vocabulary for students to see as the interventionist pre-teaches them.
3. Pronounce each term and review the definitions with students. The interventionist will establish a **vocabulary routine** by prompting students to pronounce the word, rate the word on their fingers, and establish meaning through class discussion.
4. The interventionist will then **model** the digital highlighting, note-taking, or graphic organizer students will use to track their thinking and better understand the text. Students will be able to refer back to their notes for the Activity and Thought Question.

Tuesday

1. Students will track their thinking and have opportunities to share their thoughts, ideas, and understanding of the text with other students and the teacher by tracking their thoughts as they **pair read** for each important chunk of text where they are building meaning with their partners of similar Lexiles using the *Tip Card* as guidance for annotation/note-taking. As students continue through the 5-Step Literacy Routine at their individual Lexile levels, they will use the Reading Connection called *Setting the Purpose, Summarize, and Generate Questions* in order to record information that will help them to respond to the Thought Question. As student complete the graphic organizer in pairs, the interventionist will facilitate discussion around each chunk of reading.

Wednesday

1. Students will then complete the **After Reading Poll** using new understandings and evidence from the text. The interventionist will ask students if they agree or disagree with the Poll statement and encourage them to provide specific evidence from the texts, their own background knowledge, and ideas from whole group and pair discussions to support their opinions. They will explain whether or not their opinions changed over the course of the lesson, and if so, why. Students will continue to use the *Sentence and Paragraph Frames* for language support.

2. After students write their **Thought Question** drafts, they will click on *Finish Later* so they can modify their Thought Question responses at a later time (after the *Stretch Activity*)
3. As students complete the *Activity Questions*, *After Reading Poll*, and the *Thought Question*, the interventionist will review, score, and send feedback to students about submitted work.

Thursday

1. The interventionist will support students in reading the **Stretch Article** which is the grade-appropriate version of the lesson that was written with greater text complexity and increased academic vocabulary.

Friday

1. The interventionist will encourage students to use their notes to complete the **Stretch Activity**. Then, correct answers will be reviewed with students. Sentence and paragraph frames will be made available to students for language support. The interventionist will work with students to find new evidence from the Stretch Article to add to their **Thought Question** responses. Students will finish all tasks independently.

Appendix H

RTI 7TH AND 8TH GRADE TIER 2 READING INSTRUCTIONAL MAP: TEENBIZBOOST®

Reading Process/ Instructional Framework (BDA):	Before Reading	During & After Reading	After Reading	Before & During Reading	After Reading
5-Step Literacy Routine	I. Pre-reading Activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before Reading Poll 2. Build Background Knowledge 3. Pre-teach Vocabulary 4. Preview Thought Question/Purpose for Reading II. Article: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer 	II. Article: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paired Reading 2. Discuss Article III. Activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity (CBM), After Reading Poll 	IV. After Reading Poll: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to previous poll question using new understandings and ideas V. Thought Question: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to Thought Question and 'Save for Later' 	VI. Stretch Article (Whole Group): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model Annotation Task/selective highlighting strategy/graphic organizer 2. Paired reading VI. Stretch Article cont'd: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paired reading 2. Discuss Article 	VII. Stretch Activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity (CBM) 2. Revise Thought Question (Use Vocab Words & new understandings for revision)

Monday

1. Before beginning the lesson, students will complete the **Before Reading Poll** in order to introduce and engage them in the topic of the article. Students will be introduced to the *Sentence and Paragraph Frames* that help frame their responses before, during, and after reading. Before we begin to model a strategy, we capture our kids' enthusiasm and activate their prior knowledge.
2. Then, the interventionist will review the lesson's subject matter to build students' **background knowledge** by offering some basic information about the topic in a class discussion, video, or picture activity. Additionally, the interventionist will review and explain the *Thought Question* to students so they have a clear understanding of their **purpose for reading** and project vocabulary for students to see as the interventionist pre-teaches them.
3. Pronounce each term and review the definitions with students. The interventionist will establish a **vocabulary routine** by prompting students to pronounce the word, rate the word on their fingers, and establish meaning through class discussion.
4. The interventionist will then **model** the digital highlighting, note-taking, or graphic organizer students will use to track their thinking and better understand the text. Students will be able to refer back to their notes for the Activity and Thought Question.

Tuesday

0. Students will track their thinking and have opportunities to share their thoughts, ideas, and understanding of the text with other students and the teacher by tracking their thoughts as they **pair read** for each important chunk of text where they are building meaning with their partners of similar Lexiles using the *Tip Card* as guidance for annotation/note-taking. As students continue through the 5-Step Literacy Routine at their individual Lexile levels, they will use the Reading Connection called *Setting the Purpose, Summarize, and Generate Questions* in order to record information that will help them to respond to the Thought Question. As student complete the graphic organizer in pairs, the interventionist will facilitate discussion around each chunk of reading.

Wednesday

1. Students will then complete the **After-Reading Poll** using new understandings and evidence from the text. The interventionist will ask students if they agree or disagree with the Poll statement and encourage them to provide specific evidence from the texts, their own background knowledge, and ideas from whole group and pair discussions to support their opinions. They will explain whether or not their opinions changed over the course of the lesson, and if so, why. Students will continue to use the *Sentence and Paragraph Frames* for language support.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> After students write their Thought Question drafts, they will click on <i>Finish Later</i> so they can modify their Thought Question responses at a later time (after the <i>Stretch Activity</i>) As students complete the <i>Activity Questions</i>, <i>After Reading Poll</i>, and the <i>Thought Question</i>, the interventionist will review, score, and send feedback to students about submitted work. 				
Thursday				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The interventionist will support students in reading the Stretch Article which is the grade-appropriate version of the lesson that was written with greater text complexity and increased academic vocabulary. 				
Friday				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The interventionist will encourage students to use their notes to complete the Stretch Activity. Then, correct answers will be reviewed with students. Sentence and paragraph frames will be made available to students for language support. The interventionist will work with students to find new evidence from the Stretch Article to add to their Thought Question responses. Students will finish all tasks independently. 				
<p>Unit 1: Crime & Social Justice (Overview): Middle and High School mark a time in the lives of adolescents in which they have new choices to make as they grow up. Throughout the course of four weeks, students extend their exploration of the role of personal voice in speaking, listening, and writing in response to reading. They learn foundational reading skills that help them analyze and build meaning from digital texts. Through consistent practice and learning reading strategies, students continue to hone their vocabulary knowledge and reading abilities to improve their reading comprehension of engaging, nonfiction texts. Teachers utilize instructional strategies, reading frameworks (e.g. the Before-During-After Reading & Gradual Release Models) in order to build background knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, a purpose for reading, engagement, and older, struggling readers' ability to read and comprehend texts.</p>				
Unit & CCSS	Enduring Understandings	Key Concepts	Skills & Objectives	Assessments

<p>Unit 1: Week 1 Social Justice & Revolution One Week</p> <p>1. The Many Faces of New York’s Police</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>There are 35,000 police officers in the New York Police Department (NYPD)--the largest police force in the country. The NYPD has more police officers born in countries outside of the United States than any other police department in the country. This year, out of 1,103 men and women who graduated from the police academy, 264 were born in 48 different foreign countries. There are more than 400 NYPD employees who speak about 36 different languages. The NYPD says that it is important to have police who speak more than one language so that they can build trust in the immigrant communities that they serve. The NYPD has about 40 officers whose job it is to recruit new police officers from communities where immigrants live. The NYPD places ads in community newspapers to encourage people to join the police force.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>aggressive civilian diverse recruiting drive</td><td>aggressive diverse somber</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	aggressive civilian diverse recruiting drive	aggressive diverse somber	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MAP Testing (Baseline)• TeenBizBoost® Activity #1: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #1: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
aggressive civilian diverse recruiting drive	aggressive diverse somber							

	<p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Letter to Families MAP Goal-setting (Day 1) TeenBizBoost® Goal Setting/Career Center Student Usernames & Passwords Google Chromebook Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan 	
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	<p>connections between events and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas• Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims• track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them• Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning			
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<p>Unit 1: Week 3 Social Justice & Revolution One Week</p> <p>3. Is Collecting DNA Okay?</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>A DNA database is a collection of DNA samples. DNA is found in cells and provides a genetic blueprint that is unique to each person. A DNA sample can be compared against other DNA--such as obtained from hair, skin, or bodily fluids--found at a crime scene.</p> <p>State and federal authorities typically require an arrest before a sample is entered into their databases. Since local police databases do not have these regulations, dozens of U.S. police departments have been putting together their own DNA databases to track criminal activity. Some departments allow samples to be taken from people who have never been arrested for a crime. Local police officials say having their own databases helps them solve crimes faster. State and federal databases are often backlogged, leading to delays in DNA processing. Some critics object, saying that local samples can be taken from people who are not suspected of serious</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>eliminate juvenile privacy reprimand</td><td>coerce jurisdiction reprimand surveillance</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts• Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	eliminate juvenile privacy reprimand	coerce jurisdiction reprimand surveillance	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #3: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #3: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
eliminate juvenile privacy reprimand	coerce jurisdiction reprimand surveillance							

<p>the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p>	<p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make 	<p>crimes. Others say collecting DNA samples is a violation of privacy.</p>	<p>comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions Summarize the main ideas and important events in texts Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> connections between events and ideas can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 			
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<p>Unit 1: Week 4 Social Justice & Revolution One Week</p> <p>4. Logging on to Stop Crime</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Police officers in New York City have been trying to stop gangs for years. Now, they are using a new tactic. Some gangs use Facebook pages to post pictures, make threats, and write about their crimes. Many of these posts are public, so they can be viewed by anyone--including the police. But some gangs make their posts private, meaning that only Facebook "friends" can see them.</p> <p>Now, the police have a way to gain access to private posts: They use fake names on Facebook and "friend" the gang. Then they can read the gang's private posts.</p> <p>The police believe that this approach will help them solve more crimes.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>access infiltrate profile tactic</td><td>abound incriminating infiltrate informant virtual</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	access infiltrate profile tactic	abound incriminating infiltrate informant virtual	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #4: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #4: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
access infiltrate profile tactic	abound incriminating infiltrate informant virtual							

<p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p>	<p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can compare & contrast relationships 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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	<p>in order to make connections between events and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 			
<p>Units 2: Technology and Our Society (Overview): This unit utilizes technology in order to teach students about the world of technology and how it can be a positive contribution to their lives or destructive when used recklessly or with bad intentions. Students will understand that informational texts can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of the skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas. Students will understand that writing in response to reading includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts through nonfiction reading skills.</p>				

<p>Unit 2: Week 5</p> <p>Technology and Our Society One Week</p> <p>5. Smile! You're on Camera</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author's claims <p>Good Readers:</p>	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Video surveillance cameras are becoming more common—in stores, airports, and other public places. The cameras use new technology to record people's movements and keep track of suspicious activity in order to detect possible security risks. If security guards watching the videos see something suspicious, they can investigate the situation. Some people say that people are sacrificing their privacy in the interest of safety. Privacy advocates say this is not a fair trade. However, most people approve of the use of security cameras in high-traffic areas since the equipment is there to keep people safe. This public endorsement means that officials are likely to purchase and install additional cameras.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>hijack invest surveillance</td><td>advocate breach surveillance susceptible vulnerable</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	hijack invest surveillance	advocate breach surveillance susceptible vulnerable	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #5: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #5: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
hijack invest surveillance	advocate breach surveillance susceptible vulnerable							

<p>categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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<p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them• Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning			
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<p>Unit 2: Week 6 Technology and Our Society One Week</p> <p>6. World of Robots</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims <p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinkingAccess existing knowledge and apply background	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>A new exhibit called "Robots" opened at the Science Museum in London, England, in February 2017. The exhibit charts the evolution of automatons with 100 robots from five different centuries. The robots include a 15th-century Spanish clockwork monk that can move its arms. There's also a silver swan from the 18th century that is made up of more than 2,000 moving parts. And there's a robotic hand that moves almost like a real hand.</p> <p>Many of the robots on display aim to show how the technology can benefit human life. Museum curator Ben Russell thinks the exhibit will force people to think about how androids can enhance their lives. The exhibit closed in September 2017.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Accessing Prior KnowledgeCause & EffectCompare & ContrastNote-takingProblem & SolutionMain Ideas & DetailsSummarizationSequencing/Chronological OrderAnalyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>automation curator mimic sophisticated</td><td>automation curator repetitive replicate</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">4-Corner VocabularyWord WebWord Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinkingAccess existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of textsMonitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	automation curator mimic sophisticated	automation curator repetitive replicate	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">TeenBizBoost® Activity #6: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)Thought Question #6: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
automation curator mimic sophisticated	automation curator repetitive replicate							

<p>and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p>	<p>knowledge to make sense of texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away • are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions • constantly draw inferences during and after reading • identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 		<p>comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Chromebook • Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) • Answer Keys • Curriculum Key • Graphic Organizer • Lesson Plan • Struggling Readers Supports • Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan • Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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<p>Unit 2: Week 7 Technology and Our Society One Week</p> <p>7. A Call for Safety</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims <p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>The NTSB makes recommendations about driver safety. The group has a new recommendation for states: States should ban all cell phone use while driving. This includes hands-free cell phones. The NTSB said the new bans will be helpful by making the roads safer. The group said that talking on phones can distract drivers. This is true even with hands-free phones. Drivers who are distracted might cause accidents. Some people like the recommendation, while others aren't sure. Some argue that it isn't clear if cell phone use causes more accidents. They say there aren't enough facts, and that more studies are needed.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>collide oblivious pedestrian</td><td>maximize undeterred</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts• Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	collide oblivious pedestrian	maximize undeterred	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #7: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #7: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
collide oblivious pedestrian	maximize undeterred							

<p>on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away • are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions • constantly draw inferences during and after reading • identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claimstrack events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 		<p>repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Chromebook • Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) • Answer Keys • Curriculum Key • Graphic Organizer • Lesson Plan • Struggling Readers Supports • Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan • Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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<p>Unit 2: Week 8</p> <p>Technology and Our Society</p> <p>One Week</p> <p>8. Is This Reality TV?</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims <p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Nearly a decade after the NAACP reported the lack of diversity found in television, the group reports that networks have stalled in their efforts to further ethnic diversity both on-screen and off. The NAACP found that the presence of minorities, including actors and writers, in prime-time shows has diminished in recent years, but that there has been some improvement. There have been more minorities in lead roles of shows and reality TV shows are including minorities. The NAACP is again calling on the networks to diversify the ranks of actors, writers, directors, and executives at networks. Broadcasters have agreed to create minority recruitment and training programs and to hire more minorities.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Inferring• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>dearth diversity merge reality systematically</td><td>dearth diverse virtual</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	dearth diversity merge reality systematically	dearth diverse virtual	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #8: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #8: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
dearth diversity merge reality systematically	dearth diverse virtual							

<p>categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key</p>	<p>knowledge to make sense of texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away • are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions • constantly draw inferences during and after reading • identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts • Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away • Identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas. • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Chromebook • Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) • Answer Keys • Curriculum Key • Graphic Organizer • Lesson Plan • Struggling Readers Supports • Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan • Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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concept.				
CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.				
Units 3: Teen Spotlight on Choices & Change (Overview): 7th and 8th grades are defined by having new choices to make as they enter high school. This unit focuses on the theme of choices and their effects on people's lives, and theirs. Throughout the course of four weeks, students extend their exploration of the role of personal voice in thinking, reading, and writing. They question their own knowledge about important topics that affect teens and consider choice they should make when presented with difficult situations. The interventionist will continue to use instructional strategies that best help students understand informational texts through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, writing in response to reading, and the development of the skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.				

<p>Unit 3: Week 9 Teen Spotlight on Choice & Change One Week</p> <p>9. New Heart, New Life</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Courtney Montgomery is 16 years old. Courtney has had a heart condition since she was 8. Her heart has trouble pumping blood. This condition has changed Courtney's life. She has been home-schooled and she can't do many of the things she loves. Courtney had many heart surgeries, but her condition did not improve. Doctors said she needed to have a heart transplant. At first, Courtney did not want a transplant. Health workers wanted to change her mind. They made a plan for her to meet Josh Winstead, 17, who had the same heart condition as Courtney. Josh had a heart transplant and was doing well with his new heart. The workers hoped that meeting Josh might convince Courtney to get the transplant. Josh and Courtney became friends. They even went to the prom together. Josh helped Courtney change her mind about the transplant. In 2011, Courtney had the surgery. She has a new heart and is doing well.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>depressed emotional recovery surgery transplant</td><td>psychological rational recuperate</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	depressed emotional recovery surgery transplant	psychological rational recuperate	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #9: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #9: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
depressed emotional recovery surgery transplant	psychological rational recuperate							

<p>technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>through discussion and writing in response to the author's claims</p> <p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas. Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 			
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<p>Unit 3: Week 10 Teen Spotlight on Choice & Change One Week</p> <p>10. Can Money Buy Happiness?</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Jack Whittaker won \$314.9 million in the 2002 Powerball lottery. It was the largest single jackpot ever. He was already a millionaire before that. Jack was happy to win, but he has had many misfortunes occur since he won. His teen granddaughter died, he separated from his wife, and his daughter has been fighting cancer. He says that every friend wanted money from him, which ruined the friendships. His car and home have been repeatedly burglarized. Many news stories written about his misfortunes have been embarrassing and mean-spirited. Jack says he tries to use some of his lottery earnings to help others. Part of the lottery money helped build two churches and his family donates food, clothing, and college scholarships. Jack hopes that he isn't remembered for all of the troubles he's had. Instead, he hopes he is remembered as someone</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>aggravation divorce embezzle lottery reality</td><td>barrage celebrity embezzle legacy variable</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	aggravation divorce embezzle lottery reality	barrage celebrity embezzle legacy variable	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #10: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #10: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
aggravation divorce embezzle lottery reality	barrage celebrity embezzle legacy variable							

<p>figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>through discussion and writing in response to the author's claims</p> <p>Good Readers (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections 	<p>who helped a lot of people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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	<p>between events and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 			
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<p>Unit 3: Week 11 Teen Spotlight on Choice & Change One Week</p> <p>11. The Dangers of Pain Meds</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Opioids are a group of drugs that are often prescribed by doctors to reduce pain. They are also highly addictive. Teenagers can become addicted to opioids when they misuse drugs that have been prescribed for them. Opioid abuse can cause health problems, and overdoses can be fatal. Opioid abuse among students is driving new drug education efforts, as school districts across the U.S. develop new drug education programs to address the problem. Officials say that prevention programs should teach both kids and parents about how drugs affect the brain and the body.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>prescribe psychological</td><td>internalize psychological rigorously</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	prescribe psychological	internalize psychological rigorously	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #11: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #11: Text-dependent constructed response question
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
prescribe psychological	internalize psychological rigorously							

<p>text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in</p>	<p>Good Readers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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<p>developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>between events and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas • Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims • track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them • Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning 			
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<p>Unit 3: Week 12 Teen Spotlight on Choices & Change One Week</p> <p>12. Teens Say Stay in School</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings;</p>	<p>Informational Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be understood through the acquisition of a vast vocabulary, use of comprehension strategies when reading, and the development of skills needed for using textual evidence to make connections among old and new ideas.• Require writing in response to reading which includes the ability to share information, support an argument using evidence from the text, and the ability to engage in evidence-based analysis of texts.• Provide quality opportunities for the acquisition of effective communication skills; this permits individuals to speak knowledgeably with and develop informed responses to others through discussion and writing in response to the author’s claims	<p>Key Concepts:</p> <p>Three Latino teen girls in Oregon made a public service announcement on the radio to tell Latino youth to stay in school. The teens say that by making the PSA, they have learned that they can help shape their own futures if they stay in school. The hip-hop radio station, where the girls recorded the PSA, believes it’s important to play it because the message should be heard by Oregon’s large Latino student population.</p>	<p>Reading Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing Prior Knowledge• Cause & Effect• Compare & Contrast• Note-taking• Problem & Solution• Main Ideas & Details• Summarization• Sequencing/Chronological Order• Analyze Evidence & Evaluate <p>Academic Vocabulary:</p> <table><tr><th>Lower Lexile</th><th>Higher Lexile</th></tr><tr><td>diploma equivalent morality overwhelm reality</td><td>devastating equivalent resonate</td></tr></table> <p>Vocabulary Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-Corner Vocabulary• Word Web• Word Sort <p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking• Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts	Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile	diploma equivalent morality overwhelm reality	devastating equivalent resonate	<p><i>Methods for students to demonstrate their levels of proficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TeenBizBoost® Activity #12: 8-question, text-dependent assessment of weekly article (text comprehension and vocabulary understanding)• Thought Question #12: Text-dependent constructed response question• MAP Testing
Lower Lexile	Higher Lexile							
diploma equivalent morality overwhelm reality	devastating equivalent resonate							

<p>analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p> <p>CCSS.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>Good Readers (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the text and take notes on it to track their thinking Access existing knowledge and apply background knowledge to make sense of texts Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away are able to determine what's important in the texts they read in order to summarize what it is mainly about (main ideas) and draw conclusions constantly draw inferences during and after reading identify cause-effect relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas can identify problem-solution relationships in order 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor their comprehension throughout the reading process and repair their comprehension by clarifying once they realize it has gone away Identify problem-solution relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas. Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Chromebook Skills Progression Instruction w/graphic organizer(s) Answer Keys Curriculum Key Graphic Organizer Lesson Plan Struggling Readers Supports Instructional Supports for Boost Users Lesson Plan Sentence & Paragraph Frames 	
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	<p>to make connections between events and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• can compare & contrast relationships in order to make connections between events and ideas• Evaluate the text based on how well the author supports his/her claims• track events in sequential/chronological order to better understand events and details about them• Use context clues, morphemic analysis, and resources to build and reinforce vocabulary learning			
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Appendix I

RTI INTERVENTION FIDELITY OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Teacher Name: _____

Date: _____

Content Area: _____

Tier of Intervention: _____

Observer: _____

Overall Rating: _____

Directions: Complete the Observable domain (Instructional Factors), regularly, in order to track the degree to which the reading intervention is being implemented as designed and planned, over time. Complete the Non-Observable Domain (Organizational and Assessment Factors) when evaluating the fidelity of the RTI framework.

Observable Domain:

I. Instructional Factors	INDICATOR IS NOT PRESENT +0	INDICATOR IS KNOWN AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING HAS BEGUN +1	INDICATOR IS PRESENT IN SOME DAILY PRACTICE +2	INDICATOR IS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO DAILY PRACTICE +3
Before Reading: The interventionist peaks curiosity, interest, and understanding of needed prior information by building background knowledge (e.g. using an anticipation guide, viewing/discussing a video, etc.).				
Before Reading: The interventionist pre-teaches academic vocabulary important for understanding the text and topic.				

Before Reading: The interventionist shows evidence (i.e. lesson plans, use of instructional strategies, protocols, and/or routines) of utilizing professional development to effectively address components and instructional requirements of an adopted commercial reading program.				
Before Reading: The interventionist is prepared for intervention . The interventionist has all materials ready to teach the lesson for the day.				
Before Reading: Interventionist delivers instruction targeted to specific area(s) of deficit for the student or group of students and follows the instructional framework (i.e. BDA, Gradual Release Model, etc.) with fidelity.				
Before Reading: Interventionist provides research-based, direct, and explicit reading strategy instruction and a mixture of instructional strategies.				
During Reading: The interventionist motivates/engages students. Students are motivated/engaged and responsive to teacher directed instruction. Students are attentive, responsive, and can state the learning activity and goal. Students perform all tasks assigned by the teacher.				
During Reading: The interventionist addresses two components (vocabulary and comprehension) in an explicit, systematic, intensive manner with sufficient duration.				
During Reading: The interventionist provides verbal and nonverbal praise and encouragement to all students. Successes are celebrated as students increase mastery of reading skills and/or benchmarks.				
During Reading: The interventionist gives corrective feedback , immediately; feedback is given to students immediately and the interventionist has productive conversations with students in order to track their				

comprehension progress and make adjustments to learning goals by reteaching or affirming.				
During Reading: The interventionist divides reading into manageable sections in order to guide students in constructing meaning from each section (especially that most essential to the lesson).				
During Reading: The interventionist incorporates technology-enhanced/computer-assisted instruction to improve reading intervention implementation.				
During Reading: The interventionist teaches students to take notes as they read, using graphic organizers or note-taking guides.				
During Reading: The interventionist uses texts in students' zones of proximal development and helps students access them when necessary by rereading difficult sections at least twice (e.g. once w/oral cloze, once silently with a question to answer). The interventionist also provides relevant, authentic, high-interest texts to improve text accessibility and engagement.				
After Reading: The intervention begins and ends on time. Instruction should begin as soon as students enter the classroom and continue for entire intervention block (30-50 minutes, 3-5 days per week).				
After Reading: The interventionist offers students relevant, authentic tasks and experiences.				
After Reading: The interventionist provides appropriate post-reading written activities that require a synthesis of information & application of target lesson vocabulary .				
Total Points in each indicator:				
Overall Score:				
Observations & Comments:				

Non-Observable Domains:

II. Organizational Factors	INDICATOR IS NOT PRESENT +0	INDICATOR IS KNOWN AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING HAS BEGUN +1	INDICATOR IS PRESENT IN SOME DAILY PRACTICE +2	INDICATOR IS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO DAILY PRACTICE +3
Response to Intervention Model: RTI Coordinator(s) provide administrative leadership needed to build an RTI Structure that maintains a conducive learning environment for remedial reading instruction.				
District and school leadership provide strong support for systemic change through a collaborative model that solicits input from and facilitates discussions among all stakeholders in a way that builds consensus and promotes improvement.				
District stakeholders (e.g., teacher, paraprofessional and parent organizations) are included in plan development , implementation and fidelity monitoring.				
Teams (e.g., district, school, grade or student level) analyze data in structured, collaborative discussions designed to inform instructional decisions (e.g. RTI meeting).				
Curriculum, instruction, and assessments are aligned with Common Core State Standards .				
Use a reading intervention that incorporates instructional strategies, protocols, and routines that any interventionist can learn and use with fidelity.				
Limited Group Size. Class sizes range between 10-12 students (or less) to increase intensity of instruction, provide more opportunities for students to receive instructional feedback and maximize opportunities for differentiation.				

For Tier 2 reading interventions, classes are 30-50 minutes per day and last for at least 6 weeks.				
Total Points in each indicator:				
Overall Score:				
Observations & Comments:				

<h3>III. Assessment Factors</h3>	INDICATOR IS NOT PRESENT +0	INDICATOR IS KNOWN AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING HAS BEGUN +1	INDICATOR IS PRESENT IN SOME DAILY PRACTICE +2	INDICATOR IS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO DAILY PRACTICE +3
Universal statewide achievement tests, diagnostic assessments, and benchmark assessments are utilized as a part of a screening system (i.e. STAR, SRI, NWEA MAP, iReady, AIMSWeb, etc.) and are used by the district to assess the strengths and challenges of all students in reading achievement. Results are used effectively to make ongoing data-based decisions for students needing reading intervention.				
Assessments during the lesson are aligned with Common Core State Standards .				
Data from continuous progress monitoring drives instructional decisions throughout the three-tier process.				
A data collection and management system is in place for the purposes of screening, diagnostics and progress monitoring for academics and behavior.				
Develop (or use) a system for organizing the data (e.g. Performance Plus, iTracker, eSchool, etc.).				
Use multiple sources of data to evaluate how strategies and/or programs are being implemented.				
The interventionist presents evidence that informal progress monitoring is occurring, every 10 days for Tier 2 intervention. The interventionist provides progress monitoring data in graphical form to instructional leaders and problem solving teams, as requested.				

A method for assessing the effectiveness and implementation integrity of the core curriculum areas is established and implemented on a routine basis.				
Total Points in each indicator:				
Overall Score:				
Observations & Comments:				

Rating Key

Indicator is not present: The element does not exist at all.	Indicator is present in some daily practice: The element is being implemented to some degree but not consistently or for all students.
Indicator is known and implementation planning has begun: The interventionist is aware of the element and some level of planning has begun to facilitate initial implementation.	Indicator is fully integrated into daily practice: The element is implemented consistently and for all students.

Overall fidelity scores are interpreted as follows:

<u>Level of Fidelity</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Overall Percentage Scores</u>
Strong fidelity	73 points or higher (overall)	70 percent or higher total points
Moderate fidelity	52 points to 72 points (overall)	50–69 percent total points
Weak fidelity	1 point to 51 points (overall)	1–49 percent total points
No fidelity	0 points (overall)	0 percent total points

Appendix J
RTI PRESENTATION



Response to Intervention:

Interventions for Adolescents At-Risk for Reading Failure at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Teresa Rush
Ed.D. Candidate
University of Delaware

Agenda

- 1. Purpose of Intervention**
- 2. Response to Intervention Overview**
- 3. Student Perceptions of Reading Ability (Pre-Intervention)**
- 4. Selection of Intervention**
- 5. Intervention Implementation**
- 6. Results of Intervention Implementation**
- 7. Student Perceptions of Reading Ability (Post-Intervention)**
- 8. Recommendations**

1. Purpose of Intervention

The **purpose of this intervention** was to:

investigate the best instructional strategies and interventions needed to address the reading needs of adolescent students at-risk for reading failure

and

implement an intensive reading intervention to address adolescent students' reading needs in a 12-week, Tier 2 intervention.

2. Response to Intervention: Tiers 1-3

Tier 3: Intensive, Individualized Intervention

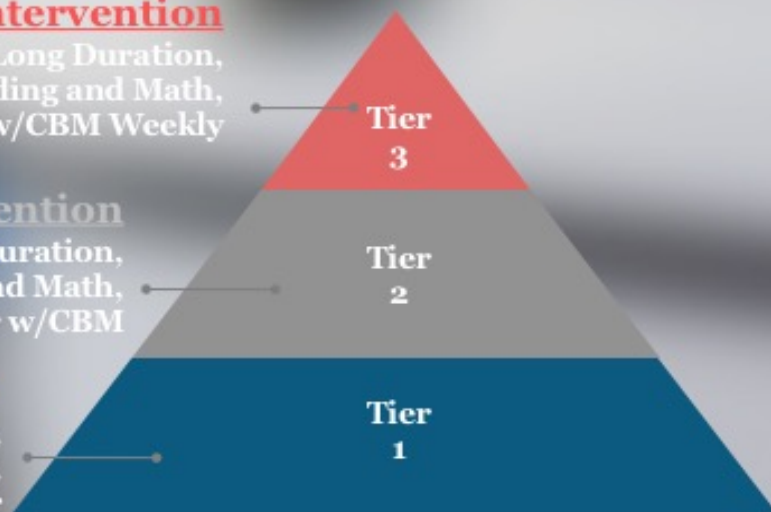
1-5%, High Intensity, Long Duration,
Individualized Instruction, Reading and Math,
Weekly Progress Monitor w/CBM Weekly

Tier 2: Targeted, Small Group Intervention

10-15%, Long Duration,
Small Group Instruction, Reading and Math,
Bi-Weekly Progress Monitor w/CBM

Tier 1: Core Instruction

80-90%, Proactive, All Content Areas,
Proactive, Schoolwide Screener,
Benchmark Assessment 3X per year



**Status of Tiers 1-3
Reading Programs at
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy:
2017 - 2018**



Tier 1

**McGraw-Hill:
Networks
W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading
Program**



Tier 2

?????????



Tier 3

**Wilson Reading System
Saddleback Reading
program**

3. Student Perceptions of Reading Ability

1. Writing in Response to Reading

Selective Highlighting; Making Inferences
Note-Taking; Summarizing; Annotating;
Graphic Organizer

2. Scaffolded Instruction and Reinforcement of Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Words

Building Background Knowledge; Leveled Texts; Shared Reading Experiences; Re-Reading Skill Level Differences; Partner Work; Word Study; Context Clues

3. Engaging Activities/Materials that Improve Motivation & Self-Efficacy

Nonfiction; Realistic Fiction; Interactive Reading Activities; High Interest Texts; Challenging Texts; Goal-Setting; Real-World Texts; Social Issues; Paired Reading; Technology Integration

4. Technology Integration for Learning and Self-direction

Incorporate Technology; Selective Highlighting; Note-Taking; Research Topics; Research Vocabulary Definitions; Building Background About the Topic

4. Selection of Intervention: TeenBizBoost®

LAAA Students' Needs

1. Note-taking instruction to track reading and retain information
2. Reading comprehension skills and vocabulary strategies that improve reading of increasingly complex texts
3. Engaging activities that improve motivation, incorporate technology, and improve learning



Intervention Component that Addresses Need

1. Lesson Plans w/ instruction in note-taking skills, selective highlighting, and note-taking graphic organizers
2. 5-Step Literacy Routine that incorporates building background knowledge, opportunities for reading skill application, & differentiated leveled texts w/vocabulary
3. Digital, high interest, nonfiction texts; paired reading exercises; opportunity for students to challenge themselves by completing stretch article & activity; progress monitoring tools for self-monitoring & goal-setting

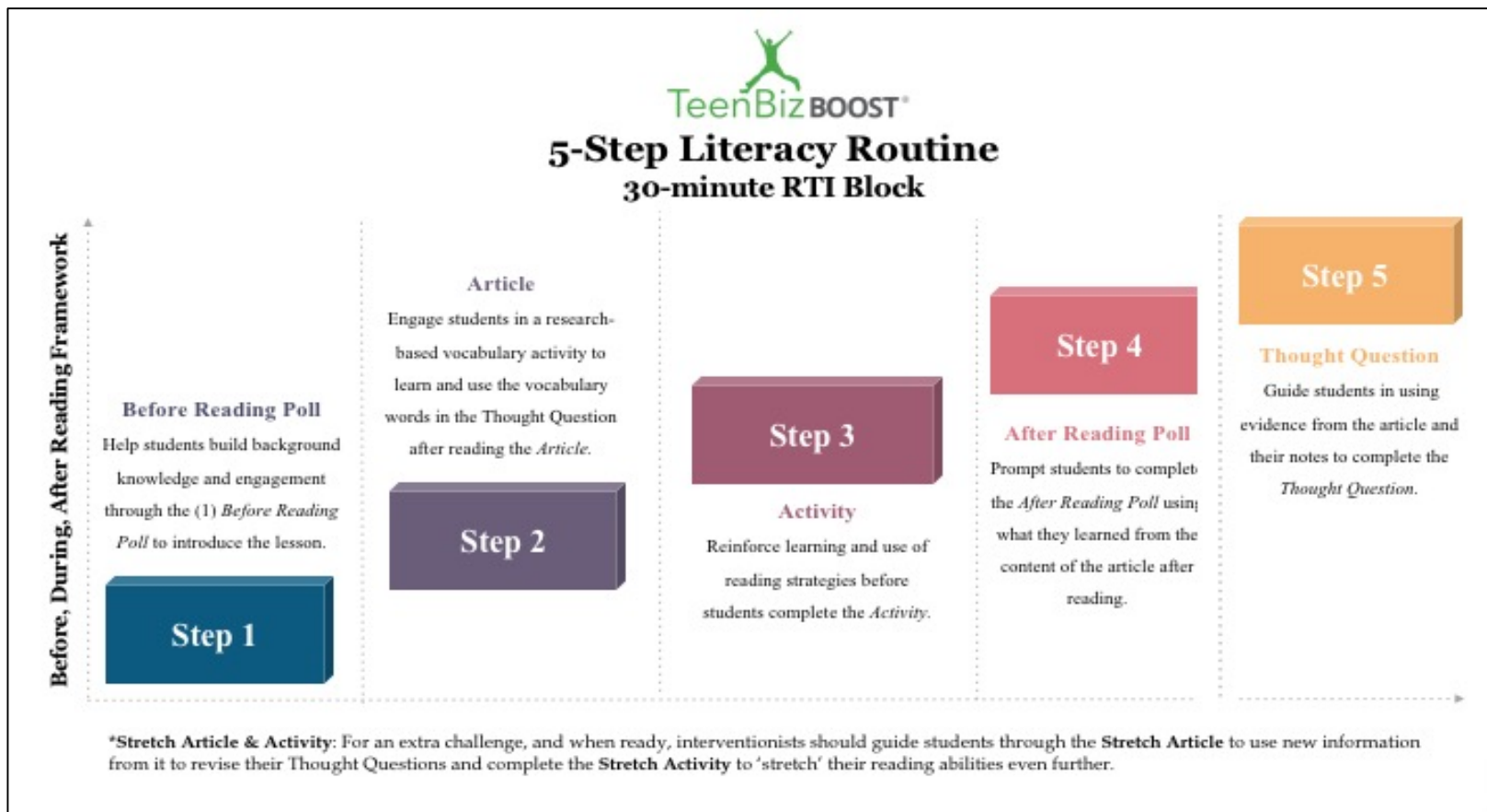
5. Intervention Implementation

What is TeenBizBoost®?

A reading intervention program that:








- accelerates the reading gains of students who need additional supports and services;
- provides scaffolds for learning nonfiction content and academic vocabulary within an RTI framework; and
- combines grade-level, standards-aligned instruction with engaging Tier 2, targeted, intensive intervention for specialized learning.

The screenshot displays the TeenBizBoost® interface. At the top, there's a green header with navigation icons and the text "Teens Say: Stay in School! ❤️". Below this is a sub-header "News: Spotlight on Teens". A horizontal menu with numbered tabs (1-6) includes "Before Reading Poll", "Article", "Activity", "After Reading Poll", "Thought Questions", "Poll Results", "Quiz", "Stretch Article", and "Stretch Activity". The main content area features an article titled "FOREST GROVE, Oregon. At Jammin' 96.5, a Portland, Oregon hip-hop radio station, three Latino teen girls are recording a one-minute public service announcement for Latino students. The sound of the girls' recorded voices booms from the studio's speakers. Ximena Manriquez, 14, Stephanie Gamico, 14, and Griselda Diego, 13, giggle as they listen. 'Think about it, Ximena,' Stephanie recites. 'Without [finishing school] you can pretty much forget about having the happy life you always wanted.' She continues, 'We have to stay in school and represent.'" To the right of the article is a photo of three girls. Below the photo is a caption: "Photo credit and all related images: AP Photo. Three teenage girls in Oregon say: The school bus goes to a successful future—stay on it!". At the bottom of the article, there's a paragraph: "The giggles die down. The girls are there with a serious message to deliver: Latino youth should stay in school." and another paragraph: "The three girls wrote the English-language public service announcement. They wrote a story in which the girls persuade a friend to stay in school. The girls' middle school principal, Parle Rodriguez, helped them along. Rodriguez hopes that the project will make people aware of something troubling. In the state of Oregon, 50 percent of Latinos drop out of high school." On the right side, there's a "Supporting Resources" section with links to "Prep for DeSSA", "Best Practices Videos", "Teacher Recommendations", and "Teacher Materials".





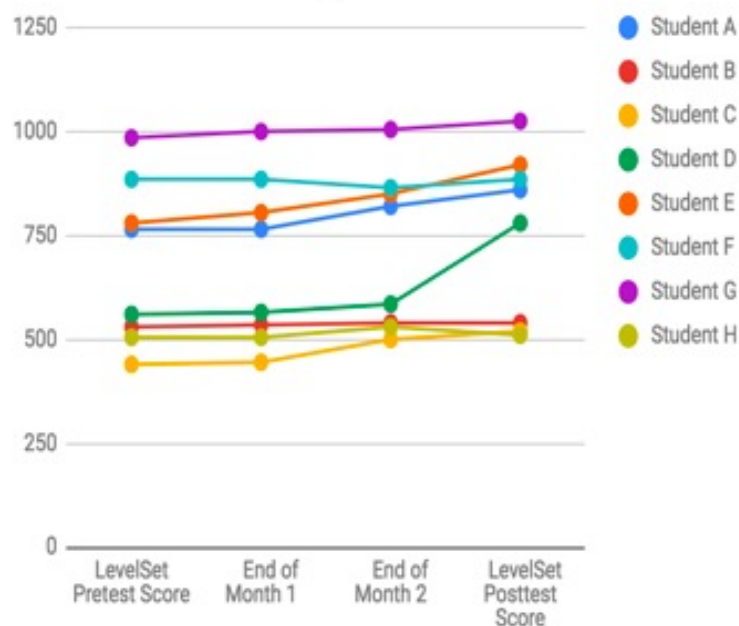
5-Step Literacy Routine: Daily Instruction

Step:	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
1. Before Reading Poll					
2. Article					
3. Activity					
4. After Reading Poll					
5. Thought Question					
<i>*Stretch Article</i>					
<i>*Stretch Activity</i>					

***Before Reading Poll:** Incorporating a video to build background after the reading poll or to prepare students for the Before Reading Poll is highly recommended..

6. Results of Intervention Implementation

TeenBizBoost Reading Lexile Growth 2017-2018



Lexile Results

1. Month 1

- Mean Growth = **6.8 lexile points**
- Students achieving growth = **63%**

2. Month 2

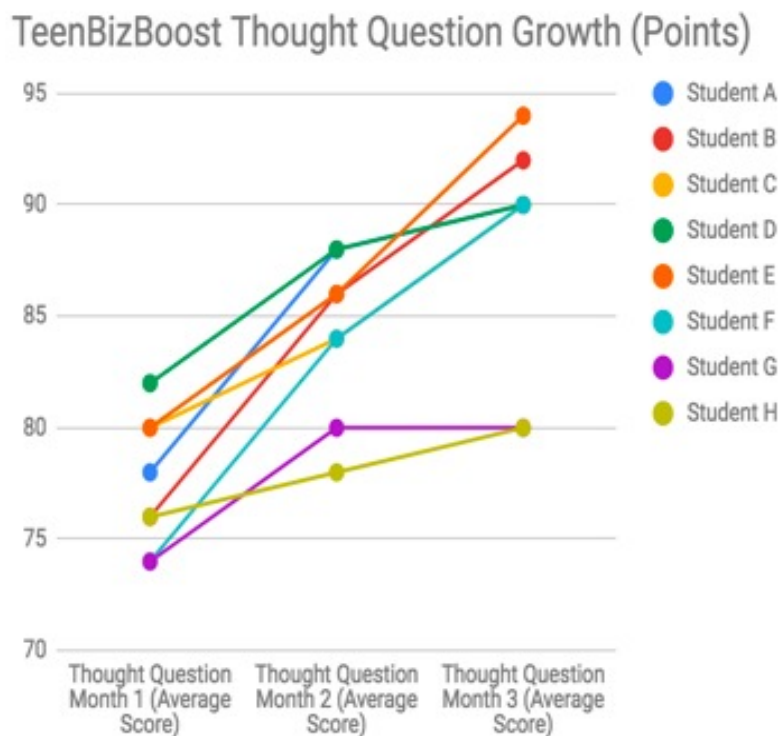
- Mean Growth = **23.8 lexile points**
- Students achieving growth = **88%**

3. Month 3

- Mean Growth = **43.1 lexile points**
- Students achieving growth = **75%**

4. Pre-Posttest Growth

- Mean Growth = **73.8 lexile points**
- Students achieving growth = **100%**



Thought Question Results

1. Month 1 – Month 2

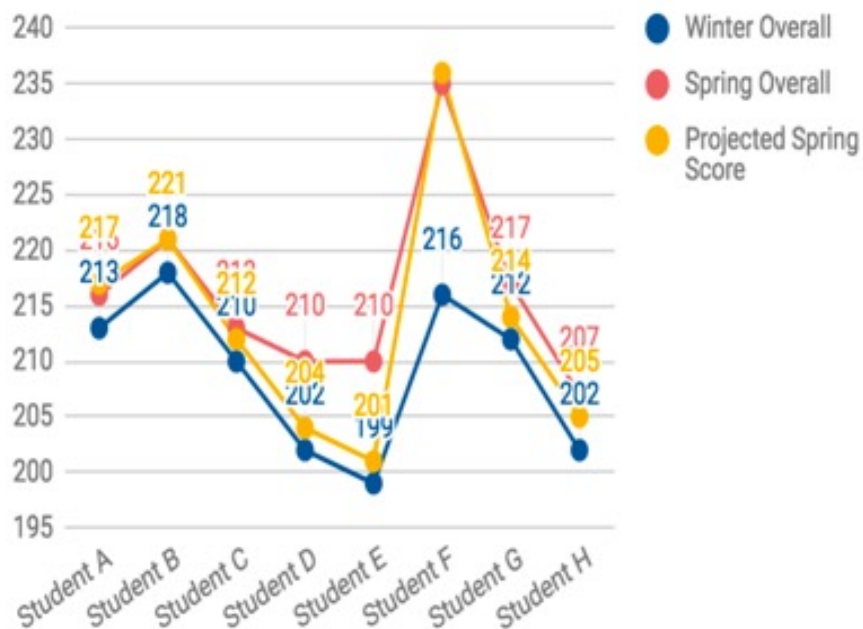
- Mean Growth = **6.8 points**
- Students achieving growth = **100%**

2. Month 2 – Month 3

- Mean Growth = **4 points**
- Students achieving growth = **88%**

**Average Overall Growth:
10.8 points**

NWEA MAP Scores: Winter 2018 Score - Spring 2018 Score



MAP Results - Overall

1. Winter NWEA MAP Benchmark

- Mean RIT Score = **209 RIT points**

2. Spring NWEA MAP Benchmark

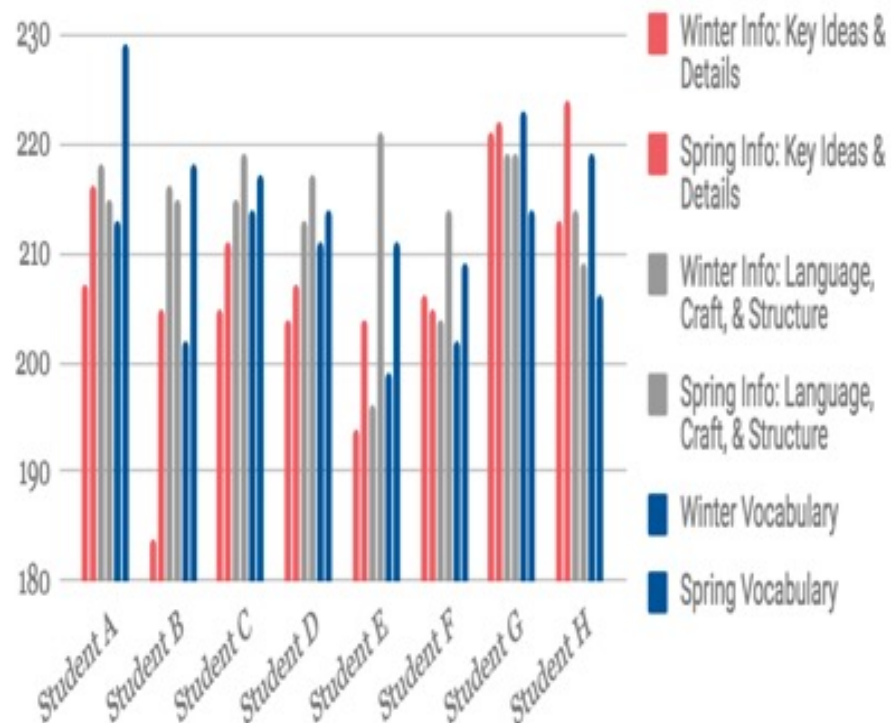
- Mean RIT Score = **213 RIT points**
- Mean Projected Score = **213.8 RIT points**
- **Difference = .8 RIT points**

3. Average Overall Growth (12 weeks): 4 RIT points

2015 National Norms

- **216.9 (7th Gr.) – 218.2 (7th Gr.)**
- **219.1 (8th Gr.) – 220.1 (8th Gr.)**

NWEA MAP RIT Scores: Winter 2018 - Spring 2018 Growth



MAP Results - Domains

1. Winter – Spring Key Ideas & Details:

- Average Growth = 8 RIT points
- % of students increased in this domain = 100%

2. Winter – Spring Language, Craft, & Structure:

- Average Growth = 4 RIT points
- % of students increased in this domain = 50%

3. Winter – Spring Vocabulary:

- Average Growth = 4 RIT points
- % of students increased in this domain = 75%

7. Student Perceptions (Post-Intervention): Perceptions of Reading Ability

- **100% of students believe that the reading instruction they received over the course of 12 weeks helped them become a better reader.**
- **75% of students rated reading comprehension as being not as difficult as they originally expressed in their pre-interview**
- **75% of students rated vocabulary as being not as difficult as they originally expressed in their pre-intervention interviews.**

- **63% of students expressed they know that they can read when they are able to use a reading comprehension strategy to track or check their understanding of a text (e.g. questioning, summarizing, using text features, rereading, reflecting on information, and determining main ideas).**
- **100% of students expressed having learned strategies for looking inside of the word or outside of it at surrounding sentences to determine the meaning of words they do not understand.**

- **75% of students believed that various activities (e.g. Thought Question, Stretch Article & Activity, and shared reading experiences) helped improve their reading.**
 - Students who critiqued the program, negatively, felt that their reading didn't improve significantly and would like more articles outside of nonfiction subgenres and more engaging activities besides "*videos and just reading articles.*"
- **88% of students believed that the intervention motivated them to read more in and out of the classroom.**

- 100% of students expressed that the texts that were the most engaging targeted real world issues (e.g. rights, violence, drugs, money, and life problems).
- 88% of students would recommend this intervention to students in their age group for various reasons: it supports learning in their ELA classes, it encourages students to improve their assessment scores, helps with note-taking, is interesting, and has a good source of articles.

Recommendations

Needed Improvements Based on Reading Outcomes and Post-Interview Results:

1. Reading Comprehension Instruction

Provide direct and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

2. Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Provide explicit vocabulary instruction.

3. Assessments

Use assessments to make data-driven decisions on placement, grouping, material selection, and instruction.



4. Writing in Response to Reading

Provide opportunities for writing and discussions to aid in enhanced text interpretation.

5. Engagement & Motivation

Increase student motivation and engagement by incorporating relevant, high-interest texts, shared reading, shared discussions, & text-self connections.

6. Professional Development

Provide professional development and ongoing support in intensive interventions.

Tier 2 Reading Intervention Recommendation



Tier 1

**McGraw-Hill:
Networks
W.O.L.V.E.S.
Reading Program**



Tier 2



Tier 3

**Wilson Reading System
Saddleback Reading
program**



Questions?

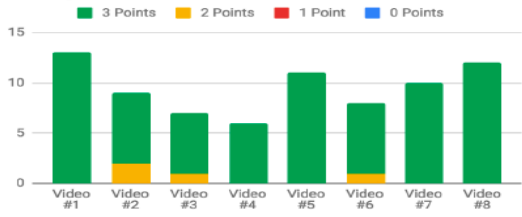
Appendix K

RTI SCORECARD

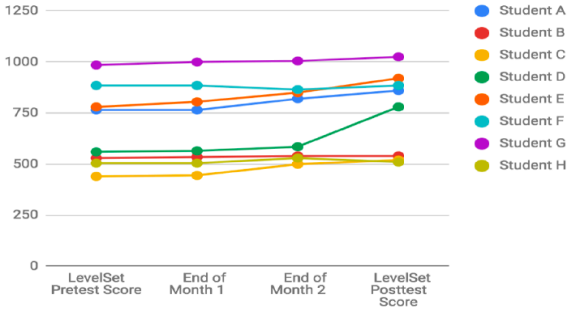
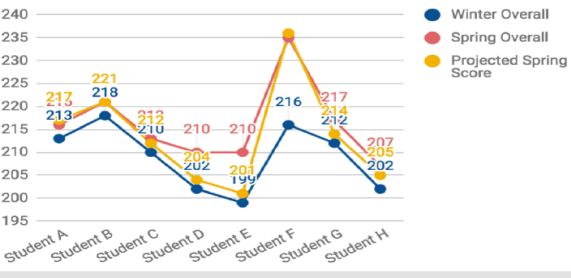
**Response to Intervention
Scorecard:
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy
Middle School**

Performance Rating	Percent of Points Earned
Highly Effective	90%-100%
Effective	80%-89%
Approaching	70%-79%
Needs Improvement	0%-69%

Overview: Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's (LAAA) Response to Intervention (RTI) middle school program was evaluated based on reading intervention outcomes using TeenBizBoost® and results from the fidelity observation protocol completed by the LAAA assistant head of school. This RTI Scorecard contains three (3) scored domains: Fidelity Observation Protocol Results, curriculum-based assessment results, and NWEA MAP Growth® Reading Results. Each domain is weighted according to importance and calculated according to outcomes of the measurement (domain) used. An overall performance rating is provided based on the total of all three domain scores.

DOMAIN	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS	SCORE & RATIONALE
Fidelity Observation Protocol Results	This domain scores the interventionist's effective use of strategies, protocols, and routines embedded in the digital reading program. I provided reading instruction to eight 7 th and 8 th grade students to improve their reading outcomes over the course of 12 weeks.	<p>Fidelity Observation Protocol Results</p>  <p>Figure 1. Fidelity Observation Protocol Results</p>	<p>55 / 60 POINTS:</p> <p>For this domain, I utilized the fidelity observation protocol completed by the assistant head of school who watched eight videos filmed over the course of 12 weeks to determine the effectiveness of my instruction. In order to address the reading comprehension needs of my intervention group, I aligned my instruction to what is known about best practices in teaching reading comprehension and academic vocabulary to adolescents. This approach included: A Before, During, After Reading framework, multi-component comprehension strategy instruction, academic vocabulary instruction, high-interest texts, motivation and engagement strategies, building background knowledge, and providing corrective feedback. Figure 1 displays the number of</p>

			<p>scores recorded for each of the eight videos and how many times either 3 points, 2 points, 1 point, or 0 points were given. In order to award points, eight recordings of instructional routines were observed, protocols, and strategies used before, during, and after students read a text during intervention:</p> <p><u>Before Reading Score (19/20)</u>: The average score for this section when indicators for it were observed was 85 points out of 90, or 94% of available indicator points.</p> <p><u>During Reading Score (18/20)</u>: The average score for this section when indicators for it were observed was 97 points out of 105, or 92% of available indicator points.</p> <p><u>After Reading Score (18/20)</u>: The average score for this section when indicators for it were observed was 23 points out of 25, or 92% of available indicator points.</p> <p><u>Rationale</u>: The assistant head provided positive feedback primarily focused on pre-teaching academic vocabulary, use of engagement strategies (i.e. group reflections), leveraging the stretch article to encourage higher level thinking, use of sentence frames to frame responses to articles, reading strategy instruction (e.g. determining main ideas & summarizing), and improving constructed responses by providing language for reasoning in support of answers. Overall, favorable scores were given in the before, during, and after reading instruction sections of the RTI observation protocol which totaled to 55 points.</p>
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<p>Curriculum-based Assessments & Activity Results</p>	<p>This domain scores Lexile growth, the results of 12 progress monitoring assessment scores, and the intervention pre-test and posttest scores from winter 2018 to spring 2018.</p>	<p>Reading Lexile Growth 2017-2018</p>  <p><i>Figure 2. Intervention Students' Lexile Results</i></p>	<p>15/20 POINTS:</p> <p>For this domain, I utilized the curriculum-based intervention placement assessment and 12 progress monitoring assessment scores that tracked Lexile growth throughout the 12-week intervention period. Overall, students using the intervention over the course of 12 weeks improved their reading comprehension by an average of 73.8 Lexile points. Students achieved a mean growth of 6.8 Lexile points in the first month of intervention, a mean growth of 23.8 Lexile points in the second month, and a mean growth of 43.1 Lexile points in the third month. According to the 2016-2017 National Lexile Study College and Career Readiness performance levels, 25% of students improved a College and Career Readiness performance level (i.e. Far Below, Approaches, Meets, Exceeds).</p> <p>Rationale: The percentage of students achieving growth each month increased from 63% to 88%, and back down to 75%. For this reason, 75% worth of points which is 15 out of 20 points is the final score for this section.</p>
<p>NWEA MAP Growth® Reading Results</p>	<p>This domain scores the results of the NWEA MAP Growth Reading assessment from winter 2018 to spring 2018.</p>	<p>NWEA MAP Scores: Winter 2018 Score - Spring 2018 Score</p> 	<p>15/20 POINTS:</p> <p>NWEA MAP Growth® Reading results indicate that 75% of intervention students using the intervention over the course of 12 weeks met their 2018 winter to spring projected RIT scores whereas only 25% met their projected RIT scores between 2018 fall and winter administrations, before using the intervention. Results also indicate that students improved their mean RIT scores by an average of 4 RIT points between winter 2018 and spring 2018 NWEA MAP Growth® Reading administrations, or over the course of the intervention.</p> <p>According to 2015 national norms, 7th grade students scored a mean RIT of 216.9 at mid-point and 218.2 at the</p>

		<p><i>Figure 3. Intervention Students' NWEA MAP Growth Reading Results</i></p>	<p>end-of-year point and 8th grade students scored 219.1 at mid-point and 220.1 at the end-of-year point on the NWEA MAP Growth® Reading assessment. Seventh grade students receiving intervention achieved 207.3 RIT points on average at mid-point (winter) and 217.3 RIT points on average at end-point (spring). Eighth grade students receiving intervention achieved 210.8 RIT points on average at mid-point (winter) and 214 RIT points on average at end-point (spring).</p> <p>Rationale: While the average RIT score for each grade level is still below the 2015 national norm for both grade levels in NWEA MAP Growth® Reading, all students experienced growth in their RIT scores from Winter 2018 to Spring 2018, with the least amount of increase in RIT score being 3 RIT points and the greatest increase being 19 RIT points. All students receiving the intervention achieved 4 RIT points of growth on average from beginning to end of the 12-week intervention leading to 75% of intervention students met their 2018 winter to spring projected RIT score goals on the NWEA MAP Growth® Reading assessment. For this reason, 15 out of 20, or 75% of possible points that could be earned, were given.</p>
Overall Score: 85% = Effective			

Recommendations for Practice:

The purpose of measuring and assessing the quality of the LAAA RTI program at the secondary level is to provide feedback to administration regarding the needs of staff and students to improve its Tier 2 instruction for adolescent, struggling readers. This RTI Scorecard addresses Tier 2 reading intervention, corresponding instruction, and ongoing assessment at LAAA. Considering this scorecard did not yield the highest performance rating, the results, above, can be used to reflect on intervention practices and determine recommendations that address issues related to less effective reading intervention. These recommendations should be used to assist LAAA administration in determining a plan for Tier 2 reading intervention implementation within an RTI model:

1. Recommendation 1: Implement a dual approach to RTI that incorporates the most effective features of the Problem-Solving Model and the Standard Treatment Protocol Model.

The fidelity observation protocol served as a tool to ensure students were placed in Tier 2 reading intervention according to their performance levels and rates of improvement, which is characteristic of the Problem-Solving Model. Once placed in Tier 2 reading intervention, the interventionist used one standard, validated intervention to address a variety of reading deficits adolescents placed in Tier 2 intervention by the team, needed. Based on the results above, there is a strong case for improving the fidelity of reading interventions through an RTI framework. Students with the most intractable reading difficulties are in need of structure, targeted interventions, and tiered placements that offer remediation based on their specific reading needs. An RTI model is the best context for implementing reading remediation for students with reading difficulties and enhancing reading comprehension and vocabulary for all students. Further, in a dual approach to RTI, students receive a team-based instructional decision-making plan provided by the problem-solving model while ensuring that the intervention selected comes from research about struggling readers called for by the standard protocol model. In order to implement this recommendation, school staff serving adolescents should:

- adopt a multi-tiered model of instruction that provides a systematic approach to supporting learning for students of all ability levels;
- for students needing tiered reading intervention, utilize a team-based approach to place them in tiered interventions based on screening assessment data and similar reading profiles (e.g. the Problem-Solving Model);
- adopt a reading intervention that addresses the needs of students in the same tier of reading intervention with similar reading profiles (e.g. the Standard Treatment Protocol Model); and
- modify organizational factors (e.g. duration of intervention, time allotted, group size, etc.) based on the reading needs of students placed in Tier 2 reading intervention.

2. Recommendation 2: Utilize statewide achievement tests and screener/diagnostic assessments to make data-based decisions for students needing reading intervention support.

Students were administered a schoolwide screener/diagnostic assessment that helped the RTI team determine which students were in need of intervention and what intervention would best meet their reading needs. During the intervention, students were administered a progress monitoring tool to track their growth over time and make instructional decisions. Based on the results above, school staffs that serve adolescents should use assessments for three different purposes: screening, diagnostic assessments, and progress monitoring. Likewise, data should be collected frequently to evaluate intervention effectiveness and determine if intervention adjustments are needed, based on these data. In order to implement this recommendation, school staff should:

- administer screening, benchmark, and statewide assessments to screen students for intervention eligibility; and

- collect data frequently to evaluate intervention effectiveness and determine if intervention adjustments are needed, based on these data.

3. Recommendation 3: Adopt a comprehensive reading intervention that incorporates instructional strategies and protocols that align with best teaching practices and can be used with fidelity.

The intervention used to evaluate the LAAA middle school RTI program includes lesson plans that incorporate research-based instructional strategies and protocols needed to address the reading needs of adolescents. Based on the results above, school staff should adopt a reading intervention that incorporates the following characteristics:

- scientific, researched-based, and incorporate engaging, authentic tasks for adolescent, struggling readers
- provide opportunities and resources for research-based, direct and explicit reading comprehension strategy and vocabulary instruction
- offer instructional strategies that best improve reading outcomes
- utilize an instructional framework (i.e. Before, During, After Reading framework) that addresses students' reading needs
- incorporate quality, embedded progress monitoring assessment tools

4. Recommendation 4: Provide research-based, direct and explicit reading strategy instruction that best improves student reading outcomes.

The intervention used to evaluate the LAAA middle school RTI program includes lesson plans that incorporate direct and explicit reading strategy instruction that best address the reading needs of adolescents. Based those results above, students' ability to use reading comprehension strategies with success, and as necessary, has been shown to be successful in improving the reading outcomes of adolescents. Targeted and systematic instruction in these reading comprehension strategies may be a critical element of decreasing the high risk that low achieving adolescents display for persistent reading comprehension difficulties. In order to implement this recommendation, school staff should:

- address two components (vocabulary and comprehension) in an explicit, systematic, intensive manner with fidelity and sufficient duration;
- incorporate technology-enhanced/computer-assisted instruction to improve reading intervention implementation;
- allow students opportunities to work with partners to provide each other explicit feedback and correction during application of strategies within texts; and
- provide opportunities for teacher *and* peer support for multi-comprehension strategy application.

5. Recommendation 5: Perform Routine Fidelity Observations to evaluate how strategies and/or interventions are being implemented.

Fidelity is important at both the school level (e.g., design of the RTI process and use of resources) and classroom level (e.g., implementation of scientifically-based intervention and corresponding instructional strategies). At the school level, fidelity addresses the integrity with which screening and progress monitoring procedures are completed, resources are provided based on students' reading progress, timing and duration are structured around students' reading needs, and an effective decision-making model (RTI) is followed. Fidelity of implementation at the classroom level refers to the degree to which interventionists are expected to implement evidence-based practices and interventions as designed. The fidelity observation protocol will assess whether or not the RTI and intervention plan are designed to improve the outcomes of students with whom the practices or interventions were intended. The fidelity observation protocol used to evaluate the LAAA middle school RTI program provides evidence that intervention instruction, routines, and protocols should be aligned to

evidence-based practices for teaching reading comprehension and academic vocabulary to adolescents, and, the only way to determine this is by using fidelity checks to determine program effectiveness. In order to implement this recommendation, school staff should:

- document specific needs in organization, including instructional and assessment processes in order to address them at the school level;
- record information on how closely interventionists are adhering to critical components and procedures of the interventions being employed;
- use multiple sources of assessment data to evaluate effectiveness of interventions (e.g., progress monitoring tool, benchmark assessment, etc.); and
- use observation data to provide guidance, provoke discussion, and further current efforts at implementing effective reading interventions for adolescent students with reading difficulties.

Appendix L

IRB APPROVAL



RESEARCH OFFICE

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DATE: January 16, 2018

TO: Teresa Rush
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1142848-1] Response to Intervention for Adolescents: Intensive Interventions for Students At-Risk for Reading Failure

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: January 16, 2018

EXPIRATION DATE: January 16, 2019

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese- McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.