DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE USE

OF EVIDENCE-BASED READING RESEARCH

by

Cary Brandenberger Riches

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DEDICATION

I want to thank my husband, Mike Riches, for your patience, love and support throughout this process. You take such wonderful care of me and our sons. You have always been so supportive of my endeavors. I am grateful to have you as my partner. You are my best friend.

This project is dedicated to my sons, Dane and Beau. You make me smile, laugh, and cry, and you remind me that life is so very precious. When I started this project, I had no children and now I have two. The two of you are my greatest accomplishments. I hope you can see that hard work is worth the reward. My greatest hope is that you grow up to be kind, strong and brave.

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ABSTRACT

This Executive Leadership Portfolio (ELP) addresses the need to build a literacy model and framework that allows struggling readers to acquire the literacy skills that are necessary to meet grade-level expectations. Additionally, this ELP addresses the need for leaders to read and use reading research. This ELP had the following goals: 1) implement a comprehensive RTI literacy model to identify and monitor individual students' areas of need, 2) provide a specific, evidence-based reading intervention, PALS, to students who read below grade level, and 3) provide in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction to secondary instructional leaders. To achieve these goals, a comprehensive RTI literacy model was created and implemented, PALS was implemented and its effects measured over a two-year period for students who read below grade level, and an in-depth professional development initiative was designed for secondary instructional leaders in two different settings.

This portfolio begins with my work in the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, NCCVT, where I built a comprehensive RTI literacy model, implemented PALS and provided in-depth professional development to secondary instructional leaders. I took what I learned from NCCVT and moved to a larger district, Brandywine School District, BSD, where I was charged with the same goals. The

artifacts in this portfolio illustrate my leadership journey that took place in both NCCVT

and BSD. During this initiative, I learned that when implemented with fidelity PALS can

have a positive impact on student achievement. I also learned that creating the conditions

for change is critical to any initiative. Furthermore, I also learned that leadership and

instruction must be connected. Leaders need to know a lot about literacy.   Based on the

outcomes of this initiative, I will continue to provide in-depth professional development

on reading research and leadership.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Literacy for older students is an area of increasing concern for state and district staff members. In 2006, *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*, *2nd Edition*, was published by the Carnegie Foundation (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). In 2007 the Carnegie Foundation published, *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* was published (Graham & Perin, 2007). The Carnegie Foundation's *Advancing Literacy* program is dedicated to research, policy and practice concerning reading and writing competencies for adolescents. These reports heightened the national interest concerning struggling adolescent readers. Because of this interest, researchers have been working to understand the needs of struggling adolescent readers.

When high school students enter ninth grade below grade level in reading, it is highly unlikely that they will ever reach grade-level expectations without intensive reading intervention (Torgesen & Burgess, 1998). Literacy is the gateway for success in all academic areas. Students reading significantly below grade level are likely to have difficulty in all of their academic courses.

Effective instructional leaders focus on the instructional needs of the students in their schools. They emphasize research-based strategies to improve teaching and learning (The Wallace Foundation, 2012). Instructional leaders must be well informed

about evidence-based reading instruction in order to assist in the selection and use of curricular materials. In order for instructional leaders to monitor core reading instruction for all students and coordinate reading intervention plans for students who struggle, leaders must participate in professional development that helps them remain informed about research. Moreover, leaders' participation in content-focused professional development will help them prioritize teaching and learning and create a culture of continuous learning for teachers (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

There is existing research that can guide these efforts. *Reading interventions for adolescent struggling readers: A meta-analysis with implications for practice* (Scammacca, Roberts, Vaughn, Edmonds, Wexler, Reutebuch, & Torgesen, 2007) concludes that instructional recommendations for older readers differ only slightly from those for younger readers. These recommendations can be organized into five general areas: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation. Louisa Moats (2001) suggests that the choice of reading interventions depends on a student's instructional need and what is likely to work best, not on chronological age or grade level. A student who has difficulty decoding words should receive instruction in word study whether he is in first grade, fourth grade, or 12th grade.

Academic literacy instruction for adolescents (Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, Decker, Roberts, Vaughn, Wexler, Francis, Rivera, & Lesaux, 2007) suggests key considerations in implementing reading interventions for adolescents. Torgesen and colleagues (2007) suggest adjusting the focus and intensity of interventions according to individual student needs. Older students vary greatly in both the causes and

manifestations of their reading problems. First, assessment practices must support the identification and progress monitoring of specific needs. Second, while some students require interventions that can be carried out in content-area classrooms (e.g., supporting vocabulary learning in a science classroom) others need instruction better suited to small, intensive learning environments (e.g., learning word-recognition strategies or building fluency). This targeted support is most effective when provided in well-planned, regular small-group sessions over a period of time.

This ELP began with a goal of improving reading ability for struggling adolescent readers and improving literacy leadership. This project moved with me as I changed districts and positions. When I began this ELP, I was an ELA/Literacy Specialist for the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT). I then became an assistant principal, within NCCVT, at Delcastle Technical High School. I eventually left NCCVT to become Supervisor of PK-12 Programs for the Brandywine School District (BSD). I was then promoted to Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PK-12 in BSD. During my time at NCCVT, I implemented a secondary RTI model that included Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998) as a Tier II intervention. The outcomes of the work done in NCCVT guided my work in BSD where I was charged with creating a secondary RTI model.

In order for struggling readers to improve their ability to read, they need to be appropriately placed into a systematic, evidenced-based reading model. Additionally, instructional leaders need to know how to choose evidenced-based reading intervention frameworks and programs. This ELP focuses on improving struggling students' ability

to read and improving instructional leaders' knowledge about evidence-based reading research. This ELP had the following goals: 1) implement a comprehensive RTI literacy model to identify and monitor individual student's areas of need, 2) provide a specific, evidence-based reading intervention, PALS, to students who read below grade level, and 3) provide in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction to secondary instructional leaders.

This ELP is organized into five additional chapters and includes ten appendices. Chapter 2 explains why reading below grade level is a problem for older students and why instructional leaders need to learn more about evidenced-based reading research. Chapter 2 describes the organizational context of both NCCVT and BSD, and the organizational roles I played in both districts in order to increase students' reading ability and leaders' knowledge of evidence-based reading research. Chapter 3 explains the improvement strategies of the ELP as they relate to the aforementioned goals. Chapter 4 summarizes the results of creating and implementing a comprehensive literacy model, the results of the PALS intervention for students in NCCVT over a two-year period, and the development of in-depth professional development for instructional leaders. Chapter 5 provides a reflection on the improvement efforts for students and instructional leaders. Chapter 6 is a reflection on my development as a leader and candidate in the Ed. D. program.

The appendices are a collection of all of the artifacts that were created from the beginning to the end of this ELP process. The appendices begin with my work in the

NCCVT school district and end with my work in BSD. A description of the appendices is provided in the following section.

<div align="center">**Description of Appendices**</div>

Appendix A: Research Base for Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies: A Resources for Literacy Leadership Teams.

The Literature Review is a synthesis of selected literature on Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998). This review summarizes findings from the *What Works Clearinghouse*. The goal of this review is to ground the ELP in literature and provide necessary context for the reader.

Appendix B: PALS Training Materials

The PALS training materials were adapted from the published PALS materials created by Fuchs and Fuchs (2001). I adapted the scripted training lessons from the manual and created a PowerPoint for training purposes. The PALS PowerPoint was used to train all PALS teachers in both NCCVT and BSD.

Appendix C: PALS Implementation Analysis

This document is an evaluation of the PALS implementation in NCCVT over a two-year period. The purpose of the study was to answer the following two questions:

a) Did the PALS students' reading ability increase?

b) Did the PALS teachers implement PALS with fidelity?

SRI scores were used to measure the students' reading ability in a pre- and post-test design. Teacher self-reporting, interviews, focus groups, and observations were used to document the level of fidelity of implementation. The results of this study conducted in NCCVT helped to determine whether the PALS intervention could be implemented in BSD.

Appendix D: A Resources Guide for Literacy Leaders

This guide is intended as a resource for school leaders. The purpose of the guide is to make an explicit link between essential leadership practices and literacy.

Appendix E: A Retrospective Article for Publication

The retrospective article was written in collaboration with Joseph Jones, Ed.D., former principal at Delcastle Technical High School. It is a look back at the elements that made our literacy initiative at Delcastle a success. The article was written for *Literacy Today*, the International Association's, ILA, bimonthly magazine. This artifact also serves as a transition from my work in NCCVT to my work in BSD.

Appendix F: Comprehensive Secondary RTI Literacy Guide for BSD

This document is a resource guide for BSD administrators and teachers. The first part of the guide clearly defines Response to Intervention (RTI) from the federal level and at the local level. The second part of the guide provides student placement information, RTI cycle review guidelines, instructional framework guidelines, curriculum resources, and frequently asked question regarding RTI.

Appendix G: Survey of Current Leadership

In order to create a professional development plan for BSD leaders that was focused on literacy leadership (Appendix I), I surveyed Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy cohort members. The members of this cohort are teachers and administrative leaders in all six secondary buildings in BSD. The Adolescent Instruction Model for Literacy (AIM) (2008) is a framework to guide schools/districts in developing a literacy plan for secondary schools. The AIM Literacy survey comprises thirty-five questions. These questions are divided into four categories: 1) Collaborative Leadership and School Capacity, 2) Content Area Classes, 3) Intervention and Support for Adolescent Readers, and 4) Professional Development to Support Literacy. There are several survey questions under each category. The total score for each category is used for summative ratings.

The results of the survey guide each team's school-based literacy plan as well as the professional development that I provide through face-to-face and online professional learning experiences. The professional development plan is outlined in Artifact I.

Appendix H: Secondary Professional Development for Administrators

I created this professional development session for school and district administrators to reflect on the change process that occurred in order to implement a secondary RTI model in BSD. The PowerPoint is part of the literacy professional development that has occurred for administrators in BSD. It also highlights the importance of managing transitions that occur with a major change initiative.

Appendix I: Professional Development Plan

The professional development series, Strategic Secondary Literacy Leaders (SSLL) was created to help build secondary school leaders' understanding of reading research and effective reading instruction through the Common Core State Standards and evidenced-based intervention strategies. This professional development will build instructional capacity, specifically in reading instruction and leadership, at the district and building level. In order for instructional leaders to be effective, they must:

- Prioritize teaching and learning

- Understand and embed evidence-based research

- Align and monitor curriculum, instruction and assessment

- Analyze data and make decisions

- Create a culture of continuous learning for adults.

Through this professional development series, I will model these steps and help school-based leaders, teachers, and administrators implement these steps as they relate to reading and literacy. This final resource embeds face-to-face learning and blended learning through the district's online Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology.

Appendix J: Schoology Site with Resources for Literacy Leaders

The purpose of the Schoology site is to house necessary and relevant resources, facilitate collaboration among leaders from other schools in an online environment, and capture the progress of professional learning.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Unfortunately, too many students are reading below grade level and are not receiving high quality core reading instruction and reading interventions that are timely, directive, diagnostic, systematic and grounded in evidence. In order for students to receive high quality reading instruction, instructional leaders must prioritize teaching and learning by becoming knowledgeable about research, and participate in and provide high-level professional development to teachers. Richard Elmore (2004) suggests that if the people who work in low-performing schools knew what evidenced-based strategies to use to increase achievement they would be doing it. However, too few instructional leaders are well informed of evidence-based research that should inform instruction. I am tackling this problem in the area of reading.

Organizational Context

Vocational technical high schools in Delaware provide students with a comprehensive academic curriculum, career and technical training, and structured work experiences that bridge the gap between high school and the world of work. NCCVT serves over 4,000 high school students and 6,000 adults in New Castle County every year. NCCVT comprises four high schools: Delcastle Technical High School, Hodgson High School, Howard High School of Technology, and St. Georges Technical High School. In total NCCVT offers 42 career area programs which vary by school. The district's demographic data for the 2009-2010 school year, the first year of the PALS

implementation, are presented in Table 1. As you can see from Table 1 during the 2009-2010 school year, NCCVT had a diverse population with 47.9% of the students coming from low-income households.

Table 1: NCCVT District Demographic Data 2009-2010

Grade	N Students	% Male	% Female	% Hispanic	% African American	% White	% Other Minorities	% ELL	% Low SES	% Students with Disabilities
NCCVT Fall Student Enrollment By Student Sub-Group, 2009-2010										
Total	4,723	49.6	50.4	11.8	41.2	45.7	< 5.0	< 5.0	47.9	11.3

Source: State of Delaware: The Official Website of the Frist State (2016)

The Brandywine School District (BSD) is located in New Castle County as well. However, the Brandywine School District is a traditional comprehensive, PK-12 district. Currently, BSD serves approximately 11,000 students. The district comprises one pre-school, Bush; nine elementary schools: Carrcroft, Claymont, Forwood, Hanby, Harlan, Lancashire, Lombardy, Maple Lane, and Mount Pleasant Elementary; three middle schools: P.S. DuPont, Springer, Talley; and three high schools: Brandywine, Concord, and Mount Pleasant. Although the district's feeder pattern only covers thirty-five square miles, socio-economic status varies greatly between schools. The District's demographic data from the 2014-2015 school year are presented below in Table 2. BSD has fewer students coming from low-income households than NCCVT.

Table 2: BSD District Demographic Data 2014-2015

Grade	N Students	% Male	% Female	% Hispanic	% African American	% White	% Other Minorities	% ELL	%Low-Income	% Students with Disabilities
Total	10,740	50.9	49.1	5.6	37.5	48.4	8.5	< 5.0	29.8	13.3

Source: State of Delaware: The Official Website of the Frist State (2016)

Organizational Role

During my employment at NCCVT, I served as the District ELA/Literacy Specialist. As ELA/Literacy Specialist, I was charged to create and implement a comprehensive assessment system to measure students' reading progress, create a professional development plan based on empirical evidence, create and purchase necessary reading resources, and work with building-level administrators to make sure that students were appropriately placed.

During the adoption and implementation of PALS, my role changed from District ELA/Literacy Specialist to Assistant Principal at Delcastle Technical High School. Although my role changed, I remained the lead coordinator for PALS. My new role provided me an opportunity to evaluate PALS teachers using observable behavior checklists and the Delaware Performance Appraisal System, DPAS II-Revised.

After three years as assistant principal at Delcastle Technical High School, I left the NCCVT school district and accepted a position at BSD, as Supervisor of PK-12 Programs. In that position I was in charge of English Language Arts, reading and literacy, RTI (K-12), secondary scheduling, school counselors, 504 accommodations, Title I, ESL, parent and community outreach, and special programs. In June of 2015, I

was promoted to Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PK-12. I maintained most of

my responsibilities listed above and also assumed leadership for all district-wide

professional development and direction of the entire Curriculum and Instruction Division.

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

In order to reduce the number of students reading below grade level, a comprehensive secondary RTI literacy model should be adopted. The model should include evidenced-based reading strategies and interventions that are implemented with fidelity. Additionally, school leaders must read, understand, and use reading research.

This ELP had the following goals: 1) implement a comprehensive secondary RTI literacy model to identify and monitor individual student's areas of need, 2) provide a specific, evidence-based reading intervention, PALS, to students who read below grade level, and 3) provide in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction to secondary instructional leaders. These goals were the same in NCCVT and BSD.

From 2009-2012, NCCVT offered remedial reading courses to incoming ninth-grade students who read below grade level. These remedial courses were NCCVT's RTI Tier II and Tier III courses. These courses were taught during the first semester of the students' ninth grade year. Once the students completed the remedial course, they were placed in English 9 and an appropriate heterogeneously-grouped math course. Incoming ninth grade students were placed in remedial reading courses based on their eighth grade Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) score and their performance on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) comprehension assessment. Students at

Delcastle High School and Howard High School who received a one on the 8th grade reading section of the DCAS were placed into the READ 180 course. The READ 180 course is a daily 90-minute remedial reading course that runs from August to June. READ 180 is produced by Scholastic, Inc. and serves as a Tier III intervention. The READ 180 intervention requires students to rotate between four stations: independent reading, small group differentiated instruction, computer-adaptive vocabulary and fluency work, and writing.

During the 2008-2009 school year, in my role as District English Language Arts/Literacy Specialist, I conducted an exhaustive Core Curriculum Review that included teachers, building-level administrators and a representative from the University of Delaware in order to choose an appropriate evidence-based reading intervention for students who were below grade level, but not in need of a READ 180, Tier III reading intervention. The assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum and instruction insisted that all curriculum and instruction decisions be grounded in evidence-based research. Prior to the 2008-2009 school year, students who read below grade level but did not need READ 180 were enrolled in a teacher-created remedial course that did not yield positive student results. Therefore, an evidence-based reading intervention was necessary for students who were in need of a Tier II reading intervention. The lack of a Tier II intervention created a gap in NCCVT's RTI literacy model.

Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998) was adopted as a Tier II reading intervention for students who entered ninth grade below grade level. Students who earned a performance level 2 or low 3 on the reading portion of the eighth

grade DCAS were placed in a remedial/enrichment reading course, PALS Literacy. The students enrolled in the PALS Literacy course were taught a peer-oriented reading routine using high-interest texts. The PALS routine requires students to read out loud, practice summarization, make predictions and employ word attack skills. The goal of the PALS program was to improve the reading ability of students who entered high school reading below grade level (see Appendix C). The adoption of the PALS Tier II intervention completed NCCVT's literacy model. Additionally, all building-level administrators and PALS teachers were provided in-depth professional development (see Appendix B). Initial evidence that the intervention was successful lead me to consider its implementation in a new setting. As my ELP continued and my job changed, I wondered, "Could I replicate this in BSD?"

 Students who attend schools in the BSD are provided with core curriculum, arts, music, technology and related electives. Prior to the 2014-2015 school year, BSD had a comprehensive Response to Intervention (RTI) framework for reading and mathematics for kindergarten through 5th grade. However, before 2014-2015 school year, students who entered 6th-10th grade below grade level were not systematically served within a comprehensive RTI framework.

Before I could implement a secondary RTI literacy model in BSD and implement a professional development plan for leaders, I was first charged with changing all of the secondary school schedules. The seven period rotating schedule that BSD secondary schools utilized did not provide the flexibility or time needed to implement RTI. We needed to adopt a schedule that provided eight periods. With an eighth class built into

the schedule, students could still take all of their core courses as well as receive RTI interventions during the school day. This change took over a year to complete.

To start the process, I convened two district committees: The Middle School Scheduling Committee and The High School Scheduling Committee. Both committees included teachers, administrators and parents. During the year-long process, I made several presentations to our Board of Education. I used the knowledge that I gained in EDUC 890: Leadership Theory and Research, to create a change plan. I followed Kotter's eight-step process for leading change outlined in *Leading change* (1996). Kotter's processes guided my decision making by providing me and the committee a means and method to transform. I created a change plan document to guide the committees' work.   Embedded in the Secondary Scheduling Change Plan was the need for a comprehensive secondary RTI model. I used relevant reading data from previous years' state test scores to build a sense of urgency around the need to make infrastructure changes in BSD. Changing the schedule was a prerequisite to the literacy changes that needed to take place. After a year of extensive research and careful consideration, the Board of Education voted unanimously to change all secondary schedules. This decision provided the infrastructure needed to build a comprehensive secondary RTI literacy model in BSD.

Once the schedules were changed, I implemented a comprehensive secondary RTI literacy model (see Appendix F) and created and implemented in-depth professional development for secondary instructional leaders (see Appendices H and I).

Chapter 4

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS

Results of this project were gathered through pre- and post-test student data, walkthrough forms, fidelity checklists, focus groups with PALS teachers, and completion of change initiatives.

Results of NCCVT Improvement Effort

The results of the improvement efforts in NCCVT were favorable. Over the course of two years, I analyzed the impact of the PALS intervention on Tier II students in all four NCCVT high schools, as well as the level of fidelity with which the intervention was delivered. It was not surprising that in the schools with the highest level of fidelity of implementation, students' outcome data were positive. The focus group discussions revealed the most interesting outcomes. When teachers were asked to rate themselves on the fidelity checklist, they typically rated themselves high. However, after the focus group discussions and interviews, most teachers changed their ratings to a lower level of fidelity of implementation. It was interesting to hear teachers make comments like, "I did PALS exactly, and I only changed a few things." This example illustrates the complexities of truly testing an intervention in schools where there is very little daily control over implementation. There were many instances of teachers thinking they had done the PALS intervention exactly, yet the walkthrough data, group discussions and interviews revealed something different. Many teachers shortened the timeframe for

PALS. Additionally, several teachers revealed that they allowed students to work alone. The full analysis of the PALS student data and the teacher fidelity of implementation data can be found in Appendix C.

The in-depth professional development for district and school administrators was mandated by the assistant superintendent and superintendent. All administrators were required to participate in two full day literacy professional learning sessions in the summer and then one session per month over the course of three years. The conditions for change existed in NCCVT.

Results of BSD Improvement Effort

The results of the improvement efforts in BSD must be measured with different metrics. Currently in BSD, I am building the conditions for change. Unlike, NCCVT, BSD was not primed for change. When I first came to BSD, I was struck by the level of teacher autonomy. I was not able to locate any secondary reading curriculum or intervention programs. When I visited each secondary school and spoke with the building-level administrators they were unable to clearly define what, if any, specific types of reading interventions were being used for struggling readers.

Based on these observations, I realized quickly that I had to create the conditions for change. These conditions included changing infrastructure; specifically, I had to change the secondary schedules. Additionally, we needed to adopt a universal screener for reading for our secondary schools. I needed to provide training and professional learning for all teachers focused on evidence-based reading strategies. I needed to create a sense of urgency about the low levels of achievement for our low socioeconomic,

Latino and African American sub-groups. Creating this sense of urgency has been challenging.

From the outside looking in, using previous years' state test score averages, one would assume that all BSD students were achieving at high levels. However, when I disaggregated the previous years' state test scores, it was clear that our highest-performing students stayed high and our lowest-performing students remained low or regressed.

I hypothesized that the resistance to change in BSD might be related to the demographic composition of our district compared with that of NCCVT. In NCCVT, there is a small demographic gap between African American students and Caucasians, and a small gap between students reporting low-socioeconomic and higher socioeconomic status. NCCVT pulls students from all over the county which provides a diverse group of students not bound by one set of community beliefs. They represent the beliefs of many different communities.

Comparatively, in BSD the gap between African Americans and Caucasians is larger, and the gap between students reporting low-socioeconomic and higher socioeconomic status is wide. Additionally, although BSD is only 35 square miles in size, the community is split between the upper middle class and poor. The divide in socioeconomic status, which mirrors our racial divide, presents challenges in creating equitable systems for all students. BSD tested its commitment to all students when we moved forward with the secondary schedule change. If we had not changed the schedule we would not have been able to implement a comprehensive secondary RTI system. This

one change in infrastructure sent a message to all BSD employees that the status quo was unacceptable.

Although the change process in BSD has been comparatively slower than that in NCCVT, changes are happening. William Bridges, Ph.D., writes in his book, *Managing Transitions*, "it's not the changes that will do you in, it's the transitions" (p. 3). Changes are situational, while transitions are psychological. I have spent a tremendous amount of time managing both the situational and psychological transitions that are occurring. In BSD, teachers have traditionally resisted changes to the schedule and curriculum. Therefore, when a major scheduling change actually occurred it was imperative to manage the initial situational change. Currently, I am managing the psychological transitions. Teachers are now forced to change their instructional practices to fit a 90-minute block. Many teachers are struggling to change their practices in order to keep students engaged for 90 minutes. This level of struggle can have a psychological impact. I am managing this transition by providing professional development.

Chapter 5

IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

Results of the Overall Approach

My project had the following goals: 1) implement a comprehensive RTI literacy model to identify and monitor individual student's areas of need, 2) provide a specific, evidence-based reading intervention, PALS, to students who read below grade level, and 3) provide in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction to secondary instructional leaders.

In NCCVT, I was able to achieve all of these goals. In NCCVT, the outcome of these goals was positive results for both students and leaders. I was able to implement a comprehensive RTI model based on students' need. The PALS implementation yielded positive results for students where the level of implementation was high. The retrospective article for publication, Appendix E, highlights the impact of the in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction.

In BSD the impact of the goals is yet to be measured due to the conditions that are not present. Currently teachers and leaders do not know enough about evidence-based reading practices and RTI frameworks. However, those conditions for change are being built. In BSD we have adopted a universal screener, which allows us to measure students' reading ability. Therefore, we can now identify and place students within a

literacy continuum of services. The secondary schedule change has provided the opportunity for struggling students to acquire additional literacy skills in Tier II or Tier III interventions. The Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy cohort is the first step in providing in-depth professional development about reading research and effective reading instruction for school based leaders.

What Worked Particularly Well

In both NCCVT and BSD the planning process that I used worked well. In both situations, I used Kotter's (1996) eight-step process for change and Bridges' (2009) protocol for managing transitions. Because both change initiatives were grounded in data and research and were transparent, it was difficult for others to provide valid arguments to maintain a status quo.

What Needs To Be Redesigned

The need for school and district administrators to know more about research is critical to any change initiative. In re-designing this project, I would create a mandatory professional training for administrators only. The training would include in-depth training in instructional planning, evaluation of student work and evidence that teachers' evaluations were connected to evidenced-based instructional practices and research studies.

Additionally, the requirements for the State issued School Leader I credential should include a graduate-level course in literacy. Furthermore, institutions of higher education should create courses that are focused on research-based literacy instruction for

current or aspiring administrators. This course should focus on literacy research,

evaluation, and effective instructional practices.

What to Tell Others

In order to make major changes in literacy achievement for struggling adolescents

and to build effective literacy leadership, a belief system about learning must be shared

and continually supported by all members of the organization. All decisions must

support the belief system. When contradictions occur, students and staff are given mixed

messages. Specifically, if struggling students need more time in their schedule for Tier II

or Tier III interventions, then we must build a schedule that supports this. If teachers

need more training on evidenced-based literacy strategies and frameworks, then we must

provide on-going training. If building leaders are going to support effective literacy

instruction, they must read and understand reading research and set an expectation for

implementation in every classroom.

Next Steps

As the conditions in BSD continue to change, my next steps will focus on high-

quality in-depth professional development and training for teachers and administrators. I

am currently changing the district professional development plan to limit the types of PD

for which teachers can earn credit. Teachers will only be given credit for participating in

PD that has a research-base that the District supports. By limiting the offerings, I can

create more consistency and a laser-like focus. The new plan will offer face-to-face and

digital opportunities for learning, all of which will be grounded in research. We will

utilize a digital Learning Management System (LMS), Schoology, to deliver PD through

an online platform. This online platform will help us create online PD modules that can

be used and archived.

Chapter 6

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

As I reflect on my time in the Administration and Public Policy program, I realize how much I have learned about research and leadership. In this section, I will discuss how I have grown as a scholar, problem solver and partner.

Growth of My Skills as a Scholar

As a scholar, I believe that my research skills have improved during my time as a doctoral student. I know where to find valid, reliable research that has been vetted by other researchers and scholars. I find myself constantly questioning any type of research I read, whether it be related to my work or my personal life. I provide research-based articles and studies for others to read during district-level meetings as well as in school-based meetings. As a leader, I constantly question the research base of any programs that are being considered for implementation.

In the area of literacy, I have increased my knowledge of evidenced-based strategies and frameworks. After learning about the PALS framework (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998), through *Remedial and Special Education*, I began to see the interdisciplinary connection between literacy research and remedial and special education. This was eye opening for me. Before my doctoral coursework, I would not have thought about reading or subscribing to this journal.

As I look back on my first doctoral class, EDUC 810: Models/Practices of

Instructional Leadership with Sharon Walpole, Ph.D., I can see where my passion for

research was ignited. In that class we were required to read research about reading

instruction and then create a school-wide reading initiative. After reading several

research studies for the class, I remember asking Dr. Walpole, "Why don't I know this

already? Why aren't we reading these types of research studies in our district during

PD?" Her response was, "That's why you are here. You have to make this happen in

your district." From that point forward, I have made every effort to infuse credible

research in all district- and school-level decisions.

During professional development sessions with teachers and administrators, I

require all participants to read about the research base of a program or read the actual

studies that are related to the program. For example, when I train teachers in PALS, I

first require the participants to read, *Help with Teaching Reading Comprehension:*

Comprehension Instructional Frameworks (Liang & Dole, 2006). This article outlines

five instructional frameworks that have been proven, by research, to be effective in

teaching reading comprehension. PALS is one of the five instructional frameworks

outlined in the article. I use this article to begin the PALS training to show the

participants that I actually use research to make choices about which instructional

frameworks I want to see implemented. I also use the article to explicitly show teachers

the types of professional articles they should be reading. This article was published in the

Reading Teacher, a professional journal published by the International Literacy

Association, ILA. I require participants to go the ILA website. I show the participants

that the ILA also publishes the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* as well as *Reading Research Quarterly*. I say to participants, "I am a member of this professional organization and I read these journals. You should join this organization and read these journals too." Too often, participants have said to me, "I had no idea this organization or these journals existed." This type of statement and others like it solidify the fact that I need to present and use research in professional development to reinforce the importance of doing so, as well as model the use of research for teachers and administrators.

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Growth of My Skills as a Problem Solver

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My commitment to reading and using research to make decisions has shaped my ability to problem solve. As a leader, you are constantly faced with decisions. If your decisions are not grounded in research, the outcomes are questionable from the start. As a district leader, I make my thinking and problem solving very transparent through detailed communication documents. As stated previously, utilizing Kotter's (1996) eight steps for change and Bridges (2001) protocol for managing transitions, I am able to show others how to problem solve. I created Appendix D, a resource guide for literacy leaders, as an example of transparent problem solving that is focused on literacy and leadership.

What has been clear during my leadership journey is the fact that problem solving is not the hardest part of being an effective leader. The hard part to any change initiative is the actual implementation of the change and the management of the change. When I reflect upon the changes that needed to occur in BSD in order to implement a secondary RTI model the problem was not the schedule, or the lack of curriculum--the problem was an intransigent belief system. The answers to most of our challenges in BSD are actually

very clear. The question is: Are we willing to challenge the current belief system in order to change the outcomes for all students? The psychological and emotional changes that need to occur in BSD are potentially volatile. We still have many teachers and administrators who want to go back to the old schedule, or to the way we used to do things. What they don't realize is that there is no schedule that dictates achievement. It all boils down to effective instruction and an environment where students, families, faculty, and staff feel important. Changing the schedule was the physical change that needed to take place. Changing people's hearts and their minds is where the hard work lies.

Growth of My Skills as a Partner

My positon as Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PK-12, affords me the ability to partner with many professionals in K-12 systems and in higher education. As a partner, I believe that it is critically important to know what your vision is for a partnership is and how you will work together. These pieces must be clearly defined before any partnership can be solidified. When I partner with building administrators on PD efforts, I clearly define my role and their role and together we clearly define our expectations of one other. I do this in all partnerships.

In both NCCVT and BSD, I was able to create a partnership with university professors and researchers.   In both districts, I created partnerships with the University of Delaware to help train teachers and administrators.

In NCCVT, I worked as a partner with the other administrators on our team. The retrospective article, Artifact E, co-written with Joseph Jones, Ed.D. highlights how those

partnerships resulted in positive outcomes for students, teachers, and administrators. We purposefully started the article using the word *magic*. Our time together was magical. My ability to partner with my administrative peers and their ability to partner with me resulted in positive outcomes. However, as I currently reflect on our choice in using the word *magic*, I question why changes that result in positive outcomes happen so rarely. Institutional change shouldn't be rare or magical. Transformational change should be the result of hard work, thoughtful planning, and careful execution.

Currently, in BSD, my greatest challenge is working in partnerships where my belief system about children is opposite that of some of my partners. As an administrator, my only job is to protect children. I need to protect them from ineffective practices that have gone on too long by providing high-quality professional development. I need to protect them from an intransigent belief system by constantly challenging the beliefs of my partners. I need to protect them from an infrastructure that doesn't allow for extra time by building a schedule that does. I need to protect them from a funding system that doesn't provide our neediest students more resources by advocating for more resources. I need to protect them from the system that was built to help them.

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Appendix A

RESEARCH BASE FOR PEER-ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES:

A RESOURCE FOR LITERACY LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Introduction

Reading is the gateway to success for all areas of life. Research suggests that if a child cannot read at a proficient level by the end of third grade, that child will struggle for the remainder of his/her formal schooling (Torgesen & Burgess, 1998). The ability to read at or above grade level is a necessity, yet many students enter school with weak language skills and very little exposure to literacy. This may contribute to the fact that nearly all classrooms serve a diverse group of readers. In the very same classroom students can be well below grade level, on grade level, above grade level and well above grade level. Many teachers struggle to keep all students engaged while meeting the needs of individual students.

With an intense national focus on reading proficiency, educators need instructional frameworks that are effective and easy to embed into the regular school day. An instructional framework is a set of ideas or principles organized to guide instruction. Supplemental reading frameworks for adolescents embed multiple evidence-based strategies together to focus on comprehension as the long-term outcome. Intervention frameworks that go beyond foundational skills combine, in a skillful way, the progression of fluency and comprehension.

Why are fluency and comprehension important and related?

Teachers may struggle to provide real comprehension instruction. In part, this may be because reading fluency, the ability to read with accuracy, automaticity, and prosody, has a large impact on reading comprehension. Fluency forms a bridge from decoding to comprehension (Rasinski, 2004). Reading fluency may require the ability to decode and comprehend text at the same time (Samuels, 2006). Fluent readers sound natural as they read. They read at an appropriate rate and with appropriate expression. In contrast, dysfluent readers read too slowly and sound monotone. This slow, monotone processing of text impairs comprehension.

Many times struggling readers can read words aloud yet they cannot retell the main idea of the reading. In this instance, the reader can decode the words on the page but the reader does not understand or remember text ideas. Readers need to engage in decoding and comprehension at the same time. This can take extensive practice for struggling readers.

Can the same interventions for younger children work for adolescent readers?

While much is known about how to serve the needs of younger readers, we must be careful in adopting those same strategies for older ones. *Reading Interventions for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Meta-Analysis with Implications for Practice* (Scammacca, Roberts, Vaughn, Edmonds, Wexler, Reutebuch, & Torgesen, 2007) concludes that instructional recommendations for older readers differ only slightly from those for younger readers. These recommendations can be organized into five general areas: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation. Louisa Moats

(2001) suggests that the choice of reading interventions depends on a student's instructional need and what is likely to work best, not on chronological age or grade level. A student who has difficulty decoding words should receive instruction in word study whether he is in first grade, fourth grade, or 12th grade.

Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents (Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, Decker, Roberts, Vaughn, Wexler, Francis, Rivera, & Lesaux, 2007) suggests key considerations in implementing reading interventions for adolescents. Torgesen and colleagues (2007) suggest adjusting the focus and intensity of interventions according to individual student needs. Older students vary greatly in both the causes and manifestations of their reading problems. First, assessment practices must support the identification and progress monitoring of specific needs. Second, while some students require interventions that can be carried out in content-area classrooms (e.g., supporting vocabulary learning in a science classroom) others need instruction better suited to small, intensive learning environments (e.g., learning word-recognition strategies). This targeted support is most effective when provided in well-planned, regular small-group sessions over a period of time.

The Cognitive Model of Reading Assessment (McKenna & Stahl, 2003) depicted below graphically portrays the factors that result in a child's ability to comprehend grade-level materials. The Cognitive Model of Reading Assessment begins with one central question—can an individual comprehend grade-level materials? If the answer is no, teachers must systematically assess until the child's underlying weaknesses in reading are revealed. When there is evidence that a child cannot comprehend grade-level materials,

the process requires teachers to track leftward along the three strands of factors until all of the possible factors contributing to the child's lack of success are examined. Formal and informal diagnostic tools can be used to assess each factor until a diagnosis can be made.

The Cognitive Model
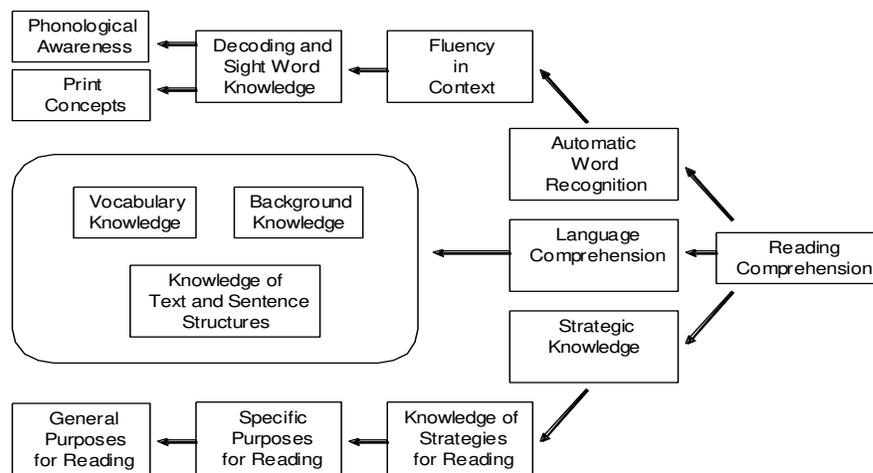
Based on McKenna and Stahl's (2003) Cognitive Model, we know that if a student cannot comprehend grade level texts, fluency and limited vocabulary may be at fault. The report of the National Reading Panel (2000) cited reading fluency as a key element in successful reading programs in the primary grades. Recent research conducted by Rasinski, Padak, McKeon, Wilfong, Friedaer, & Heim (2005) at Kent State University suggests that reading fluency is a significant variable in secondary students' reading and overall academic development.   The work done at Kent State University's reading clinic indicated that difficulties in reading fluency are seen in the majority of students in grade 2 through 8 who are referred to the clinic for reading difficulties. The primary reasons for student referrals are difficulty with reading comprehension; however,

researchers found that a lack of fluency accompanied the difficulties with reading comprehension. Although the research did not show a causal link between fluency and comprehension, it did show a correlation worthy of attention.

Reading fluency develops with contextual reading practice. Repeated reading is the most powerful way to increase reading fluency. Through repeated readings students are able to increase their fluency as well as their comprehension. Practice on specific passages generalizes to improved performance across all reading (Rasinski, et al., 2005). A second scientifically-proven method for developing fluency is assisted reading. Assisted reading is a strategy where a student is reading a passage while simultaneously listening to a fluent oral rendering of the same text by a person or persons or on a previously recorded version of the reading.

In addition to improving fluency, automatic word recognition must be improved as well. Learners need to develop automatic word recognition through the extensive reading of connected text rather than simply developing the ability to recognize words in isolation (Kuhn, 2004). Kuhn (2004) evaluated repeated reading and wide-reading approaches for their usefulness in improving fluency for young readers. Kuhn (2004) looked at two strategies for promoting both accurate and automatic word recognition and prosody. She found that both the repeated-reading group and the wide-reading group showed improvements in terms of prosody and word recognition. However, only the wide-reading group showed growth in terms of comprehension. These findings may inform thinking about program design for older readers.

These studies found that implementing repeated fluency practice increased

fluency. Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) incorporates repeated reading and assisted reading, two evidence-based reading strategies. PALS is used for primary students as well as secondary students.

What is PALS?

PALS,is a class-wide peer tutoring framework.   The PALS framework embeds fluency and comprehension into a systematic, timed structure. Students are engaged as readers and coaches. When engaged in the PALS framework the reader reads aloud, makes predictions, and summarizes the main idea. The coach listens for accurate oral reading, accurate word recognition, and accurate predictions and coaches the reader to think about the reading process during oral reading (Fuchs & Fuchs, l998).

In order for students to increase their ability to comprehend text, they need to read text fluently. The PALS framework tackles both fluency and comprehension. The procedures strategically force students to build the bridge between fluency and comprehension. Additionally, the peer coach keeps the reader engaged and prompts the student through difficulties.

PALS for grades 2-12 employs three activities in which two students, a higher-achieving reader and a lower-achieving reader, are paired together to read aloud. Each of the partners takes on the role of Coach and Reader. Using a timed structure, the first reader reads a pre-selected text aloud for 5 minutes. During this time the Coach reads along silently and listens for mistakes. The Coach uses structured coaching language to correct the reader. After five minutes the reader and coach switch roles. After Partner Reading, the students take turns retelling what was just read. For two minutes both

students engage in a back and forth retell. After Partner Retell, the first reader begins

reading from where the last reader left off. During this five-minute reading, the reader

stops after each paragraph to engage in Paragraph Shrinking, telling the main idea in ten

words or less. The first reader continues to read and paragraph shrink for five minutes.

After five minutes, the reader and coach switch roles and continue this activity for an

additional five minutes. Finally, the last activity is called Prediction Relay. The first

reader makes a prediction before reading. The reader continues to read for half of a page.

The reader stops to check his/her prediction and summarizes the main idea of the half

page. This continues for five minutes. After five minutes, the reader and coach switch

roles. In total PALS takes 32 minutes for both readers to engage in all of the mandatory

activities. Below I provide a visual representation of these activities.

PALS Procedures

		Reader A	**Reader B**
Partner Reading	5 minutes	Reads aloud	Coaches Reader A
	5 minutes	Coaches Reader B	Reads aloud from where Reader A stopped.
Partner Retell	2 minutes	Begins retell	Continues retell
Paragraph Shrinking	5 minutes	Reads aloud and paragraph shrinks after each paragraph	Coaches Reader A
	5 minutes	Coaches Reader B	Reads aloud from where Reader A stopped and paragraph shrinks after each paragraph
Prediction Relay	5 minutes	Makes a prediction and reads aloud for half a page, paragraphs shrinking after each half page	Coaches Reader A
	5 minutes	Coaches Reader B	Makes a prediction and reads aloud for half a page,

			paragraphs shrinking after each half

Does PALS Work?

Before implementing PALS in a school, I reviewed research. I located two research reviews and eight empirical studies that employed some version of PALS and tested reading outcomes. Taken together, these studies suggest that PALS can be an effective tool for teaching.

Liang and Dole (2006) identified instructional frameworks (PALS among them) that teachers can use to improve their students' comprehension. They argue that each of the individual pieces of PALS has a strong research base. Moreover, as a whole program, PALS provides teachers and students a cohesive framework that marries several evidence-based pieces.

PALS is rated on the What Works Clearinghouse as an evidence-based practice for students with learning disabilities, English Language Learners, and adolescent learners. To better understand the research evidence, I will summarize it with attention ages and characteristics of students participating.

"A Spoonful of Direct Instruction," an action research project cited in *Direct instruction with playful skill extensions: Action research in emergent literacy development* (Keaton, Palmer, Nicholas & Lake, 2007) explains the systematic approach of PALS teacher-directed lessons and playful extensions of PALS lessons for kindergarten students. The intent of this action research was to connect developmentally appropriate practices with direct instruction. The study yielded positive effects. Skills

taught as part of the PALS program were practiced during the skillful play. Although this action research project only had 20 students participate, it does show that implementing the PALS program into a regular kindergarten classroom structure is feasible.

Mathes, Torgesen, Clancy-Menchetti, Santi, Nicholas, Robinson & Grek (2003) compared teacher-directed and peer-assisted instruction for struggling first grade readers. Twenty-two general education first grade teachers of 89 diverse students who were low performing in reading participated in this study. Seven teachers conducted first-grade PALS, 7 teachers conducted small-group direct instruction lessons and 8 teachers served as the control group. The results of the study showed that both the PALS students and the direct instruction students outperformed the students in the control group. However, there was no statistical difference in pre- and post-test reading achievement measures between the students in the PALS group and the students in the direct instruction group. It may be that in a diverse classroom with a wide spectrum of student needs, a combination of PALS and small teacher-directed groups could yield the most positive results for struggling students. As educators restructure their classrooms and lessons, PALS provides additional opportunities for students to read together.

Struggling readers can be nonresponsive to supplemental reading programs that attempt to help them increase their ability to read. McMasters, Fuchs, Fuchs & Compton (2005) utilized a dual discrepancy approach to identify 56 first grade children whose reading performance and growth rates were substantially below those of average readers, indicating that they were not responding to PALS. The non-responsive readers were assigned to one of three groups: PALS, Modified PALS, and tutoring by a trained

research assistant. In this study PALS served as the control. Modified PALS included three alterations: fewer sounds and words were introduced at one time; the coach modeled the sounds and words for the Reader before the Reader read; and greater emphasis was placed on phonological awareness and decoding skills. There were no statistically significant differences on reading measures among the identified readers. The tutoring by an adult group was most promising for reducing unresponsiveness.

Unresponsive readers can be so far behind that they need individualized, specialized reading instruction that is delivered by a highly trained specialist. PALS is not meant to take the place of a highly skilled teacher or reading specialist who can accurately identify an unresponsive struggling reader's needs.

Is PALS an effective framework for use with English Language Learners (ELLs)? Many ELLs struggle to learn how to read. McMaster, Kung, Han & Cao (2008) studied the effectiveness of Kindergarten PALS for ELLs on early reading skills acquisition. Results of pre- and post-test measures of phonemic awareness and letter-sound recognition suggest that K-PALS was as effective for ELLs as for non-ELLs.

Calhoun, Al Otauba, Cihak, King & Avalos (2007) studied the effect of PALS on reading achievement of first graders in a tow-way bilingual immersion program. Students who received the PALS treatment had statistically significant gains on phoneme segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency and oral reading fluency.

Does PALS help ELL students with learning disabilities? Saenz, Fuchs & Fuchs (2005) studied the effects of PALS on reading performance of native Spanish-speaking students with learning disabilities and their low-, average- and high-achieving Spanish-

speaking peers. PALS yielded favorable outcomes on measures of reading achievement for ELLs with LD and non-disabled Spanish-speaking students.

Can PALS be scaled up to adolescent struggling readers? Fuchs, Fuchs & Kazan (1999) studied the effects of PALS on high school students' literacy development and their beliefs about reading when PALS was implemented in remedial and special education classes. In this study, nine classes were assigned to PALS and nine classes were assigned to contrast treatments. The PALS teachers implemented PALS with the entire class five times every two weeks for 16 weeks. The PALS students' reading comprehension grew more than the students in the contrast groups. The Comprehensive Reading Assessment Battery, CRAB, was used to assess the students' comprehension. Additionally, the PALS students reported more positive beliefs about working to improve their reading ability. Interestingly, the PALS students' fluency did not improve compared to the contrast groups. Homogenously grouped PALS students being served in special education classes may need more than 10 minutes of sustained oral reading to increase fluency.

Calhoon (2005) studied the effects of PALS on the teaching of phonological skills and reading comprehension for struggling middle school students (grade 6-8) who were identified as having a learning disability and reading at the third-grade level or below. Thirty-eight students were identified and divided into two groups, a control group who received traditional whole-group instruction and a group that utilized peer-mediated frameworks. The peer-mediated group utilized Linguistics Skills Training, LST and

PALS. The LST/PALS group outperformed the control group in reading comprehension. Interestingly, there was no difference in the increase in fluency between the two groups.

If fluency is the bridge to comprehension, why did fluency not increase in the LST/PALS group? Research suggests that a necessary skill for increasing fluency is automaticity in phonological skills. Since the students in this study were significantly below grade level, an intense focus on phonological skills was taught through the LST framework. As the students continue to increase their phonological skills their fluency should increase.

Taken together, these studies suggest several useful lessons. PALS can be implemented in regular classrooms or in intervention settings. PALS can improve reading comprehension for students with a variety of different profiles, but it may not always improve fluency for students with disabilities. Finally, PALS can be implemented across a broad range of grade levels, making it a very flexible, high-utility routine.

Implementation Issues

Bringing research into practice in schools is unbelievably difficult. Unfortunately, despite overwhelming evidence to change or try something different, teachers often revert to what they have always done. In order for lasting change to occur, intense on-site technical assistance needs to be a priority. Using a randomized control trial at scale over two years, Stein, Berends, Fuchs, McMaster, Saenz, Yen, Fuchs and Compton (2008) examined the effect on student reading outcomes of Kindergarten PALS, which previously proved effective in increasing student reading achievement. They also examined the level of on-site technical assistance required. The researchers

measured student reading achievement, fidelity of implementation and teachers'

perception of school context. The two-year experimental study in 67 urban, suburban

and rural schools with 259 teachers and 2,959 students yielded positive results.

The most positive results were facilitated by the fidelity with which teachers

implemented the Kindergarten PALS program.   The levels of support the teachers

received impacted the fidelity of implementation. Three levels of support were offered:

workshop, booster and helper. The workshop group included a one-day K-PALS

workshop. The booster group added two follow-up sessions. The helper group provided

the teachers with a one-day K-PALS workshop, two follow-up sessions and weekly

technical assistance by a trained graduate assistant. As hypothesized in the study, the

teachers in the helper group had the highest level of fidelity of implementation.

However, the helper groups' scores were not statistically significantly higher than the

booster groups. This would suggest that providing booster sessions, which are more cost

effective, with high levels of fidelity of implementation of the K-PALS program, will

yield positive student outcomes.

Summary and Conclusions

PALS is certainly a low-cost intervention. The PALS framework is relatively

inexpensive and relatively easy to teach to students. PALS can be used with nearly any

connected text, and it yields high levels of student engagement. Finally, PALS ensures

that students get immediate feedback from their partner. Consistent with the Cognitive

Model of Reading Assessment, it tackles the important link between fluency and

comprehension. Given its potentially positive effects on comprehension, it makes sense

to try to implement PALS with students with weak comprehension and to track its effects.

It is clear that the fidelity of implementation and the level of support directly impact the effect that PALS can have on struggling readers. If we are to implement PALS, we will need to develop consistent and directive training materials, provide both initial and follow-up sessions, and equip administrators with the knowledge and skills to provide monitoring and support.

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Appendix B

PALS TRAINING MATERIALS

The PALS training materials were adapted from the published PALS materials created by Fuchs and Fuchs (2001). I bought the *PALS Reading- High School Manual* from the PALS website: https://kc.vanderbilt.edu/**pals** . When I received the manual it was hard to read and the photocopied examples were from elementary schools. I adapted the scripted training lessons from the manual and created the following training materials. The PALS PowerPoint was used to train PALS teachers and to train students to use the PALS framework. PALS training for the teachers took place over three full days during the summer. The teachers were able to give feedback regarding the materials and I adjusted accordingly. I also create a DVD that featured two Howard students using the PALS framework. The PALS DVD was given to all PALS teachers to use with their students.

The PALS training for students took place during the first two weeks of school. This allowed for the teachers to chuck the process and give students an opportunity to practice the PALS procedures with different short texts. Each day, a part of the PALS procedure was introduced to the students and then the students practiced that particular procedure. After two weeks, all of the students were familiar with the PALS procedures.

Welcome to PALS Project

We are going to develop the reading and writing skills you need to be successful here.

Weekly Schedule

Day 1	• Work with a partner to read and discuss
Day 2	• Reread • Write about what you read
Day 3	• Work with a partner to read and discuss
Day 4	• Work with your partner to edit; submit your work on Blackboard
Day 5	• Work with a partner to read and discuss

PALS Overview

- We'll do PALS for about 40 minutes every other day during this semester
- There are four activities:
    1. Partner Reading (10 minutes)
    2. Story Retell (2 minutes)
    3. Paragraph Shrinking (10 minutes)
    4. Prediction Relay (10 minutes)

You will work in pairs and earn *reward* points to use toward books and magazines you can *keep!*

Day 1: Learning About PALS

- Listen to the beginning of a short story
- Meet your partners
- Understand the roles of Coach and Reader
- Establish the rules
- Hear about the points and rewards
- Learn how to ask for and give help
- Participate in Role-play

PALS Stands For:

Peer

Assisted

Learning

Strategies

- Remember to take notes so you don't miss anything!

Working in Partners

- Meet your partners!
- You will be working with these partners for the first 4 weeks of PALS.
    - Please remember to sit right next to your partner each day.

Your Roles in PALS

Coach	Reader
•The Tutor •Helps the Reader	•Reads Aloud to the Coach •Answers Questions
Each person will take on the role of Coach and Reader each day! Decide who will be the FIRST READER today.	

PALS Responsibilities

1. Talk *only* to your partner and *only* about PALS
2. Keep your voices low
3. *Cooperate* with your partner
   - Help when you partner asks for help
   - Listen to your partner
   - Give your partner positive feedback
4. **Try your best!** The more you try, and the harder you work, the better you'll read and understand

Earning PALS Points

PALS Points are given **every day** to students who are working hard!
   - At the end of each week, the student with the most points can either choose a book to keep or enter the running for a magazine subscription.
   - At the end of each month, the person with the most points can choose a book *and* a magazine subscription.

✓ Make sure that your Point Card has your name on it. Keep it at the corner of your desk every day.

Getting Points

- I am the only one who can award points
- The **first thing** you can get points for is *being focused*
   - How will I know if you are being focused?
- The **next thing** you can get points for is *cooperating*
   - How will I know if you are cooperating?

More Ways to Earn Points

- The **third thing** you can get points for is *catching mistakes.*
   - Why is it important that you catch your partner's mistakes and your own?
- The **last thing** you can get points for is using *helping strategies*
   - What does this sound like?

Keeping Track of Your Points

- **Every Friday,** I will collect your Point Card to see who earned the most. On Mondays, you can choose your prize!
- At the end of **every month,** I will tally the points from each week. The winner can then choose a book to take home.
- You have a chance to start over every week, and you can even win again and again!

Getting Help

- When you are the **Reader**, you will sometimes need help reading a word or answering a question
  - When you need help, *ask your* **Coach** *to help you. This helps both of you learn.*
- If you can't understand what your Coach is saying, ask for more help! Don't give up

Giving Help

- To help your partner as a **Coach**, you have to pay *close attention* to what your partner is reading and saying
- If you notice that your partner needs help but doesn't ask, *offer!*
  - "Do you need help?"
  - "If you need help, just ask."
  - "I'll be glad to help if you need it."

When You're Coaching

- **Don't just give the answer.**
  - Explain how your partner can find the answer.
- Ask questions that begin with What, Where, When, How, and Why to help your partner think about the problem.
- If you *can't help, ask the teacher* for help.
- Ask your partner to explain things back to you to find out if he or she *really* understands.

Let's See It

I'll be the **Reader**. Who wants to be my **Coach**?

1. While many of us frequently do something nice for others, we almost always mention our acts of kindness to someone else. When we do this, we are secretly seeking their approval.
2. When we share our own niceness with someone else, it makes us feel like we are thoughtful people. It reminds us of how nice we are and how deserving we are of kindness.

Day 2: Lesson Objectives

After this lesson, you should be able to:

- Organize your materials
- Conduct Partner Reading
  - This includes reading aloud and Story Retell
- Identify and correct reading errors
- Ask for and give help to your partner

Setting Up Your Things

FIRST READERS:
- Take out the PALS guide and put it at the top of your desk

SECOND READERS:
- Take our your Points Card and put it on the corner of your desk

What's With the Cards?

The PALS Guides
- This card will help you with each reading activity
- If you get stuck, check the card to see what you can do next

The Points Card
- Write your name on the Point Card
- This card keeps track of all your points
- You and your partner will have opportunities to earn PALS points daily

---

Now What?

FIRST READERS:
1. Take out the short story in your folder.
2. Turn to the correct starting page
3. Place the story between you and your partner

Let's practice how to set up our desks for PALS
(Quickly and Quietly)

Partner Reading Procedures

- **FIRST READERS** read aloud for 5 minutes
  - During this time, **SECOND READERS** act as coaches
    - ✓ Coaches listen carefully to their partner and help with careless mistakes and difficult words

Remember: following these procedures will earn you and your partner more PALS points!

When Reading Aloud, Remember:

- Read carefully
- Read quickly
- Read with expression

What does it mean to read with expression?

Five Fabulous Minutes

- After the first 5 minutes, partners will switch jobs.
  - When you switch jobs, the Second Reader will begin reading where the First Reader left off
- The FIRST READER then becomes the Coach.

Remember, SECOND READERS: read carefully, quickly, and with expression!

It's Okay to Make Mistakes

That's why we have **Coaches:**
- **Coaches** help find and correct mistakes
- **Coaches** should never feel bad about pointing out mistakes

  ✓ Working as a **Coach** to find and correct mistakes helps both you and your partner learn new words

Earn PALS Points

Catching mistakes and using helping strategies is a great way to earn more PALS points, **but you have to help your partner in a *nice, polite* way.**

What does a kind, tactful response look like?

Careless Mistakes While Reading:

- Leaving out (omitting) words
- Saying the wrong word
- Saying the wrong word ending
- Adding any extra words

Can you find my careless reading mistakes?

Choose Your Battles Wisely

- "Choose your battle wisely" is a popular phrase in parenting. But it is also useful for anyone who wants to live a happy life. It means life is filled with opportunities to choose between making a big deal out of something or simply letting it go. If you choose your battles wisely, you'll win the ones that are truly important.

  There will be times when you will want or need to argue, confront, or fight over practically anything. This turns their lives into a series of battles over "small stuff." There is so much frustration in that way of life. You tend to lose track of what is truly important.

Difficult Words

When you come to a difficult word, *try* to say it out loud.

- If you get it right, great job! *Keep going!*

- If you get it wrong, the **Coach** needs to help
  - After a few seconds, a Coach can ask if you need help or you can ask the Coach for help.

Choose Your Battles Wisely

Can you help me find and correct my errors?

- The smallest problem can be made into a big deal if you need to have everything work out in your favor. In my book, this is nothing more than the express route to unhappiness and frustration.

  The truth is, life is not always the way we want it to be. Other people often don't act as we would like them to. Moment to moment, there are parts of life that we like and others that we don't. There are always going to be people who disagree with you, people who do things differently, and things that don't work out. If you fight against this, you'll spend most of your life fighting battles.

Why Do These Strategies Matter?

It's important to *help* your partner instead of *telling* your partner the answer because you won't always be reading together

This means you both have to try your best!

What If Nothing Works?

Sometimes, strategies don't work. When this happens, the **Coach** can:

- Tell the Reader the word
- Ask the Reader to repeat the word
- Tell the Reader to read the sentence again

or

- If the **Coach** doesn't know the word either, raise your hand and **ask me for help!**

When to Just Give the Answer

- If the **Coach** tries two ways of helping and the Reader still doesn't know the word, then the **Coach** may tell the Reader the word

- Once your partner figures out the word, or once you tell your partner the answer, your partner should *always re-read the sentence* with the correct word in place

Coach Roles: Watch for Mistakes
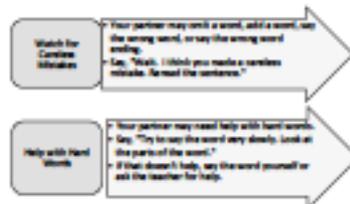
Let's Practice

FIRST READERS:
- Read aloud to your partner for 5 minutes

SECOND READERS (Coach):
- Use helping strategies to coach your partner through careless mistakes and difficult words

Okay, now let's switch!

Story Retell

After you have each read for 5 minutes, it's time for **Story Retell**. This is the *last step* in Partner Reading!

✓ Story Retell is retelling the most important information from the story in the order that it happened!

Story Retell shows that you understood what you read

Guide for Retelling

What did you learn first?

What did you learn next?

What did you learn next?

Student Roles During Retell

- The **FIRST READER** states what happened first in the reading
- The **SECOND READER** states what happened next
  - If you disagree with your partner about the order, you must explain why you disagree. Listen carefully to catch any mistakes!
- This back-and-forth continues for **2 minutes**, until you've both retold everything you read

Partner Reading Review

- **Books out and open as soon as we begin**
  - Take out your Question and Point Cards, too
- **FIRST READER reads for 5 minutes**
  - SECOND READER acts as Coach
- **SECOND READER reads for 5 minutes**
  - FIRST READER acts as Coach
- **Story Retell occurs for 2 minutes**
  - Each reader takes turns retelling what happened in the story, paying close attention to the correct order of events

Day 3: Paragraph Shrinking

- Practice Partner Reading and Story Retelling
- Introduce Paragraph Shrinking
- Practice Paragraph Shrinking

Student Objectives:

- Identify paragraphs
- State the Main Idea
- Ask for and give help appropriately

Review of PALS Procedures and Partner Reading

- Today we are going to learn the second reading activity of PALS called Paragraph Shrinking.

- Before we begin, lets review what we've learned about PALS and Partner Reading!

Story Retelling

- **FIRST READERS** get ready to tell the first thing that happened in the story.
- **SECOND READERS** follow along and get ready to state the next event in the story.
- Continue taking turns until your time is up.
- You have **2 minutes!**

Paragraph Shrinking

- You should have on your desk:
  - Notes Worksheet for Paragraph Shrinking
  - Question Card
  - Point Card
- In Paragraph Shrinking, you state the most important idea of a paragraph by shrinking the information in that paragraph to *10 words or less*

What's the Purpose?

- The purpose of Paragraph Shrinking is to improve understanding by finding the Main Idea!

Paragraph Shrinking

- If you were the FIRST READER in Partner Reading, you'll also be the FIRST READER in Paragraph Shrinking

- If you were the SECOND READER in Partner Reading, you'll also be the SECOND READER in Paragraph Shrinking

Identifying Paragraphs

- The first word is indented
- Only one person should speak per paragraph (dialogue, quotations, short paragraphs)
- Sometimes paragraphs continue to the next page!

Let's identify some paragraphs.

Short Paragraphs

- When paragraphs are very short, you'll need to read *more than one paragraph* so you'll have enough information to make a Main Idea Statement
- At the end of a short paragraph, the **Coach** will tell you whether to keep reading or stop. It's the **Coach's job** to decide when to stop reading

When There's More Than One

- If there is *more than one* important Who or What in a paragraph, you *can* name the two or three people, places, or things that paragraph is mainly about
  - When doing your Paragraph Shrinking, these two or three important Whos or Whats only count for one of your 10 words!

Secrets to Paragraph Shrinking

- Name the who or what.

- Tell the most important thing about the who or what.

- Say the main idea in 10 words or less.

Let's Practice

- I'm the reader, and you are all my coaches.
- Stop and correct me like you would during Partner Reading
- After I read, ask me the Paragraph Shrinking questions on the Question Card

Choosing Your Battles Wisely

- If you decide which battles are worth fighting and which are better left alone, you will live a more peaceful life. If your goal isn't to have everything work out perfectly but to live an almost stress-free life, you'll find that most leave you feeling frustrated and unhappy. Is it really important that you prove to your girlfriend that you are right and she is wrong? Do you need to tell someone when he or she has made minor mistakes? Does your choice of which restaurant or movie to go to matter enough to argue over it? Does a small scratch on your car really warrant a suit in small claims court? These and thousands of other small things are what people spend their lives fighting about. Take a look at your own list. If it's like mine used to be, you might want to look at your priorities.

The WH Questions

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

Coaches should ask WH questions when helping the reader!

WH Question Examples

- Who does the paragraph talk about?
- What happened when ...?

A Picture Says a Thousand Words

Let's try "Paragraph Shrinking" with a picture!

- **First**, figure out all the possible Whos and Whats in this picture
- **Next**, decide the *most important* Who or What.

Shrink the Picture

What's Important About ...

1. *Listen* as I read
2. Work with your partner to decide the most important thing about the two subjects, ...
3. Get ready to tell me your main idea statement. Remember to *shrink!*

"Basketball Tryouts"

- Randy woke up suddenly from a deep sleep. Outside, the morning light was changing from black to a light gray. Randy felt a scared feeling deep down in the bottom of his stomach. Today was the day for basketball tryouts at Westview School. This was the first year Westview School had a ball team and Randy wanted to be one of the first players. Randy looked at his alarm clock and saw that the hand pointed to 5:00 a.m. Randy groaned and turned over in bed. He had to wait three more hours until tryouts. When the alarm went off at 6:00 a.m., Randy got up and got dressed as fast as he could.

Good or Bad Main Idea? Why?

1. Randy
2. Basketball tryouts
3. Morning
4. "Randy wants to make the basketball team."

Practice

- FIRST READERS, begin with the second paragraph and read this page in quiet voices to your partner
- SECOND READERS, you are the Coach. Decide how much is a good amount to read, and tell your partner when to stop reading

Coaches

- Use the PALS Guide strategies
- If the most important Who or What is incorrect, say: "That's not quite right. Try again."
- If the Main Idea Statement is more than 10 words, say: "Shrink it."

Giving Help

- Ask your **Coach** for help if you're not sure of an answer
- Use the same helping strategies we use during Partner Reading

What do you do if neither the **Coach** nor the **Reader** knows the answer to a main idea question?

How to Help Your Partner
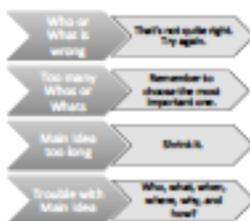
Review

1. When do we do Paragraph Shrinking?
2. Who reads first when we start Paragraph Shrinking?
3. Where does the FIRST READER begin reading during Paragraph Shrinking?
4. How long does the FIRST READER read during Paragraph Shrinking?
5. What happens at the end of 5 minutes?
6. What does the Reader do after every paragraph during Paragraph Shrinking?

PALS Points

You get PALS points for:

- Staying focused
- Cooperating with your partner
- Catching mistakes
- Using helping strategies

The Short Story

- **FIRST READERS**, you'll read for 5 minutes. Make a Main Idea Statement after every paragraph
- **Coaches**, check the parts and number of words of the Main Idea Statement
- Remember to use helping strategies!

Day 4: Prediction Relay

- Show Prediction Relay Cards
- Introduce Prediction Procedures
- Practice Prediction Relay

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Day 4: Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Make *reasonable* predictions
- Check your predictions
- Ask for and give help *appropriately*
- Conduct the entire Prediction Relay activity

Before the Lesson

1. Please sit with your partner

2. Distribute your materials
   - PALS folder, short story, Notes page, PALS Guide, Point Card

3. Set up your desk for PALS!

Procedures for Prediction Relay

1. The procedures for Partner Reading and Paragraph Shrinking stay the same each day
2. **Prediction Relay** occurs right after Paragraph Shrinking and lasts for **10 minutes**
3. The **purpose** of Prediction Relay is to improve comprehension by *making and checking predictions.*

Procedures for Prediction Relay (continued)

4. During the first 5 minutes of Prediction Relay, the FIRST READER continues reading new text, making a prediction and *checking* that prediction after each half page
5. For the next 5 minutes, the SECOND READER continues reading new text, making and checking predictions

What is a Prediction?

- A prediction is a *guess* about what could happen in the future
- Predictions are based on *information already learned*

Why are Predictions Important?

Predictions:
- Help you think about important parts of the story
  - Good readers think about what they will learn next

Making Good Predictions

Good predictions are **reasonable**
- Reasonable means the prediction is *likely* to happen based off evidence from the text
  - This means the prediction is something possible, not something impossible
- Remember: there can be *several* reasonable predictions

Can a Prediction Be Wrong?

Reasonable predictions don't always come true
- You can't always accurately predict what will happen. Sometimes, authors even try to mislead you
- However, as long as a prediction is reasonable, it's a good prediction

Prediction Relay Steps

1. Look at your Question Card. The steps on the Question Card are: Predict, Read, Check, and Shrink. FIRST READERS, get ready to predict, read, check, and shrink first!
2. The FIRST READER begins by making a starting prediction.
3. Next, the FIRST READER reads half a page of text.

Prediction Relay Steps

4. Then the FIRST READER checks the prediction.
   - The Coach asks: "Did the prediction come true?"
   - The Reader answers: "Yes", "No", or "I don't know yet."
     - Remember: the READER only answers "I Don't know yet" if he/she hasn't learned enough information from the text.

Prediction Relay Steps

5. Next, the Reader is asked to 'shrink' what was read.
   - The Coach asks WH questions from Paragraph Shrinking.
   - The Coach uses the helping procedures to make sure the statement is 10 words or less.
6. The FIRST READER repeats the steps (predict, read, check, and shrink) for the next half page of text.

Prediction Relay Steps

7. After 5 minutes, students switch jobs and the SECOND READER predicts, reads, checks, and shrinks.
   - Remember: the SECOND READER begins where the FIRST READER left off.
   - For the starting prediction, the SECOND READER may use the last prediction of the FIRST READER or make a new one.

Let's Practice!

* Based on the information in the picture, let's talk about what's happening and make reasonable predictions.

picture

What's Happening?

* Based on what we know, what do you think will happen next?
* Discuss your prediction with your partner
* Decide whether or not you have made a good prediction
* Remember that a good prediction must be *possible* (something that is likely to happen)

"Basketball Tryouts"

* At the end of the tryouts, Randy sat on the bench tired but happy. He knew he had done his best and that was really all that mattered. The coach began to call out the names of the boys who made the team...

Making Predictions from Stories

* Even if our predictions did not come true, we still made reasonable predictions based on the information we had
* Good readers *always* make predictions while they read

Prediction Relay: Giving Help

* When the **Reader** makes a prediction that is not reasonable, the **Coach** says: "That's not quite right!" and offers to help
* If neither the Reader nor the Coach knows the answer, the **Coach** raises his or her hand to signal the teacher for help, and the pair continues to work while waiting for the teacher

Guide Prediction Relay

- What do you think will happen next?
- Read half a page.
- Did the prediction come true?
- Name the Who or What.
- Tell the most important thing about the Who or What.
- Say the Main Idea in 10 words or less.

Let's Get Started

- First, lets practice Partner Reading and Paragraph Shrinking
  - Take out your notes for those two activities
- **Coach:** It is your job to make sure your partner is making predictions that are possible.
- **Reader:** You can ask your coach for help if you are having trouble

Earning PALS Points During Prediction Relay

- Staying focused
- Cooperating with your partner
- Catching mistakes
- Using helping strategies

Questions

- Now that we've practiced, what questions do you have?

Conducting Prediction Relay

- Take out *the designated short story*
- Who will be the FIRST READER and who will be the SECOND READER?
- SECOND READERS, find the place in your book where you stopped reading last

Review

- Let's review to make sure you understand everything about Prediction Relay!
- Also, make sure you completed the note taking sheet correctly

Wrap-Up

- You have now learned all the steps of the PALS program. Congratulations!
- Please keep in mind that we will implement PALS Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

Appendix C

PALS IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS

Introduction

High school literacy is an area of increasing concern for state and district leaders. Achievement data from the 2008-2009 school year for the NCCVT school district indicated that approximately 30% of entering ninth grade NCCVT students read below grade level as measured by state test scores and Lexile scores. Clearly this was an area where instructional improvements were necessary.

Based on my coursework, I argued that all incoming ninth graders who read below grade level should be given reading interventions based on their instructional needs. In addition, I argued that a secondary literacy instruction and intervention framework should be adopted at NCCVT. This framework would work in tandem with the RTI model. In *The Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide: Helping School Districts Transform into Systems that Produce Life-Changing Results for All Children* (McPeak, Trygg, Minadakis, & Diana, 2007) the Stupski Foundation identified the equity-based, Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) model, developed by the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (CRL) as an effective secondary literacy framework and model (presented below).

Content Literacy Continuum Model (CLC)

ELA Level I and II Advanced (Above Grade Level)	1-2 periods Core ELA materials with fidelity and enrichments
ELA Level I and II Benchmark (Grade level)	1-2 periods Core ELA materials with fidelity
ELA Level III Strategic (Basic, Below Basic, Approaching Grade Level)	An additional 1 or 2 periods within block Core materials with companion materials used to differentiate
ELA IV and V Intensive (Far Below Basic Grade Level)	2 periods in lieu of Core ELA Evidence-based program

The ELA courses at NCCVT supported Levels I, II, IV and V. Levels I and II were supported with our district-wide ELA curriculum and district-wide Honors English Curriculum. The Core ELA curriculum was aligned with state grade level expectations. Students who needed intensive intervention at Delcastle and Howard were enrolled in a computer-based intensive intervention called READ 180. They received 90-minutes of instruction in lieu of the core ELA curriculum, Level IV and V. Before 2009, Level III was not implemented in a strategic manner. The goal of Level III is to provide an additional one or two periods of differentiated instruction for those identified students. A Level III intervention that parallels the core ELA curriculum, but focuses on individual student's needs could accomplish this goal. The model I developed is presented below.

CLC Model with Interventions Specific to NCCVT

NCCVT's CLC Model	
ELA Level I and II Advanced (Above Grade Level)	District Approved English Course or Honors English Course: 1-2 periods

	Core ELA materials with fidelity and enrichments
ELA Level I and II Benchmark (Grade level)	District Approved English Course: 1-2 periods Core ELA materials with fidelity
ELA Level III Strategic (Basic, Below Basic, Approaching Grade Level)	Core ELA plus reading intervention, PALS, based on student need: An additional 1 or 2 periods within the school day Evidence-based program
ELA IV and V Intensive (Far Below Basic Grade Level)	READ 180: 2 periods in lieu of Core ELA Evidence-based program

I chose Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS, as the Level III reading intervention (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998). PALS is a type of classwide peer tutoring that is used to improve reading and math skills. Teachers pair lower and high performing students, and the partners work on a series of activities that address the skills that are causing problems. The pairs are changed regularly, giving all students the opportunity to act as coaches and players. PALS enables teachers to address individual student needs, as well as observe students and develop individual remedial lessons. It is a strategy that teachers can use to augment their existing reading curricula. PALS is comprised of 32-35 minutes of structured activities that are implemented 2-4 times a week. For a review of research on PALS, please see Appendix A.

PALS Reading, which has been developed for preschool through high school, is a structured, peer-mediated activity. In grades 2-6, PALS promotes reading fluency and comprehension. PALS activities include partner reading, paragraph shrinking (identifying the main idea), and prediction relay (predicting what will be learned next, reading aloud,

determining if the prediction was accurate, and summarizing the main idea). PALS does not require special reading materials. For PALS implementation in NCCVT, authentic full-length young adult literature was chosen because authentic connected text includes repetition of words, allowing the reader to increase word recognition quickly and because of its potential to motivate struggling adolescent readers.

The purpose of the evaluation is to answer two questions:

1) Are the PALS teachers implementing the PALS program with fidelity?

2) Did the reading achievement of PALS students increase?

To answers these two questions, I implemented a two-year evaluation to document the effects of the PALS intervention.

Method

Setting

The PALS framework was implemented for the first time in September of 2009 at Delcastle Technical High School, Hodgson Vocational Technical High School, Howard High School of Technology, and St. Georges Technical High School as a Level III Intervention. PALS was implemented for a second year beginning September 2010 at the four aforementioned schools. The New Castle County Vo-Tech PALS program was designed to improve the reading ability of ninth grade students who entered high school below grade level in reading, but who did not need intensive support. The intervention lasted for the first half of the school year both years.

Participants

Student participants were selected based on their initial Lexile score. A Lexile score between 600-850 prompted the student to be placed into the PALS intervention. During the first year of implementation, 232 students participated in the PALS intervention. During the second year, 199 students participated in the PALS intervention.

During the first year of implementation six teachers: one at Delcastle, one at Hodgson, three at Howard and one at St. Georges, were selected by their respective building administration to implement the PALS intervention.

During the second year of implementation I collaborated with building administrators to recruit additional teachers. During year two there were six PALS instructors: two at Delcastle, one at Hodgson, two at Howard, and one at St. Georges. Three of the original PALS instructors from year one were replaced with three new PALS instructions. Each teacher participant was given a code for reporting purposes.

Procedures

During the course of the PALS program, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) was used as a screening measure to determine whether or not a student was placed into the PALS program. SRI is a computer-adaptive comprehension test. Additionally, SRI was used to measure each student's reading comprehension, pre- and post-intervention.

The SRI provides Lexile score along with normative data. The Lexile Framework for Reading is an approach to comprehension measurement that matches readers to text. The Lexile Framework measures both reader ability and text difficulty on the same scale, called the Lexile scale. I chose the SRI as a screening tool and progress monitoring tool because it measures a reading comprehension in a valid and reliable way. This is

consistent with the cognitive model of reading assessment (McKenna & Stahl, 2003).

The SRI was administered to each student within the first week of the school year to acquire the pre-test score and then administered during the last week of the treatment to acquire the post-test score. The administration of the SRI was done via computer. Students were placed in the PALS intervention if they scored between 600 and 850 Lexile.

I trained teachers and administrators in program implementation; for training materials, see Artifact B. Both teachers and administrators had access to implementation guides and observation tools. In order to estimate fidelity, I conducted focus group discussions at the end of the treatment each year. I typed notes during the meetings and engaged in problem solving. Focus Group questions were used to guide the group:

- How difficult was it to require students to work in pairs?

- How difficult was it to assess the students' coaching language?

- How often did you switch pairs?

- How much time did you allow for partner reading, story retell, paragraph shrinking and prediction relay? Did you modify the times? If so, why?

- Did you implement the PALS framework three times per week?

- What factors were roadblocks to implementation?

- How did you "grade" the students?

- Did you explain PALS to your colleagues?

- Did you see students' motivation to read increase during the course?

- How often and when did you allow students to read silently?

- What books did the students like best?

Analytic Strategy

To estimate the effects of the intervention at the different sites, I used a public-access effect size calculator (http://www.psychometrica.de/effect_size.html#cohen) to generate Cohen's *d*. It is important to note, though, that the pre- and post-test intervention scores were treated as independent measures, although correlations between pre-test scores and post-test scores ranged from .66 to .78. I used Cohen's recommendations to interpret the effect sizes with .2 being small, .5 being moderate, and .8 being large.

To estimate fidelity, I reviewed notes from the focus groups and coded each teacher's responses and then met with each teacher individually. Based on the teachers' answers to these questions, I asked each teacher to rate his or her own level of implementation fidelity. The teachers could assign the following descriptors: Low, Low/Moderate, Moderate, Moderate/High, and High. Each teacher and I discussed fidelity until we agreed on a descriptor. I then combined these ratings for each school.

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

The data below report the Lexile scores and fidelity ratings during year one of implementation along with the teachers' reported level of fidelity.

PALS Results--Year One --Mean Gain Growth

	Valid N	Mean Fall (SD)	Mean Winter (SD)	Mean Gain Fall/Winter (SD)	Effect Size *d*	Level of Fidelity of implementation based on Focus Group Discussion and Interview
Delcastle	48	883.02 (182.58)	823.96 (154.86)	-59.06 (123.33)	-.35	Low/Moderate
Hodgson	29	817.32 (205.43)	875.75 (153.50)	58.43 (127.40)	.32	Moderate/High
Howard	86	901.52 (144.83)	963.07 (148.88)	61.55 (103.23)	.42	High
St. Georges	69	899.91 (170.35)	881.39 (217.55)	-18.52 (164.96)	-.10	Low/Moderate

Given the prescriptiveness of the PALS program and the level of training, large differences in teacher fidelity were not acceptable. In addition, there was a clear relationship between teacher fidelity and student achievement. The PALS intervention in the two schools with Low/Moderate levels of fidelity had no effect or a moderate negative effect on reading comprehension. The PALS intervention in the two schools with moderate to high levels of implementation had small to moderate positive effects on student achievement.

Focus group discussions and teacher meetings revealed that two teachers had supplemented the intervention with other instructional methods. For Year 2, these two teachers were replaced with teachers who were willing to approach the intervention with fidelity. I trained these new teachers using the same procedures described in Artifact B.

The data below report the Lexile scores and fidelity ratings during year two of implementation along with the teachers' reported levels of fidelity. Data continue to

indicate that high fidelity is associated with positive effects and that low fidelity is associated with no effects.

PALS Results--Year Two --Mean Gain Growth

	Valid N	Mean Fall (SD)	Mean Winter (SD)	Mean Gain Fall/Winter (SD)	Effect Size *d*	Level of Fidelity of implementation based on Focus Group Discussion and Interview
Delcastle	75	879 (102.46)	941 (110.83)	62.2 (113.82	.58	High
Hodgson	51	846.90 (172.84)	847.98 (166.38)	1.08 (113.82)	.01	Moderate
Howard	35	906.63 (148.77)	935.2 (158.84)	28.57 (99.12)	.19	Moderate/High
St. Georges	38	744.29 (226.96)	757.05 (244.37)	12.76 (93.8)	.05	Low/Moderate

Discussion

The PALS program produced mixed results in both implementation years. However, results were associated logically with teacher implementation. In Year 1, schools with higher levels of implementation saw growth in student comprehension, but those with lower levels of implementation did not. After additional professional development (and the removal of some of the low-fidelity PALS teachers) year two data indicated that stronger implementation at one school (Delcastle) was associated with a change from a negative effect to a positive one.

Three sets of outcome data (Hodgson, Howard and St. Georges) were puzzling, as implementation reports and observations indicated stronger implementation processes, but outcome data remained weak. Further investigation yielded a possible explanation: Hodgson and St. Georges did not follow the PALS placement protocol. Since neither school had access to a more intensive intervention than PALS, both opted to include students with much lower initial Lexile scores in the PALS classes. PALS was used for students for whom it was never intended. Further investigation of Howard's data yielded a possible explanation: of the two teachers in the PALS program, one teacher continued to teach PALS in year two, and that teacher's outcome data were positive with a mean Lexile growth of 68.5. The second PALS teacher was a teacher new to the field. His intervention yielded a negative Lexile mean of -39.0. This variation contributes to the overall weak effect size at Howard.

Limitations

The SRI yielded valid and reliable outcome data for this evaluation. Fidelity data, collected through periodic observations and teacher self-reports, may be less valid and reliable. To fully understand the impact of the PALS intervention, more systematic observational data are necessary. In addition, without a strict protocol for using initial Lexile scores for placement within PALS, it is difficult to get a complete picture of the students for whom the intervention can be expected to work. Finally, the pre- and post-test design, with no control group, is insufficient for claims of a causal relationship between PALS and achievement gains.

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Appendix D

A RESOURCES GUIDE FOR LITERACY LEADERS

I read the article, *The Effective Principal* by Pamela Mendels (2012), a senior writer for

The Wallace Foundation and reflected on the literacy initiative that I spearheaded at Delcastle

from 2009-2012. I interviewed Joseph Jones, Ed.D., former principal of Delcastle High, and

asked him how the five pivotal leadership skills cited in Mendels' article related to our literacy

initiative. I then synthesized the answers and wrote the following guide for school leaders.

During our work together at Delcastle Technical High School, both Joe and I worked with The

Wallace Foundation on several leadership initiatives. We were both familiar with the five key

practices and were evaluated on those practices during our work together at Delcastle.

The guide is intended to be a resource for school leaders. The purpose of the guide is to

make an explicit link between leadership skills and literacy. I envision that school leaders would

use this resource as a professional development tool for themselves and other leaders in the

building. Additionally, I envision leaders would use this guide as a planning tool. The guide is

specific to literacy; however, the planning process and the goal of linking research about

instruction to leadership skills can be used in other contexts.

The New Normal: Effective Principals Must Know A Lot About Literacy

In recent years much attention has been given to effective principal leadership

initiatives. Many policy pundits highlight the importance of the principal being an instructional

leader. However, research describing effective school and instructional leadership may fail to

connect evidenced-based instructional practices to leadership skills and practices. Pamela

Mendels (2012) writes that the most effective principals institute five key practices:

1. Shaping a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards;

2. Creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit, and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail;

3. Cultivating leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision;

4. Improving instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost; and

5. Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement (55).

These five practices were generated based on research synthesized by the Wallace

Foundation, 2012. The Wallace Foundation is a national philanthropy that seeks to improve the

lives of disadvantage children and foster the vitality of the arts for everyone. The Wallace

Foundation funds research in five key areas: School Leadership, Arts Education, Building

Audiences for the Arts, After School, and Summer and Expanded Learning. The Wallace

Foundation has funded and conducted extensive research in the area of school leadership and is

a key contributor to the national conversation around effective leadership practices. While

these five practices are absolutely imperative to the success of a school and to student

achievement, several pre-requisite questions have to first be asked and answered:

1) What is the instructional or achievement problem?

2) Why is it a problem? and

3) What instructional research base are we going to use to solve the problem?

If these questions are not answered first, the five practices listed above can be misdirected and

produce no impact on student achievement, or, worse, be associated with a decline.

When it comes to literacy, it is critical for school leaders to deeply understand what

effective literacy instruction looks like and sounds like. If we connect evidenced-based literacy

practices with the five practices of effective principals, we could potentially reduce achievement

disparities in reading and writing. It is a simple concept: as a leader, you actually have to know

what you are talking about when it comes to instruction -- more specifically literacy instruction.

However, many principals and other school and district leaders do not read research and

actually have very little understanding of evidenced-based instructional practices.

The guide below draws upon research conducted by The Wallace Foundation, 2012 and

synthesized by Pamela Medels, a senior writer for the Wallace Foundation. The guide integrates

the five key practices for effective leadership (The Wallace Foundation, 2012) and Mendels'

(2012) explanations of these key practices. In addition, the guide connects evidenced-based

research and instructional practices to make a leadership plan that has a concrete focus on

literacy instruction and research. This guide is focused on literacy, but could easily be adapted

for other content areas. I provide this illustration so that building leaders can think through a

planning process for their own buildings.

Step One: Identify Your Problem and Choose your Research Base	
Question: What is the problem?	Answer: Too many students are reading and writing below grade level.
Question: Why is this a problem?	Answer: Literacy is the gateway to success for schooling and for life. The ability to read, write

	and communicate effectively is the most important skills one can learn.
Question: What instructional research base are we going to use to solve the problem? What resources will we use?	Answer: The literacy practices we choose will fit into the Cognitive Model of Reading (McKenna and Stahl, 2003) and a strategy based approach to writing instruction. The following resources will be used: • *Explaining Reading: A Resource for Teaching Concepts, Skills, and Strategies* (Duffy, 2009) • *Cracking the Common Core: Choosing and Using Texts in Grades 6-12*. (Lewis, Walpole and McKenna, 2014) • *Best Practices in Writing Instruction* (Graham, 2013) • *Writing Next* (Graham and Perin, 2007) • *Reading Next* (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006) • *Writing to Read* (Graham and Herbert, 2010) • *The Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide: Helping School Districts Transform into Systems that Produce Life-Changing Results for All Children* (McPeak, Trygg, Minadakis, & Diana, 2007)

Step Two: Relate your instructional focus, inclusive of your research base and resources, to the 5 practices of effective principals.	
Practice One: Shape a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards.	Mendels' Explanation: Effective leadership begins with the development of a schoolwide vision of commitment to high standards and the success of all students. The principal helps to spell out that vision and get all others on board with it. Potential Pitfall: Many times, vision statements are too broad and are full of educational jargon. If the vision does not clearly outline exactly what literacy instruction will look like and sound like every day in every class, then do not expect instruction to change.

	Literacy Solution/Connection: Explicitly shape the vision around what literacy instruction will look like and sound like in every classroom, every day. High standards will be set by the instructional framework that is clearly outlined. This framework should explicitly detail the evidence-based literacy practices that will occur when students are reading, writing and speaking in all classes. These literacy practices, that happen in every classroom, every day, should be non-negotiable.
Practice Two: Create a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit, and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail.	Mendels' Explanation: Teachers should not work in isolation. Principals need to build a culture where teachers and students work together to solve problems. Potential Pitfall: When teachers do not know what they are supposed to collaborate about, collaborative time, like time in PLCs, can become a waste of time. Literacy Solution/Connection: During collaborative time teachers should *only* focus on the literacy strategies and/or research base that have been adopted by the school. Teachers should not spend time creating or "tweaking" old lessons, but learning how to implement instructional routines *exactly* as the research outlines. Students should be taught literacy routines exactly has the research outlines. Students should talk the same language as teachers when it comes to strategy use and purpose.
Practice Three: Cultivate leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision.	Mendels' explanation: Principals should make good use of all the skills and knowledge on the faculty and among others, encouraging the many capable adults who make up a school community to step into leadership roles and responsibilities. Along with the faculty, paraeducators and support staff can assume leadership roles in the building that support the school's vision.

	<u>Potential Pitfalls:</u> Many principals assume that the "best teachers" have deep knowledge about how to teach and can explain the complexities of research to other teachers. This may be true for some, but most teachers cannot articulate the research base behind their own practices. Additionally, many teachers, even the "best teachers" are not experts in literacy instruction. <u>Literacy Solution/Connection:</u> Develop teacher leaders by having teachers read research that is directly related to the school's literacy initiative. Don't ask teachers to figure it out on their own. Give them exactly what you want them to read and learn. Too often research is left out of teacher professional learning. Have teachers and other adults verbalize the literacy initiative and the research behind it. Additionally, monitor implementation of literacy strategies in all teachers' classroom, even your "best teachers." All teachers have room to improve.
<u>Practice Four:</u> Improve instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost.	<u>Mendels' Explanation:</u> Effective leaders focus in a laser-like way on the quality of instruction in their school. They emphasize research-based strategies in classrooms. <u>Potential Pitfalls:</u> Phrase like "quality of instruction" and "emphasize research-based strategies" are too vague. "Quality of Instruction" has to be defined as accuracy of implementation of specific instructional routines. Emphasis on use of "research-based strategies" is also too vague. If this is not clearly defined, teachers are left asking: What strategies? Based on what research? With what resources? <u>Literacy Solution/Connection:</u> By providing teachers exactly what you expect to see and hear in classrooms, as it relates to instructional routines (and other areas as well) teachers are not left confused about what is expected. It should be made very clear what strategies

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	should be used, for what purposes, and when.
Practice Five: Manage people, data and processes to foster school improvement.	Mendels' Explanation: Effective leaders hire well and know how to retain high performers. They also know how to give their teachers the backing they need to thrive. Strong principals also know how to go about their jobs systematically. Potential Pitfalls: When hiring teachers, principals must ask candidates to read and explain research as well as write about it. Although time consuming, one can learn a lot about a candidate based on his/her interpretation of research as well as how well he or she can write. Backing teachers does not mean giving in when teachers push back. Change is hard even for the highest performing teachers. Having systems in place to plan, implement, communicate and monitor is crucial. Change will not just happen. Literacy Solution/Connection: Processes should be related to and support the research and strategies that the teachers and students should be using. Make sure that you don't let "teacher buy-in" impede progress. Teacher buy-in isn't about getting everyone to agree.It's about getting everyone to support the vision and do exactly what they need to do. Make sure other systems support the literacy focus. For instance, align your walkthrough tool to look for very specific literacy strategies. Additionally, the data that you collect and analyze should be related to the implementation and outcomes of the literacy focus.
Step Three: Evaluate the effectiveness of your practices as they relate to student achievement and teacher improvement. Go back to step one if necessary and make changes to better support the vision.	

If you do not know how to find valid research, here is a list that will help you begin your

literacy research journey.

Florida Center for Reading Research: http://www.fcrr.org

The Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) is a multidisciplinary research center at Florida State University. FCRR explores all aspects of reading research—basic research into literacy-related skills for typically developing readers and those who struggle, studies of effective prevention and intervention, and psychometric work on formative assessment.

Center on Instruction: http://www.centeroninstruction.org

From October 2005 to September 2012, the Center on Instruction (COI) was one of five national content centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support the 16 Regional Comprehensive Centers as they helped state education leaders raise student achievement, close achievement gaps, and improve teaching and learning for all students in their state.

What Works Clearinghouse (Literacy): http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/topic.aspx?sid=8

The goal of the WWC is to be a resource for informed education decision making. To reach this goal, the WWC identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (referred to as "interventions"), and disseminates summary information and free reports on the WWC website.

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Appendix E

RETROSPECTIVE ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION

The following retrospective was written in collaboration with Joseph Jones, Ed.D., former principal of Delcastle High School. This article was written for *Literacy Today*, the International Literacy Association's, ILA, bimonthly member magazine. ILA posted on their website that they are looking for articles that reflect trends in literacy instruction. The article could be no more than 900 words and could not include citations.

Magic- that is how Joe and I describe the time our team spent working together at Delcastle Technical High School. Joe was the principal and I was an assistant principal with the responsibility to plan professional development and implement a school-wide literacy initiative. We needed a Response to Intervention plan for students who read below grade level.   Although we have both moved on to district-level positions, we look back fondly on our time together and think about the elements that contributed to Delcastle Technical High School winning the Governor's Award for Excellence in 2011 for significantly closing the achievement gap in reading and mathematics (at the time the only high school in the State of Delaware to win), building a culture where teachers routinely used evidenced-based literacy strategies (even in career area classes), and where our administrative team and teacher leaders grew to be instructional leaders.

Background

Delcastle Technical High School is a vocational technical high school located in Wilmington, Delaware. Delcastle's 130 teachers and paraprofessionals serve 1500 students. All students who attend Delcastle spend half of their day in core content classes: English, math, science and social studies. During the other half of the day, students are enrolled in career area exploration and learning. Delcastle offers 23 careers. These career areas range from Auto Body to Biomedical Sciences. After students explore all career areas during their freshman year, they choose one career area for the remainder of their high school career.

What made it work?

Cary's perspective…

When I joined the team, Joe had been the principal for three years. During Joe's first three years, he made major strides in building a positive climate and culture focused on student data and instruction. Before I joined the team, I was often critical of building-level administrators who had little understanding of evidenced-based instructional practices. As a district literacy specialist, I ran professional development for school administrators who dismissed the importance of evidenced-based practices. My frustration grew. The missing links seemed to be beliefs about whether better instruction could change schools, commitments of administrators to focus on instruction, and the willingness to take action to make sure teachers were using evidence-based instructional practices.

From the beginning of our professional relationship, Joe set up structures that allowed me to succeed. He also supported changes to the school's schedule. These changes allowed us to implement additional literacy interventions for our neediest students. Although I was new, Joe recognized that my time would be best spent planning and leading professional learning rather than scheduling detention.

I implemented professional development experiences for all of our teachers -- traditional content teachers and career area instructors. During weekly administrative meetings, Joe asked me to model evidenced-based literacy routines for the other administrators. I modeled strategies like Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, reciprocal teaching, Listen Read Discuss, and many others.

We eventually aligned our walkthrough tool to these specific strategies. This alignment allowed us to collect relevant and timely data which led to rich instructional conversations for our team.

Joe's perspective…

Cary once asked me what I really wanted to achieve as principal. Cary understood the school's vision and goals, but this was more of a non-political, gut-level question about how I defined success. The truth was I wanted our school to be a model, and to realize this goal I was driven by a few items I assumed were truths: 1) The classroom is where the difference is made, so teachers needed the resources, support, and training to execute lessons in a very diverse setting; 2) I needed to have a highly skilled and driven administrative team; 3) We needed to build a community that believed that our school was something special; and 4) This was only possible by developing leaders in all positions.

We needed Cary so that we could commit to literacy as our defining initiative. As a school we realized that we needed to proceed with surgical precision. We needed a specialist. We had already made several adjustments based on "best practices" to improve student achievement--we had a strong building steering committee, devoted department chairs, committed teachers, and a strong purpose. However, we realized we needed high-level expertise within literacy.

As a team we focused on becoming instructional leaders with Cary leading us. She honed in on key practices that could be infused throughout the school and developed key people to ensure implementation. As a team, we continued to manage our day-to-day responsibilities, but our underlying drive was to become instructional experts with a specialization in literacy.

In an effort to learn and grow, we devoted time to understanding what engaged literacy looked like and sounded like in the classroom. Cary's expertise allowed our team to develop and we were committed to learning. Each team member had strengths, and instructionally we were all competent; however, to make the gains we were attempting we needed to move from being instructional generalists to literacy specialists ourselves.

We often had far more tasks than time and issues could muddy our pursuits, but we knew what we wanted to achieve. For us, success had student names and our resources were committed people devoted to the young men and women that needed to learn. We were

thrilled to make it happen. As we work now in district leadership, we hope to inspire more teams to make literacy work for students.

Appendix F

COMPREHENSIVE SECONDARY RTI LITERACY GUIDE

The following resource guide was created for Brandywine School District administrators and teachers. The purpose of this guide is to provide information regarding Brandywine School District's Secondary Response to Intervention (RTI) Literacy Model. The first part of the guide clearly defines RTI from a national level as well as from a Brandywine School District level. The second part of the guide defines how the secondary RTI framework should be incorporated into all secondary BSD schools. The guide provides student placement information, RTI cycle reviews guidelines, instructional framework guidelines, curriculum resources, as well as frequently asked questions regarding RTI.

This guide was distributed to all secondary administrators and secondary RTI instructors during professional development sessions that took place in August of 2015. This document is housed on the Brandywine School District Secondary RTI Resources Schoology page as well as our district website.

Brandywine School District

Secondary

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Literacy Guide 2015-2016

Table of Contents

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Response to Intervention (RTI)

Introduction

Response to Intervention (RTI) integrates assessment and intervention within a tiered system of instruction to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. Within an RTI system school teams:

- use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes through screening,

- monitor student progress through progress monitoring,

- provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and

- identify students with potential learning disabilities or other disabilities after the RTI tiered system is implemented with fidelity.

The four essential components of an RTI system are screening, progress monitoring, multi-level or multi-tier prevention system, and data-based decision making. In this publication, you will learn how the Brandywine School District uses the essential components of an effective RTI system as they relate to secondary literacy instruction and intervention. The graphic below illustrates how the essential components of an RTI system work together.

4 Essential Components of an RTI System ("The Essential Components," 2012)
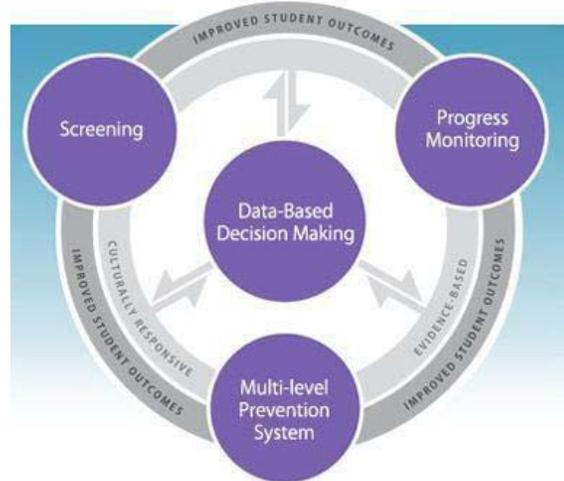
What is RTI?

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored through assessments to evaluate the learning rate and mastery of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data ("What is RTI?" 2015).

According to the National Center for Learning Disabilities (2015), for RTI implementation to work well, the following essential components must be implemented with fidelity and in a systematic manner:

- *High-quality, evidence-based classroom instruction.* All students

receive high- quality, evidence-based instruction in the general education classroom.

- *Ongoing student assessment.* Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with a peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the RTI process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.
- *Tiered instruction.* A multi-tier approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, evidence-based interventions matched to student needs.
- *Parent involvement.* Schools implementing RTI provide parents information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction, and the academic or behavioral goals for their child ("What is RTI?").

The descriptions below are adapted from the *RTI Action Network: A Program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities* (2015). If you would like to read more about each Tier, please access the following URL: www.rtinetwork.org

Explanation of Tiers

Tier 1: High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions Within Tier 1 (Core ELA class), all students receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction provided by a highly qualified teacher. All students are screened, using the STAR Reading Assessment, three times a year to establish a baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. Students identified as being "at risk" through STAR and/or results on state or district-wide tests will receive differentiated instruction during the school day in his/her ELA class. In the Brandywine School District, any student who falls below the 50th percentile in STAR should be closely monitored through small group instruction during the core ELA class. During small group instruction, student progress is closely monitored using

curriculum-based assessments that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Students not showing adequate progress will be provided a Tier 2 intervention. The Tier 2 intervention will be provided in addition to Tier I instruction. In BSD, we call this "Core Plus More."

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions
Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom in Tier 1 will be provided additional support in literacy during an RTI class. In BSD, any student who scores below the 25th percentile on the STAR Reading assessment qualifies for a Tier 2 intervention. These supports and interventions are provided in addition to instruction in the general curriculum. Students who show too little progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3 support. In BSD, Tier 2 intervention classes may be taught by an English teacher, reading specialist, and/or special education teacher. All teachers who deliver interventions will be provided training. In BSD, Tier II interventions will focus on fluency, automatic word recognition, writing and comprehension. In Tier II, students are taught structures that will help them increase their comprehension. The specific structures and resources are described later in this document.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions
Students who do not respond to interventions provided in Tier 2, may be placed in a Tier 3 intervention. At this level, students receive very-small-group intensive interventions that target the students' skill deficits. In many instances, these interventions are delivered through a direct, explicit approach. In BSD, like Tier II, Tier III interventions will focus on fluency, automatic word recognition, multi-syllabic decoding, writing and comprehension. Tier III interventions are delivered very strategically and directly with greater support from the instructor. The specific resources are described later in this document. In BSD, Tier 3 intervention classes may be taught by an English teacher, reading specialist, and/or special education teacher. All teacher who deliver interventions will be provided training.

Comprehensive Evaluation
Students who do not show growth in response to these very targeted interventions should then be referred for a comprehensive evaluation and ultimately considered for eligibility for special education services under the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 will be included and used to make the eligibility decision. In BSD, this process is coordinated and facilitated by our school-based educational diagnosticians.

There is one caveat to the RTI process, according to IDEA 2004, parents have the right to request a formal evaluation to determine eligibility for special education at any point during the RTI process. An RTI process cannot be used to deny or delay a formal evaluation for special education ("What is RTI?", 2015).

Although RTI frameworks can take different forms, the information outlined in this guide clearly defines Brandywine School District's Secondary RTI Literacy framework. This framework was created in collaboration with the Curriculum and Instruction Division and secondary school leaders.

Non-Negotiable Components of Tier 1 Instruction in BSD: Best Practices

In the Brandywine School District, Tier 1, or Core instruction, is provided to all students. Effective Tier 1 instruction greatly reduces the number of students who need intensive interventions in Tiers 2 and 3. All secondary students should be provided a full block of ELA core instruction every other day in an A/B block. During these ELA blocks, grade level Common Core State Standards are taught, using a variety of strategies. It is expected that the Common Core State Standards are taught and assessed in all content area courses. In ELA classes, teachers will balance the type of text that students are expected to read and analyze. In ELA classes, literary text will be read and analyzed, as well as, informational text. The Common Core State Standards may be accessed at the following URL:www.corestandards.org. Differentiation should take place during the core ELA.

What do Tier 1 differentiation strategies look like?

Core ELA Curriculum: ALL STUDENTS
  * ***Focus on Grade Level Common Core ELA Standards daily***

Structured Opportunities for Collaboration:
- Include individual think time; Think-Pair-Shares
- Check in with groups frequently to ensure students are on track and on task
- Use cooperative structures to ensure all students are engaged and accountable
- Develop quality literacy discourse skills with students

High Impact Differentiation and Intervention Strategies:
- Incorporate text-based writing into weekly routine
- Create small, flexible grouping
- Model Listen-Read-Discuss strategy for students. The teacher delivers a short lecture about the text before students read. Students read the text and then engage in a structured discussion about the text (Manzo & Casak, 1985).
- Use repeated oral reading strategies, such as Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS, (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998) for students to navigate texts
- Create Reading Guides/Study Guides for complex text. Reading Guides

are created by the teacher prior to the students reading a complex text. A Reading Guides explicitly guides the reader through the text helping the reader navigate the text structure and vocabulary (Horton & Lovitt, 1989).

- Plan for scaffolds in the lesson – use judiciously
- Use strategies for vocabulary acquisition, for vocabulary that is context relevant
- Clarify and teach vocabulary, symbols, syntax, & structure
- Illustrate through multiple media
- Vary methods for response and navigation
- Graduate levels of support for practice and performance
- Allow for individual choice and autonomy

Non-Negotiable Components of Tier 1 Instruction in BSD: Best Practices (continued)

1. **Students receive 85 minutes (Middle School) or 92 minutes (High School) of core ELA instruction every other day.** In 2014, the A/B block schedule was implemented in all BSD secondary schools.

2. **Students requiring tiered interventions (Tier 2 or Tier 3) receive this support in addition to the core ELA block.** In BSD, we call this model: "Core Plus More."

3. **Common Core State Standards, CCSS, are used as the basis for grade level ELA courses.** Common text-based writing assessments are required for each of the four marking periods. The full scope and sequence for ELA 6-12 can be found on the BSD Secondary ELA (6-12) Schoology site. Please use access code: ZHJXQ-6C8WP.

4. **Collaborative Planning is essential to the implementation of the core curriculum as well as the effective implementation of interventions.** In BSD we use Professional Learning Communities, PLCs, to accomplish collaborative planning. Content teams meet every week for 90 minutes in PLCs. During PLC time, content-based teams
   - Review ELA Units that meet the CCSS, incorporate best practices and Learning Focused Solutions (LFS) strategies into daily lesson plans;
   - Review standards-based assessments written/edited before

instruction;
- Reflect and analyze student data as a continuous process following instruction
- Adjust curriculum and instruction based on student data

5. **Both formative and summative assessments are used in the planning process to design *and modify* instruction that changes to meet individual student needs.**
   - **Formative Assessments:** Exit tickets, informal observation, class work, written responses such as summaries, rough drafts, etc.
   - **Summative Assessments**: Marking Period Text-based Writing Tasks, Reading assessments

   Quality Assessment Strategies:
   - Use Effective Questioning: ask enhanced questions that require critical thinking and demonstrate deep understanding, rather than yes-no, true-false, one-word-answer, non-motivational questions. Include a variety of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels within the assessment;
   - Provide increased and detailed feedback in a timely manner;
   - Develop student self-assessment and reflection skills.

Non-Negotiable Components of Tier 1 Instruction: Use of the Core Block

ELA Block Component	Description
Introduction *5 - 10 minutes*	**Purpose:** Explicitly state the purpose of the lesson and introduce the text(s). Discuss the purpose of the text and the text structure. What are the essential questions for the unit and/or lesson?

Lesson *Whole Group and Small Groups* *Individual* *Writing/Analysis* *of Texts* *70 minutes*	<u>**High Quality Text Interactions**</u>**:** • Give students opportunities to interact with multiple texts • Focus on either addressing one or more skills previously taught or activate ideas around new concepts for the lesson **Students are engaged in content through reading, writing, speaking and listening:** • Content-focused peer discussions, cooperative learning, and discourse • Multiple opportunities to explain their thinking and justify their answers • Effective questioning using Webb's, Depth of Knowledge, DOK • Small and flexible groups that personalize and differentiate instruction (face-to-face
Closure *Whole Group/Individual/Pair* *5-10 minutes*	**Closure:** Allows the <u>student</u> to summarize main ideas, evaluate class processes, answer questions posed at the beginning of the lesson, and link to both the past and the future. The <u>teacher</u> uses summarizing strategies and formative data to inform instructional decision-making for creation of the next lesson.

Overview: Response to Intervention

- Screening data are norm-referenced or curriculum-based
- Progress monitoring curriculum based (intervention based)
- Interventions must be evaluated and approved by District (reading and math)
- Team approach to decision-making

- Up to a total of 24 school weeks of interventions
- Not made sufficient progress toward end of year benchmarks Referral for initial evaluation for special education services

Reading

Tier III:
Intensive
Intervention — 5%

Tier II:
Targeted Small Group
Instruction — 15%

Tier I:
Core Instructional Program — 80%

Math

Tier III:
Intensive
Intervention — 5%

Tier II:
Targeted Small Group
Instruction — 15%

Tier I:
Core Instructional Program — 80%

Reading
&
Math

Both: Not less than 180 minutes per week

Both: Not less than 120 minutes per week

Reading & Math

Tier III
- Groups smaller than Tier II
- Minimum of 150 minutes per week
- Not less than four (4) sessions per week
- 6 weeks of intervention
- Progress monitored weekly

Tier II
- Minimum of 90 minutes per week
- Not less than two (2) sessions per week
- 6 weeks of intervention
- Progress monitored weekly

Non-Negotiable Components of Tier 2 and Tier 3: Needs-Based Intervention

Interventions that are delivered during Tier 2 and Tier 3 minutes, in both reading and mathematics, should be skill-based. In BSD, secondary students who require Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are scheduled into an additional RTI class. This class is in addition to their core ELA class.

Children who score below the 25th percentile on STAR Assessments (reading and mathematics) must be provided RTI interventions. Identified students should initially be provided Tier 2 supports, unless they were identified as needing Tier 3 supports in the previous year or are determined by the team to need the same level or type of instructional services as Tier 3 students.

A school-based team (such as a grade-level, literacy, or leadership team) should review the program and progress for each student in the 25th percentile or below. The team should assure that:

- Instruction is differentiated and skills-based depending on students' individual needs.
- The grouping of students is appropriate for all students.
- Instruction is paced properly.
- The program is being implemented with fidelity.
- Students are attending a sufficient number of minutes weekly for the intervention.

If after twelve (12) weeks of Tier 2 intervention the child is not on a trajectory to meet end-of-year benchmarks, the child should be discussed in depth by a school based team. The child may need to receive more intensive interventions through Tier 3 supports.

The following RTI Placement Flowchart should be used when making placement decisions about students. Materials cited in the flow chart will be explained on pages 13 and 14. Materials regarding RTI placement, instruction and curriculum can be found on the Secondary RTI Resources Schoology Course, access code: TK9CS-BK3K9.

STAR Fall Benchmark Screening

Above 40th Percentile

26th- 40th Percentile

Below 25th Percentile

Progress Monitor in Tier 1 Instruction

Space Permitting, Include in Tier 2

Implement *Read for Real* (MS)- OR- *eSolutions and REWARDS Writing* (HS) Small Group Instruction, PM Weekly

STAR Winter Benchmark Screening

At or Above 40th Percentile

Below 25th & 26th – 40thPercentile

Progress Monitor in Tier 1 Instruction

Sufficient Growth

Insufficient Growth

Continue *Read for Real* (MS)- OR- *eSolutions and REWARDS Writing* (HS) Small Group Instruction, PM Weekly

Implement *Read for Real* (MS)- OR- *eSolutions and REWARDS Writing* (HS) Small Group Instruction, PM Weekly

STAR Spring Benchmark Screening

At or Above 26th Percentile

Below 25th Percentile

Recommend Tier 1

Sufficient Growth

Insufficient Growth

Continue Tier 2

Recommend Tier 3

Tier 2 Reading/Writing Instructional Framework and Materials

Once a student drops down to or below the 25th percentile on a nationally normed assessment (in this case, STAR), he or she should begin receiving Tier 2 intervention.

The following charts illustrate the intervention materials used in middle and high school for Tier 2.

Middle School (6-8)

Time	Resource	Literacy Focus	Format
40 Minutes	*Read for Real: Nonfiction Strategies for Reading Results* (Zaner-Bloser, 2011) Grade 6: Level F Grade 7: Level G Grade 8: Level H	Comprehension Vocabulary Fluency Writing	Paper based resources. Teacher materials and student materials provided by District.
32 Minutes	Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS (Fuchs & Fuchs 1998) with connected text	Comprehension Vocabulary Fluency	Training materials on Schoology Group: RTI Resources. Adolescent Literature provided through school libraries and teacher classroom.
10 minutes	Summary Writing: Students summarize the text that was read during PALS	Comprehension Writing	Training materials for strategies on Schoology Group: RTI Resources.

| Independent | Independent Reading Project: Students will complete an independent reading project every marking period. The project must include a written response and a creative component. | Comprehension Fluency Vocabulary Writing | Training material and student materials on Schoology Group: RTI Resources. |

High School (9-10)

Time	Resource	Focus	Format
10 Minutes	*REWARD Sentence Refinement*	Writing	Paper based resources. Teacher materials and student materials provided.
30 Minutes	*eSolutions: Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension* (Adams & Van Zant, 2009).	Comprehension Vocabulary Fluency Writing	Blended Approach. Paper based materials provided to teachers and students. Online access provided to teachers and students.
32 Minutes	Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998) with connected text.	Comprehension Vocabulary Fluency	Training materials on Schoology Group: RTI Resources. Adolescent Literature provided through school libraries and teacher classroom.

10 minutes	Summary Writing: Students summarize the text that was read during PALS	Comprehension Writing	Training materials for strategies on Schoology Group: RTI Resources.
Independent	Independent Reading Project: Students will complete an independent reading project every marking period. The project must include a written response and a creative component.	Comprehension Fluency Vocabulary Writing	Training material and student materials on Schoology Group: RTI Resources.

Tier 2 Reading/Writing Decision Making and Placement

The following decision making process should be followed when making placement decisions about students. The flowchart on page 11 of this document, illustrates this process as well.

Screening

As previously mentioned in the Introduction, all students will be screened three times per year using the STAR assessment for reading. STAR is a computer adaptive reading assessment that assesses 46 different skills that fall into four domains:

- Foundational Skills
- Reading Informational Text
- Reading: Literature
- Language

If you would like to know more about the STAR assessment for reading, please access the following URL: http://www.renaissance.com/products/star-assessments/star-reading. You may also learn more about the other uses of STAR assessment in BSD by access the Brandywine School District website at www.brandywineschools.org and click on **Assessment**.

Diagnosing

Based upon students' STAR score, determine an appropriate level for administering a pre-test to each student. These should be *individually* set for each student.

- Middle School: Read for Real Placement Assessment
- High School: eSolutions Placement Assessment

Getting Started

For Middle School, students will begin work in the grade-level appropriate *Read For Real* workbook.

For High School, once the pre-test is complete, *eSolutions* will make recommendations for the student. The RTI educator should review these recommendations carefully and approve assignments to go into the dashboard to check progress.

During the first few weeks of RTI, it will be important to set a positive tone regarding reading and writing. During the month of September, teachers should use the *REWARDS Sentence Refinement* lessons and explicitly teach the PALS strategy. Students should also be taken to the library to find an independent reading book.

Maintaining

Middle School:
RTI Middle School educators should review weekly assessments from the *Read for Real* series. When students demonstrate an additional need for support (as shown by not achieving a 70% on the first or second attempts at a comprehension lesson), the RTI educator should be pulling small groups to run lessons based upon the challenging skill.

High School:
RTI High School educators should review student *REWARDS Writing* data on a weekly basis (every 5 lessons) and pay close attention to students

who are struggling with assignments. Additionally, high school RTI teachers should monitor comprehension data on *eSolutions*. If students are not completing the comprehension assessments with a 70% or above, the student's level may need to lowered.

When students demonstrate an additional need for support (as shown by not achieving a 70% on the first or second attempts at a comprehension lesson), the RTI educator should be pulling small groups to run lessons based upon the challenging skill. These small group lesson resources can be pulled from *VPort (online resources for eSolutions)*.

Progress Monitoring

Students in Tier 2 must be progress monitored weekly. However, much of this progress monitoring will take place within *eSolution*s, (high school) and Read for Real (middle school). Students will be progress monitored using STAR twice each marking period (see included calendar). This will provide additional data about student growth towards national benchmarks.

Tier 3 Reading/Writing Instruction

Tier 3 literacy support for students in need of intense interventions will be determined on a case-by-case scenario. In many instances, students who are identified as needing tier 3 supports already have an IEP, 504 or ELL plan. In these instances, specialized instruction has already been defined by the IEP, 504 or ESL team. For those students who are in need of tier 3 supports and do not have an IEP, 504 or ELL plan, the school-based team will work together to problem solve and create a plan that is specialized for the student.

The following RTI Cycle Review guidelines should be used when making decisions about students. The school-based team should use the following guidelines as well as the RTI Placement Flowchart found on page 11 when they are discussing placement and movement of students.

RTI Cycle Review Guidelines

1. **Review all the relevant data:**
   STAR data (fall, winter, and/or spring)
   - Current course grades
     - Class work
     - Common assessments
   - Progress Monitoring
     - STAR
     - eSolutions and REWARDS Writing data:
       - Usage
       - Scores
   - Other Data
     - Student attendance
     - Student work from RTI small groups
2. **Progress Monitor**
   - STAR data (Fall-Winter-Spring, as well as progress monitoring)
   - Work completion
3. **Check Fidelity of Implementation**
   - Number of sessions/time devoted to intervention
   - Student attendance minutes
   - Student usage data
4. **Evaluate the Level of documentation**
   - Discontinue intervention (no longer necessary)
     - Student meets benchmark
   - Continue current intervention
     - Student meets benchmark, but the team determines that the support should be continued to avoid regression
     - Students does not meet benchmark, but is showing growth towards benchmark
   - Escalate services (Tier 2 to Tier 3) or De-escalate services (Tier 3 to Tier 2)
     - Student shows sufficient progress during intervention
     - Student show insufficient progress toward benchmark

Response to Intervention Implementation Calendar 2015-2016

Date	Activity
September 8 - 25	STAR Fall Screening Benchmark (ALL Students)
Week of September 28	STAR Progress Monitoring (Interims End October 6)
Week of October 5	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
Week of October 12	
Week of October 19	
Week of October 26	STAR Progress Monitoring (Marking Period 1 Ends November 5)
Week of November 2	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
Week of November 9	
Week of November 16	
Week of November 30	STAR Progress Monitoring (Interims End December 9)
Week of December 7	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
Week of December 14	
January 4-15	STAR Winter Screening Benchmark (ALL Students)
Week of January 18	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring (High School Mid-Terms – Week of January 18)
Week of January 25	
Week of February 1	
Week of February 8	
Week of February 15	STAR Progress Monitoring (Interims End February 23)
Week of February 22	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
Week of February 29	
Week of March 7	
Week of March 14	STAR Progress Monitoring (Marking Period 3 Ends March 23)
Week of March 21	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
Week of April 4	

Week of April 11	
Week of April 18	STAR Progress Monitoring (Interims End April 22)
Week of April 25	Weekly Resource-Based Progress Monitoring
April 27-May 11	STAR Spring Screening Benchmark (ALL Students)

Frequently Asked Questions:
Secondary Response to Intervention (RTI)

1. *Why do we have to do RTI?*
   Federal IDEA regulations and Title 14 Education DE Administrative Code
   mandate that public agencies implement procedures to determine whether
   children respond to scientific, research based interventions for reading and
   mathematics. If children are not learning, we must figure out a way to
   intervene in real time. We cannot wait until the end of a school year to
   determine that a student is not responding to instruction. Instructional
   practices must meet the needs of the student on a daily basis.

2. *Which students need to take the benchmark screenings?*
   All students, including gifted, special education students and ELL students,
   need to be administered both reading and math benchmark screenings
   within the first two (2) weeks they are in school. The only students who are
   not administered the benchmark screenings are students who take
   alternative forms of the state assessment (previously DCAS Alt.).

3. *How often must benchmark screenings occur?*
   Benchmark screenings in reading and mathematics must be conducted
   three times a year. Please follow the RTI Assessment Calendar sent out
   at the beginning of the year.

4. *Which benchmark screenings are we using in BSD for the 2015-
   16 school year?*
   Reading:
   - Grades 2-10 will administer the STAR reading assessment.
   - Secondary STAR assessment dates for the current school year can
     be found on the included calendar

5. ***How are students identified for RTI interventions?***
   - Children who score at or below the 25th percentile on STAR Assessments for reading or mathematics.
   - Identified students should initially be considered Tier 2 students, unless they were identified as Tier 3 in the previous year or are determined by the team to need the same level or type of instructional services as Tier 3 students.
   - A school-based team (such as a grade-level, literacy or leadership team) should review the program and progress for each student in the 25th percentile or below. The team should assure that:
     - Instruction is differentiated and skills-based depending on students' individual needs.
     - The grouping of students is appropriate for all students.
     - Instruction is paced properly.
     - The program is being implemented with fidelity.
   - If after twelve (12) weeks of Tier 2 intervention the child is not on a trajectory to meet end-of –the year benchmarks, the child should begin receiving Tier 3 interventions.

6. ***Are students who score in the 26th to 40th percentiles required to go to RTI?*** Under state code, students who fall in this "on watch" range are not *required* to have RTI services. However, these students should be discussed at placement meetings to determine whether they should be placed into Tier 2, depending on additional data and classroom performance. Remember- ALL students should be provided differentiated instruction that meets their needs and allows them to grow throughout the year. Even if a student does not fall below the 25th percentile, he/she must be provided effective instruction that helps the child grow at a rate that is consistent with normative data.

   When entering plans in DSC for students in the 26th-40th percentiles, they should be entered as having a plan, but the tier should be entered as "TIER 1." The rest of the plan details will be the same as any other Tier 2/3 student.

7. ***Who may teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions?***
   - Tier 2 interventions are designed to be administered by the general education teacher, but may be administered by other trained staff.

- The most highly qualified teacher available to teach the content area should administer tier 3 interventions.

8. How often does progress monitoring have to occur?
According to DE State Code:
- Tier 2 students must be progress monitored weekly.
- Tier 3 students must be progress monitored weekly.

9. Which progress monitoring assessments is BSD administering for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students?
- Weekly for Tiers 2 and 3 in Reading
    - eSolutions and REWARDS Writing can be used for progress monitoring on a weekly basis
    - STAR will be used to progress monitor grades 6-10 in reading at the end of each interim period and marking period.

10. Why do we have to progress monitor Tier 2 and Tier 3 students so often? Students in Tiers 2 & 3 are at risk for reading failure. Frequent progress monitoring allows us to assess how the child is responding to the instructional intervention. Students who are not responding may need additional classroom support. Multiple progress monitoring data points allow us to determine whether a child is on a trajectory to achieve the grade level benchmark by the end of the year. Progress monitoring data over time are essential pieces of evidence for students who may need additional special education resources in the future.

11. How can I complete all of this progress monitoring without taking time away from instruction?
Progress monitoring should not take away from learning. In fact, it is built in to the resources selected for reading RTI support. STAR progress monitoring may take longer, but is a necessary component of the RTI process, as it provides data around trajectory to benchmark compared to national percentile rankings.

12. Do RTI groups occur in addition to the 85-92 minute reading or mathematics block?
Yes. RTI students should have the same access to reading and mathematics instruction as all other students.

13. **What are the Delaware's time requirements for RTI?**
    - Tier 2 students
        - **90 minutes** of targeted instruction per week
        - No less than **two (2) sessions** per week
        - For both math and reading combined:
            - No less than 120 minutes per week in a proportion decided by instructional team.
    - Tier 3 students
        - **150 minutes** of intensive instruction
        - No less than **four (4) sessions** per week
        - For both math and reading combined:
            - No less than 180 minutes per week in a proportion decided by instructional team.

14. **Do I still have to teach small groups during the reading/math block if students are going to RTI?**
    Yes, all regular education students, including Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, must have equal access to small group instruction as part of the core reading curriculum. Small

    group reading instruction should occur daily during the ELA block as part of the

    core curriculum.

15. **Are special education students included in RTI groups?**
    Yes. All RTI procedures, including frequency and intensity of instruction must apply to students who already receive special education services. Placement of students should depend on their individual reading or math instructional needs. In many cases, the RTI time is provided to special education students as a portion of their academic support time.

16. **Can Tier 2 and Tier 3 ELL students go to their ELL tutors for language learning during RTI time?**
    No. ELL students should be placed in RTI groups based on their reading needs. Language learning with ELL tutors should take place in addition to Tier 2 or Tier 3 reading instruction.

17. **What should instruction look like in Tier 2 and Tier 3 groups?**

Federal and state regulations require that we provide students with scientifically- based reading interventions.

For more information and to access Delaware State code regarding RTI please access this URL: http://www.doe.k12.de.us/domain/72

RTI Walkthrough Form

Reading/Math (circle one)

Name of Intervention_____

Focus Skill of Intervention_____

The intervention is being delivered in a small group

 Y or N   Comment:

The intervention is skill-based. Y   or   N   Comment:

The students are actively engaged in the lesson: Y   or   N

Comment:

The students not in the intervention group are actively engaged in meaningful work.   Y or N Comment:

The intervention is being delivered as an explicit and systematic approach.   Y   or   N Comment:

Data are available regarding the students in the group. Y   or   N

Comment:

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Appendix G

SURVEY OF CURRENT LEADERSHIP

In order to create a professional development plan that was focused on literacy

leadership (Appendix I), I surveyed Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy (SSLL)

cohort members. The members of this cohort are teacher and administrative leaders in all

six secondary buildings. The Adolescent Instruction Model for Literacy (AIM) is a

framework to guide schools/districts in developing a literacy plan for secondary schools.

The structure of this survey was developed in August of 2006 based on the work of Linda

Diamond from the Consortium of Reading Excellence (CORE) www.corelearn.com. The

survey questions are closely aligned with work in *Creating a Culture of Literacy: A*

Guide for Middle and High School Principals (2005). I found this particular version of

the survey and the scoring rubrics on the West Virginia Department of Education

website: **wvde.state.wv.us**/osp/RTI**AIM**Lit**Survey**5-28-08.doc. I added the survey to a Google

Form and sent the link to each principal.

In early June 2015, I asked all SSLL cohort members to assemble in their

respective schools and take the survey at the same time. Each school submitted one

survey on behalf of the school's group. I did this because there are several questions on

the survey that pertain to the principal's effectiveness as a literacy leader and to teacher

effectiveness. These conversations can be sensitive. I wanted the group to talk about

each question and come to consensus rather than submit individual responses. The

results of the survey will guide each team's school-based literacy plan as well as guide

the professional development that I provide through face-to-face and online professional

learning experiences. The professional development plan is outlined in Artifact I.

The survey comprises thirty-five questions. These questions are divided into four

categories: 1) Collaborative Leadership and School Capacity, 2) Content Area Classes,

3) Intervention and Support for Adolescent Readers, and 4) Professional Development to

Support Literacy. There are several survey questions under each category. The total

score for each category is used for summative ratings.

Section One: Collaborative Leadership

The questions for section one are presented below. Each school's score is identified in

Section One: Results.

Indicators	Score of 5 Very Clear and Evident	Score of 3 Somewhat Clear and Evident	Score of 1 Not Clear or Evident
1. The administrator's role in improving the school's literacy opportunities is clearly evident.			
2. School leaders encourage collegial decision making.			
3. School leaders support integration of literacy instruction across the content areas.			
4. School leaders and staff members believe the teaching of reading is their responsibility.			
5. Adequate fiscal resources are provided to support the literacy improvement plan.			
6. Data-driven decision making guides			

literacy improvement planning.			
7. Scheduling structures are in place to support identified literacy needs of all students.			
8. Scheduling structures are in place to support literacy professional development.			
9. The school improvement plan includes literacy as a major goal for improvement.			

Section One: Results

Each school's score is indicated in parenthesis next to its name at the bottom of the

rubric.

Score of 45-35 There is a school-wide emphasis on literacy.	Score of 34-25 There is partial emphasis on school-wide literacy.	Score of 24-9 There is a lack of emphasis on school-wide literacy.
There is a school-wide emphasis on literacy and the school improvement plan includes literacy as a major goal with fiscal resources provided. The administrator's role in improving literacy is clearly evident by scheduling common planning time for teachers to analyze data for improving literacy. Administrators and staff exhibit a high level of commitment to the teaching of reading and writing across the content areas. Scheduling structures are in place to support tiered literacy instruction and individual literacy	There is some support for literacy by administrators and staff as evidenced with a goal of literacy improvement. The administrator is somewhat effective in improving literacy by scheduling a planning time for teachers and teachers review data from state tests only. Staff sometimes uses literacy strategies in the content classroom. Scheduling structures are somewhat modified to meet tiered literacy instruction. Some school-wide professional development on literacy is provided for the staff.	There is a lack of focus on school-wide literacy with no goal or fiscal resources for literacy improvement. The administrator is ineffective in improving the school's literacy environment as evidenced by no support for collegial decision making, no data-driven decisions being made and no extra time allotted for literacy. The school leaders and staff believe that the teaching of reading is the English teacher's responsibility. Literacy professional development is not embedded or on going.

professional development.		
Springer (35)	P.S. du Pont (25) Talley Middle (27) Brandywine High School (27) Mount Pleasant High School (31)	Concord (13)

Section One: Analysis

The results suggest that four schools have a partial focus on literacy. Even though Springer scored in the highest category, their score was 35, indicating that they are on the border of partial emphasis and school-wide emphasis. Concord's score of 13 is low. After a conversation with Concord's team, they indicated that they scored themselves harshly in an effort to improve. Closer analysis of the individual questions and responses revealed that there were no particular patterns that emerged for the four schools in the partial emphasis group. Of the nine indicators, indicator three had a score of 3 or 5 for all schools. Indicators three focuses on school leaders' support of integration of literacy instruction across the content areas. This is promising outcome. Integration of literacy instruction across the content areas is critical to the success of a school-wide focus on literacy.

Section Two: Content Area Classes

The questions for section two are outlined below. Each school's score is identified in Section Two: Results.

Do all courses throughout a student's day capitalize on the student's literacy and language as a way to learn new information?			
Indicators	**Score of 5 Every teacher participates.**	**Score of 3 Over half of the teachers participate.**	**Score of 1 Less than half of the teachers participate.**
1. Teachers attend professional development sessions to learn reading instructional strategies for their respective content areas.			
2. Administrators encourage teacher participation by all curriculum areas in professional development regarding reading in the content areas and content literacy.			
3. Teachers understand and routinely use instructional reading strategies in their daily lesson plans.			
4. Teachers front-load new vocabulary.			
5. Teachers provide frequent and appropriate instruction to inform students as to how they can best use the textbook clues.			
6. Teachers provide instructional strategies for effective student reading of outside sources such as Internet sites, journal and media sources, and reference books.			
7. Teachers provide appropriate assessment for learning/reading.			
8. Teachers provide timely feedback to students regarding reading progress.			
9. Teachers instruct students how to use their assessment results to inform and improve their reading and literacy skills			

in all content areas.			
10. Teachers regularly assign reading from sources other than the textbook.			
11. It is evident in classrooms that reading in content areas is a school-wide goal.			
12. It is evident that students understand and use their content area reading strategies.			

Section Two: Results

Each school's score is indicated in parenthesis next to its name at the bottom of the

rubric.

Score of 55-41 Your school is a content area literacy school.	Score of 40-25 Your school is becoming a content area literacy school.	Score of 24-11 Your school needs help becoming a content area literacy school.
Teachers in every department (100%) emphasize content reading as part of the school-wide emphasis on literacy. Administrators support professional development in content reading for all teachers. All teachers attend professional development for content area reading. All teachers exhibit and practice content reading strategies. All teachers assess student reading achievement in content areas. All teachers provide timely feedback to students to inform their progress	Teachers in over half of all classrooms emphasize content reading as part of the school-wide emphasis on literacy. Administrators support some professional development in content reading for teachers in the core curriculum areas. Core curriculum teachers attend some professional development for content area reading, depending on other issues that faculty and administration are emphasizing. Many of the teachers (at least half) assess student reading achievement on a regular	A few teachers (less than half) emphasize content reading as part of the school-wide emphasis on literacy. Administrators do not often support most professional development in content reading for teachers in the core curriculum areas. Administrators never support non-core curriculum teacher professional development in content area reading. Core curriculum teachers seldom attend professional development for content area reading. Other issues that faculty and

toward higher achievement in content literacy. There is evidence that teachers are delivering content literacy strategies daily. There is tangible evidence that students are learning content literacy strategies. Student progress is reinforced daily. Students understand how to use their assessment results for learning to improve their skills in every content area.	basis in their content areas. Over half of the teachers provide timely feedback to students and inform their progress toward higher achievement in content literacy. There is some tangible evidence that teachers are teaching content literacy strategies. There is evidence that some students are making progress with content literacy. Evidence is unclear as to how often teachers are using the student assessment to improve learning. Students do not fully understand how to use their assessment results for learning to improve their skill in every content area.	administration are emphasizing generally take precedence. Some teachers (less than half) assess student reading achievement on a regular basis in their content areas. Less than half of the teachers provide timely feedback to students and inform their progress toward higher achievement in content literacy. There is little tangible evidence that teachers are teaching content literacy strategies. There is little evidence that some students are making progress with content literacy. Teachers do not correctly use the student assessment to inform and improve learning. Students do not understand that their assessment results are to help them improve their reading and literacy skills in every content area.
	Springer (36) Brandywine High (26)	P. S. DuPont (18) Talley Middle (22) Concord (20) Mount Pleasant High (18)

Section Two: Analysis

The results suggest that two schools have a partial focus on content area literacy.

However, four schools indicated that less than half of the content area teachers use

literacy strategies as part of their daily routine. On initial examination it appears that

professional development is needed for all content-area teachers. Closer analysis

revealed the indicators 1, 2, 3, 7 and 12 had the lowest scores. Indicators 1 and 2 are

specifically related to professional development for teachers regarding specific reading

strategies and routines within content areas. Indictors 3 focuses on lesson planning that

includes specific reading strategies. Indicator 9 focuses on teaching students how to use

assessment data to improve their literacy skills. Indicator 12 focuses on evidence that

students use reading strategies across content areas. The low scores of these indicators

reveal that professional development is needed for teachers. Specifically, teachers need

professional development that is focused on using and planning evidenced-based reading

strategies and routines, teaching students to analyze assessment data and teaching

students how to use specific strategies.

Section Three: Intervention and Support for Adolescent Readers

The questions for section three are outlined below. Each school's score is identified in

Section Three: Results.

Indicators	Score of 5 Full Implementation	Score of 3 Partial Implementation	Score of 1 Your school needs assistance to implement
1. Administrators and teachers develop individual literacy plans to meet literacy instructional needs of adolescent readers.			
2. Intervention is highly prescriptive toward improving identified literacy deficits of			

individuals.			
3. Intervention instruction is driven by useful and relevant assessments (formative and summative).			
4. Ample and strategic tutoring sessions are available to support improved student literacy.			
5. The most highly skilled teachers work with the struggling/striving readers.			
6. The School Literacy Improvement Plan supports strategies ranging from intervention for struggling readers to expanding the reading power of all students.			

Section Three: Results

Each school's score is indicated in parenthesis next to its name at the bottom of the

rubric.

Score of 30-23 Your school fully implements intervention and support for adolescent readers.	Score of 22-14 Your school partially implements intervention and support for adolescent readers.	Score of 13-6 Your school needs assistance to implement intervention and support for adolescent readers.
Administrators and teachers develop assessments that are ongoing and are used to tailor individual instruction in reading and writing. Formative assessments are specifically designed to inform instruction on a frequent basis. Summative assessments go beyond state assessments and are designed to demonstrate progress specific to school and	Administrators and teachers develop uniform assessments for placement, program entry and program exit. Formative assessments are given but generally do not drive instruction. The school uses the state assessment as a means of continuous progress monitoring of students or programs. Tutoring programs are	Administrators and teachers develop assessments where all students start at the same point and move through interventions regardless of their individual performance. Formative assessments are given infrequently and are not designed to inform instruction. The school rarely uses ongoing

program goals. The school allows for flexibility in time and reading teachers/ coaches to support strategic tutoring and the struggling readers. The school literacy plan is successful in engaging all students in literacy for learning.	somewhat effective and the available teachers are delivering literacy strategies to the struggling students. The school literacy plan has some additional support for the advanced students to the struggling readers.	summative assessment of students and program goals. Struggling readers rarely have opportunities for strategic tutoring or extra time devoted to literacy strategies taught by highly qualified reading teachers. The school literacy plan is only for the struggling readers.
Mount Pleasant High (24)	P S DuPont (14) Springer (22)	Talley (10) Brandywine High (10) Concord (10)

Section Three: Analysis

The results suggest that two schools have a partial implementation of intervention and

supports for students. However, three schools indicated that they need assistance in

implementation. Mount Pleasant's score of 24 is interesting considering that the schools

have only been implementing a Response to Intervention (RTI) system for one year.

After a conversation with the Mount Pleasant team, I learned that they had been focused

on struggling students for several years as a result of their involvement with the State's

School Improvement Grant 2009-2012. On initial examination it appears that all of the

schools need assistance in implementation. This is not surprising since 2014-2015 was

the first year that a structured RTI system was built into all secondary schools' schedules.

Closer analysis revealed that indicator 1 yielded the lowest score for each school.

Indicator 1 focuses on individual literacy plans for all students. This outcome is not

surprising since we do not require individual literacy plans for students. Additionally,

Talley, Brandywine and Concord all had a composite score of ten; however, there were

no patterns for these three school's scores. Three of the six school's scores indicate that they are in need of assistance regarding interventions for adolescent readers. P.S. duPont's score of 14 indicates that they are partially implementing an intervention and support structure. Since P.S. duPont's score is on the low end of the partial implementation rubric, I would conclude that they also need assistance.

Section Four: Professional Development to Support Literacy

The questions for section four are outlined below. Each school's score is identified in Section Four: Results.

	Score of 5 Effective implementation of ongoing PD	Score of 3 Partial implementation of ongoing PD	Score of 1 Your school needs assistance in developing an ongoing PD plan
1. The literacy leadership team assesses and plans literacy professional development.			
2. Professional development plans are based on identified student literacy needs.			
3. Reflective teaching and self-assessment of instructional practices provide direction as to ongoing literacy professional planning (individual and school).			
4. Content-area teachers receive professional development to learn literacy strategies.			
5. Teachers with literacy expertise and experience serve as models and mentors to less experienced colleagues.			

6. Teachers participate in shared-teaching sessions to learn and refine literacy strategies.			
7. Content-area teachers receive ongoing, job-embedded professional development to learn instructional/literacy strategies.			
8. Data from informal *Literacy Walks* provide areas of focus for literacy professional development.			

Section Four: Results

Each school's score is indicated in parenthesis next to its name at the bottom of the

rubric.

Score of 40-30 **Your school effectively implements ongoing professional development to support literacy.**	**Score of 31-20** **Your school partially implements ongoing professional development to support literacy.**	**Score of 19-8** **Your school needs assistance in developing action steps for ongoing professional development to support literacy.**
The literacy leadership team plans and assesses effective professional development for the entire faculty on literacy. Professional development opportunities are differentiated and job embedded, focus on identified student literacy needs and respect the teacher as a professional. Teachers are provided with opportunities to observe and give feedback to one another. Reading	The literacy leadership team meets infrequently and has little authority in the professional development for faculty on literacy. Professional development opportunities focus on literacy but are mandated and common for all teachers. The opportunity for teachers to observe and give feedback to one another is unplanned and infrequent.	The leadership team rarely or never meets to plan and assess professional development. Professional development centers on learning about programs or textbooks. The opportunity for teachers to observe and give feedback to one another is rare. There are little or no conversations about learning and teaching literacy. Teachers operate

teachers/coaches serve as models and mentors for all the teachers. Teachers are regularly observed (informal *Literacy Walks*) which provides area(s) of focus for literacy professional development.	Reading teachers/coaches give minimal assistance to content area teachers. Teachers are sometimes observed (informal *Literacy Walks*) with occasional feedback that lacks clarity as to the focus of his or her literacy professional development.	as independent entities with little or no communication with reading experts. Some teachers are observed (informal *Literacy Walks*) but rarely receive feedback for focus on literacy professional development.
	Springer (22)	P S DuPont (10) Talley Middle (12) Brandywine High (12) Concord (10) Mount Pleasant (14)

Section Four: Analysis

The results suggest that all of the schools need assistance in creating an ongoing

professional development plan that is focused on schoolwide literacy. These scores are

consistent with the outcomes from sections one through three; however clear patterns

emerged in this section. Closer analysis revealed that all six schools rated indicators 1, 2

and 8 with a score of one. Indicators 1 and 2 specifically focus on professional

development for teachers and literacy leadership. Indicator 8 specifically references

Literacy Walks and the data that are collected and analyzed from these types of

walkthroughs. The data reveal that data from informal literacy walkthroughs are not

being used to plan and deliver professional development that is related to students' needs

and teachers' needs.

Conclusions

The results of this survey suggest that all of our schools need assistance with creating, implementing and monitoring a schoolwide focus on literacy. The results of section one indicate that all of the schools have the perceived capacity and structures in place to make schoolwide literacy a reality. For all six school, the outcomes in Section Four: Professional Development to Support Literacy, reveal that literacy leaders are not planning and delivering professional development that is focused on literacy. Additionally, section four also reveals that *Literacy Walks* are not occurring; therefore, data are not being collected. Additionally, three of the six schools' data reveal that they need additional assistance in intervention and supports for their students. The data from Sections One and Two reveal mixed outcomes with no discernable patterns.

Next Steps

Based on the results of the survey, I will create professional learning experiences that align with the needs of our schools. The mixed outcomes of Sections One and Two reveal that a focus on District priorities may be necessary in order to send a clear message. The outcomes in Section Four clearly show a need for professional development for leaders and teachers. This professional development series will focus on the indicators outlined in the survey. The professional development series Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy will focus on leadership, structural changes, content area literacy, intervention and support for adolescent learners, and building school-based professional development plans that are aligned to district priorities. These focus areas align to the AIM for Literacy Survey focus areas. During the professional development series, I will ask each school to provide evidence for the indicators that they scored at 5.

This evidence can be shared with the other schools and may show best practices in specific areas. Additionally, each school-based team will have an opportunity to focus their school-based professional learning time on the areas that they scored the lowest. The professional development plan that was created as a result of this survey is provided in Artifact I.

References

AIM for Literacy Survey. (2008, May 28). Retrieved May 15, 2015, from

wvde.state.wv.us/osp/RTIAIMLitSurvey5-28-08.doc. Found on the West Virginia

Department of Education website.

Creating a culture of literacy: A guide for middle and high school principals. (2005).

Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Appendix H

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION FOR SECONDARY

ADMINISTRATORS

When I was hired, I was given the task of creating a secondary Response to

Intervention (RTI) system for all schools in the Brandywine School District. The nine

elementary schools had some semblance of a system in place; however, our six secondary

schools had no discernable RTI system. I was able to hire an Elementary Literacy

Specialist to restructure our RTI framework in our elementary schools. The creation of a

secondary RTI system was my project. I first began by creating a Secondary RTI

Planning, Implementing and Monitoring infographic to organize the planning process and

make it transparent to all stakeholders. I used this infographic when I met with our Board

of Education, administrators, and teachers. The infographic is highlighted on page 146.

As we progressed through the creation of the secondary RTI system, I met monthly with

secondary building principals and assistant principals. The Professional Learning

PowerPoint was used in November of 2015 as a reflection tool and a next steps tool for

building administrators. I used this PowerPoint at a secondary administrators meeting to

have administrators reflect on the change process that occurred in order to implement a

secondary RTI system. These changes included shifting to an A/B Block schedule in all

secondary schools, providing professional development to all teachers, and shifting

control of decision making from teachers to administrators.

Goals

- Provide you a window on the relationship between leadership, professional learning, and achievement
- Give an honest description of what literacy needs to look like in all secondary BSD schools.
- Provoke your thinking about how to create and nurture conditions for change in your school

Turn and Talk

- What professional learning structures do you currently have in place?
- How well are they working?
- What are the biggest barriers?

Planning Professional Learning

BSD Secondary Literacy Supervisors
November 10, 2015
Cary B. Riches

Planning Professional Learning

- Purpose- do teachers know the "Why?"
- Process—what structure do you have in place?
- Product- what will teachers and students use/produce?
- Avoid an "activity trap"– do not have teachers engage in professional learning activities that have no purpose.

Buy-in: what does that mean?

- Buy-in from teachers is important, but buy-in is usually misunderstood
- Leaders build the sense of urgency around the problem
- Leaders set up processes that help teachers understand the problem
- The Leader needs to be in control
- Teachers buy-in when they trust the leader

Leaders Establish a Purpose

- Identify a Problem?
  - Too many students are reading below grade-level?
- Establish a Sense of Urgency
  - This is a problem because literacy is a gateway to future success
- Establish a Purpose for Professional Learning
  - The purpose of this professional learning is to learn how to increase our students' reading ability.

Biggest Barriers

- Lack of Purpose
- Lack of Trust
- Lack of Knowledge
- Lack of Communication
- Lack of Buy-in

"Like it or not, all teams are potentially dysfunctional. This is inevitable because they are made up of fallible, imperfect human beings."

Lencioni, P. (2007). *Conquer team dysfunction*

Buy-in is about Strong Leadership

- Buy-in is not about shared decision making, it's about believing in and trusting a leader and his/her ability to make something happen.

buy-in

JOHN P. KOTTER with LORNE A. WHITEHEAD

Product--Choose an Instructional Routine/Materials/Program

Who should choose the focus, materials and/or program?

- Who has the most knowledge about literacy and research?
- One person needs to be in control of the decision making process. (That is you!)

Setting Up the Process

- You have to be clear about what it is you want teachers to do.
- You have to provide them the materials they need,
- You have to schedule time for them to learn and practice,
- You have to observe them to support full implementation,
- And you have to allow for mid-course corrections.

Leaders Establish Student Outcomes

- Establish the Student Achievement Outcomes- what are they, exactly?
  - How will we measure student reading growth?
    - Do you know your school's STAR scores?
  - How and when will we assess students' reading ability?
    - Do you know what STAR tells us? (strengths and limitations)
  - What is acceptable reading growth?

Product--Choose an Instructional Routine/Materials/Program

As the Instructional Leader, you need to know what you are talking about.

- The process must involve research
- Leaders must ask tough questions about the research base of any program or instructional routine
- Connect with people who know more than you (University of Delaware)

Research on Professional Learning

Collaborative

Job embedded

Garet, M., Porter, A., Desimone, L. Birman, B., & Yoon, K. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Analysis of a national sample of teachers. *American Education Research Journal, 38,* 915-945.

Planning Professional Learning in Action

Building a Secondary RtI Model

What does the research tell us about effective professional learning?

Turn and Talk

- Do your teachers know the problem?
  - Have a sense of urgency?
  - If not, why not?
  - If so, what's next?

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The Problem and the Purpose

- Problem: Too many current students are reading below grade level
- Process: Through transparent data sharing, I developed a sense of urgency
- Purpose: Students needed additional literacy instruction and teachers needed to learn how to do this.
- Product: A Professional Learning Plan was created that addressed both needs.

BSD RtI System: A look back

- 2012- present
- Brandywine School District
- 3 Middle Schools
- 3 High Schools

Professional Learning Plan: Process

STEP ONE:
- 2 Full Professional Development Days with School Administration
- Goal: The administrator's role in improving the school's literacy opportunities is clearly evident
- Data Analysis, Root Cause
- Reading Research
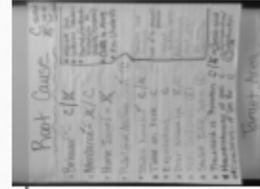
Professional Learning Plan: Process

- STEP TWO:
  - Schedule Audit
  - Are scheduling structures in place to support identified literacy needs of all students?

- STEP THREE:
  - Are adequate fiscal resources in place to support the professional learning plan?
  - Teacher resources
  - Student materials
  - Training

Professional Learning Plan: Process

- STEP FIVE:
- 2 Full PD days in the summer for all PALS teachers
- Purpose
- Materials
- Outcomes and Measures (SRI)
- Practice

Welcome to PALS Project

We are going to develop the reading and writing skills you need to be successful here.

Professional Learning Plan: Process & Product

- STEP SEVEN:
- Leveraged technology to stay connected
- All training materials
- Discussions
- Data

Professional Learning Plan: Process

- STEP FOUR:
- Worked with Sharon Walpole, University of Delaware, to choose an instructional routine and materials.
- Chose Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS as the routine
- Chose connected text, novels and short stories, 600-1000 Lexile
- Created training materials for teachers to use

Professional Learning Plan: Process

- STEP SIX:
- Blended Approach using Learning Management System, LMS, Blackboard and Schoology- all materials
- After school PD sessions

How did BSD react?

- The paradigm had to change from teachers making decisions to teachers trusting their leaders to make decisions

KEEP
CALM
THERE'S A
PARADIGM
SHIFT
GOING ON

Challenges for Leadership
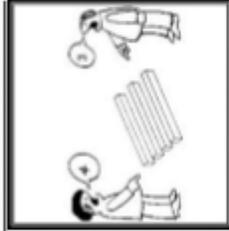
- Principals have to support a change in schedules and a new approach to struggling students.
- Administrators need to understand RTI (all tiers)
- Administrators need to know A LOT about literacy

Change Process in BSD

2012-2013
- Year long PD on why things had to change, data digs
- Scheduling Committees
- Board Presentations

2014-2015
- A/B Block Schedule
- Tier II reading training
- Tier II classes built in to all MS/HS schedule
- School-wide screening, 3x per year

Brandywine School District Secondary RtI Planning, Implementation & Monitoring

Goal: Systematic intervention to accelerate learning and enhance both efficiency and accuracy of identification efforts in special education

Phase I

Process of School Wide Change

Exploration & Need
- Raise Awareness
- Explore Big Ideas and Delaware Regulations

10/2012–11/2012

Phase II

Establish & Build Infrastructure
- Develop the structures (schedule)
- Adopt Elements & Resources to support Three-Tier Model (based on research, approval from DOE)
- Universal Screener & Progress Monitoring Tool
- Fidelity of Implementation Guidelines

11/2012–6/2014

Phase III

Implementation—4 Phase

Beginning (Forming) 2013/2014

Adjusting (Storming) 2014/2015

Norming 2015–2016

Institutionalizing 2016–

Professional learning & Support

Foundational Content:
- Exploring RtI
- Problem-Solving within an RtI Model
- Grade-level data reviews
- Evaluating and Rounding Out Literacy Intervention Continuum
- Research–based Programs

1/2013–6/2014

- State Regulations
  - Universal Screening
  - Progress Monitoring and Outcome (deeper knowledge)
- School-Based learning facilitated by District RtI Supervisor
- School Admin training

12/1/2014-8/15/2014

Review Process Established 2013-6/2015

Annual (Goals)

Quarterly (Data Driven)

Establish RtI Network for Elementary, Middle and High Schools

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Action Steps

- Involve Staff in decision making
- District commitment of resources and infrastructure support (screeners, monitoring tools, curriculum)
- Review-Analyze data to determine needs of students
- District/School Improvement plans include RtI goals
- Establish Building RtI Leadership teams
- Develop School Action Plan linked to data

1/2014-6/2015

- RtI Readiness Survey
- Meet with Building Principals
- Meet with Building Leadership teams

2/1/2014-8/15/2014

Over time:
- Grade-level Meetings
- Universal Screening, Progress, Outcome Reviews
- Common planning
- Develop Team approach to Intervention Continuum
- System for new student (testing) & new staff (training)
- Annual/Quarterly Reports of Progress to

Revised 1/15/

It's a work in progress

We are never finished, but we have a culture where teachers are recognizing that we need to do things differently.

We have a culture where concerns for student achievement trump all else.

And for 2015-16

- A/B Block Schedule
- Fluid RTI system KN- Grade 11 in reading and mathematics
- Quarterly Reviews and Mid-course corrections
- Deeper Dig into reading research
- Manage the transition

Appendix I

PROFESSIONAL DEVLEOPMENT PLAN

The Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy (SSLL) cohort was created to help leaders in our six secondary buildings develop instructional leadership through the use of evidence-based reading research and evidenced-based leadership skills. The professional development plan is a two-year plan that outlines the work of the SSLL cohort. The plan is aligned with BSD's Strategic Plan and goals. Additionally, the long-range-cohort professional development model is one that I am encouraging in BSD. This model commits participants and me to a focus for an extended period of time. Our commitment to long-range professional development is important because it acknowledges for our teachers and leaders that change takes time.

This professional development plan was also created using a blended approach, online and face-to-face. A blended approach (face-to-face and online) to professional development was my attempt to combat the "one and done" approach to PD that has occurred in the past. The use of Schoology, a learning management system, allows cohort participants to access resources anytime, collaborate with colleagues in other buildings without leaving their own building, and learn at their own time, pace and place. The SSLS Schoology site is described in Appendix J. The following plan applies to year one of the SSLS cohort. Year two goals will be based on the outcomes from year one.

Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy

Professional Development Plan

June 2015-June 2017

INTRODUCTION

Professional development, learning, and training are not the answers to all the challenges educators face, but they can significantly increase educators' capacity to increase their knowledge and increase student learning. This document will reveal connections among local and national professional development initiatives that inform our vision for supporting teaching and learning.

We recognize that there are many approaches to organizing and implementing professional development. For example, we could adopt a district-wide design or a school-based or school-based design. However, we have embraced a design that incorporates both district-wide and school -based approaches.

District-wide design models may be ineffective if delivered in a single-dose approach. District-wide models typically rely on one-time workshops, which provide little time for reflection and support. However, district-wide designs can provide a broad view of expectations for all educators.

School - based professional development can be aligned more closely with the contextual features of the school; however, school - based models can miss the broader view that a district-wide approach can offer.

An integrated approach that marries both district-wide and school - based models can be a highly effective form of professional development. Moreover, integrating state and national professional development with district-wide and school-based professional development should result in the greatest systemic impact.

The **BSD Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy, SSLL, Professional Development Plan: 2015-2017** includes national, state, district-wide and school-based approaches to enhance the learning of all educators in the district. This plan supports the following District and School Improvement goals.

BSD SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS 2015-2017:

- **Goal 1**: Identify and develop school-wide structures to build and support a culture of college and career readiness.
- **Goal 2**: Ensure that all educators implement instructional practices aligned to Common Core Standards to improve student learning
- **Goal 3**: Utilize formative and summative assessments aligned to Common Core Standards to inform instruction and ensure student growth (includes State and National assessments)

- **Goal 4**: Involve families and other community stakeholders in the initiation, implementation, continuation and outcome process of all major initiatives
- **Goal 5**: Ensure all students are supported by structures and systems that promote a positive school climate

STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:

The Brandywine School District has adopted the National Staff Development Council's, NSDC, Professional Learning Standards (2001). The seven standards focus on educator learning that directly relate to successful student learning. The seven standards are aligned to three categories: Context, Process and Content. They are reprinted below.

CONTEXT STANDARDS: DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ORGANZIATION THAT MUST BE IN PLACE TO SUSTAIN THE EFFECTS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

1) **Learning Communities**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
2) **Leadership**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
3) **Resources**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

PROCESS STANDARDS: DELINATE THE DELIVERY CHARACTERSIS THAT FACILIATE SUCCESSFUL ADULT CHANGE.

4) **DATA**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
5) **Learning Design**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
6) **Implementation**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

CONTENT STANDARDS: IDENTIFY THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS EDUCATORS NEED.

7) **Outcomes**: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for ALL students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

4 PREREQUISITES FOR EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

According to the NSDC (2001) there are four prerequisites for effective professional learning. They are so fundamental that the standards do not identify or describe them. These prerequisites exist where professional learning connects with professional ethics. They are reprinted below. More information regarding NSDC's (2001) standards for professional learning can be found at the following URL: www.learningforward.com

1. **Educators' commitment to students, ALL students, is the foundation of effective professional learning**. Committed educators understand that they must engage in continuous improvement to know enough and be skilled enough to meet the learning needs of ALL students. As professionals, they seek to deepen their knowledge and expand their portfolio of skills and practices, always striving to increase each student's performance. If adults responsible for student learning do not continuously seek new learning, it is not only their knowledge, skills and practices that erode over time. They also become less able to adapt to change, less self-confident, and less able to make a positive difference in the lives of their colleagues and students.	**2.** **Each educator involved in professional learning comes to the experience ready to learn.** Professional learning is a partnership among professionals who engage with one another to access or construct knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions. However, it cannot be effective if educators resist learning. Educators want and deserve high-quality professional learning that is relevant and useful. They are more likely to fully engage in learning with receptive hearts and minds when their school systems, schools and colleagues align professional learning with the standards.

3. **Because there are disparate experience levels and use of practice among educators, professional learning can foster collaborative inquiry and learning that enhances individual and collective performance.** This cannot happen unless educators listen to one another, respect one another's experiences and perspectives, hold students' best interests at the forefront, trust that their colleagues share a common vision and goals, and are honest about their abilities, practices, challenges, and results. Professional accountability for individual and peer results strengthens the profession and results for students.	**4.** **Like all learners, educators learn in different ways and at different rates.** Because some educators have different learning needs than others, professional learning must engage educator in timely, high-quality learning that meets his or her particular learning needs. Some may benefit from more time than others, different types of learning experiences, or more support as they seek to translate new learning into more productive practices. For some educators, this requires courage to acknowledge their learning needs, and determination and patience to continue learning until the practices are effective and comfortable.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND STUDENT RESULTS

The NSDC (2001) created the graphic below to illustrate the connection between professional learning and student results. You can find a Quick Reference Guide and more information at www.learningforward.com

- When professional learning is standards-based, it has greater potential to change what educators know, are able to do and believe.

- When educators' knowledge, skills, and dispositions change, they have a broader repertorier of effective strategies to use to adapt their practices to meet performance expectations and student learning needs.

1. Standards-based professional learning.

2. Changes in educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

4. Changes in student results.

3. Changes in educator practice.

STRUCTURE

- When student results improve, the cycle repeats for continuous improvements.

- When educator practice improves, students have greater likelihood of achieving results.

All professional development activities related to SSLL are outlined in this document. This plan will answer: What, Why, Who, How and When. The initiatives outlined is this plan are grounded in evidenced-based practices and National and State content standards.

WHAT & WHY

SSLL PD plan is a comprehensive plan that aligns with and clearly communicates how national, state, and local initiatives work together to increase educators'

knowledge about evidenced-based literacy strategies.

Designed to allow administrators and teachers to work together, this cohort professional development model is a collaboration between district office and school-based administrators. The participants will be selected by the building principal and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. A commitment will be made by the building principal and each teacher-leader participant to fully participate in each professional learning experience, complete work in between each session, via Schoology, and plan school-based professional learning based on the research presented during the district-level sessions.

All resources will be provided to each participant. These resources will be provided during the June 22, 2015 Kick-off event. Additional resources will be provided via the Schoology Group, access code: 77J5K-Z4Z9P.

The reason we are engaging this type of literacy professional development is simple: school leaders need to know **A LOT** about literacy. We hear all too often that building administrators need be "instructional leaders." However, in BSD we believe that building administrators and teacher leaders need to be "instructional leaders in literacy." A student's ability to read, write, speak and listen has an impact on every single subject area and in life. If we do not focus on teaching students to be literate in all areas, we are not meeting national and state standards, and we certainly are not producing students who are college and career ready.

The goal of this professional development series is to increase school-based leaders' knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices. These practices included evidenced-based literacy strategies and as well as literacy leadership strategies. During our professional learning we will make explicit connections between literacy and other BSD Focus Areas. The following focus areas will be linked to this plan: Assessment, Common Core State Standards, Instructional Technology & Blended Learning, Learning Focused Strategies (LFS), Maximizing School Schedules, Response to Intervention, and Student Support Structures. All of these focus areas are supported by the seven standards for professional learning, inclusive of the four prerequisites, and the Delaware Performance Appraisal System, DPAS II R.

FOCUS AREAS

	7 Standards for PD (4 prerequisites)	Component I: Planning & Preparation	Component II: Classroom Environment	Component III: Instruction	Component IV: Professional Responsibilities	Component V: Student Performance
Assessment (Smarter Balanced, District formative and summative, STAR, SAT, AP, IB)- How will we use data to make decisions regarding literacy in our schools?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Common Core State Standards, CCSS- Do I really know what the Common Core should look like in a classroom?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Instructional Technology & Blended Learning- What do blended literacy lessons look like?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Learning Focused Solutions (LFS)-How does LFS fit into literacy instruction?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maximizing School Schedules for student learning (i.e. Teaching in the Block)- What does literacy look like in a 90-minute block?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Response to Intervention (RtI), Academic - What are evidence based	X	X	X	X	X	X

interventions? And how do I know?						
Student Support Structures (AVID, 504, ESL, IEP, Gifted & Talented) & Support Services—How do we make it fit in the literacy block?	X	X	X	X	X	X

WHO

The following organizational table outlines the **WHO** of the BSD SSLL.

Role	Description	Staff
Sponsor	Has ultimate authority over and is responsible for the project and/or the program, its scope and deliverables; provides the executive level support and resources to drive the change effort.	Cary Riches
Guiding Team	Develops the strategies and maintains project schedules, executes project evaluations, actively removes roadblock, clarifies priorities, communicates with stakeholders, builds support and resolves conflicts; is responsible for overall quality of the deliverables.	Building Principals/ Assistant Principals James Simmons
Change Team	Is responsible for ensuring the tasks are completed properly and on time; provides assistance in design and deployment of the change program; performs the activities necessary for implementation of the project.	Teacher Leaders

Field Team	Represents the constituencies in the organization that have a significant stake in the change effort; provides expert understanding of their division, and represents areas the project is intended to serve.	Classroom teachers, Councils, Deans, Department Chairs, Counselors, EDs, LFS Coaches, Reading Specialists, Support Staff, Parents & Community

HOW

The following professional development structures will be utilized:

DISTRICT SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

- During these mandatory professional development opportunities, participants can increase their content knowledge and strengthen their pedagogical practices.

DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS (AUGUST & JUNE)

- During these mandatory professional development opportunities, participants are provided with broad overviews of assessment, content, curriculum, standards and pedagogical practices. Additionally, non-core teachers may be provided time for required trainings.

DISTRICT PD DAYS DURING STUDENT DAY (SUBSTITUTES REQUIRED)

- During these mandatory professional development opportunities, participants are provided with broad overviews as well as more in-depth professional learning opportunities. These opportunities may be content specific and/or grade-band specific.

DISTRICT & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR CONTENT/LEADERSHIP TRAINING

- During these mandatory professional development opportunities, District and School Administrators are provided time to strengthen their leadership skills through an in-depth focus on assessment, content, curriculum, standards and pedagogical practices that are aligned to the DPAS II process.

DISTRICT COUNCILS

- District Councils comprise school based teacher leader representatives from each secondary school.

    - Act as a District-level Professional Learning Community
        - Act as a Vertical Team in content area
        - Share student data
        - Discuss implication of data for curriculum and instruction
        - Determine professional development needs

PIP/TRADE-IN

- All BSD teachers are required to earn 7 hours of Personalized In-service Program, PIP, and 14 hours of trade-in in lieu of attendance at two days of in-service. PIP and trade-in hours may be accrued by participating in any professional learning experiences related to SSLL.

SCHOOL-BASED PLC

- School-based PLCs provide educators opportunities to engage in a cycle of inquiry regarding student learning and teacher effectiveness. Educators engage in in-depth analysis of teaching and learning connections, including a reliance on data to drive instructional planning. SSLL participants are expected to work with school-based PLCs to provide job-embedded professional learning experiences for their colleagues.

SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM MEETINGS

- Site (school)-based curriculum meetings provide school faculty guaranteed time to engage in professional learning related to District and school priorities. Principals and teacher leaders will create professional learning experiences for their monthly curriculum-based meetings. These presentations will be housed in Schoology.

SCHOOL-BASED SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

- Site (school)-based summer professional development days allow school leadership teams to conduct needs analyses and align school and District priorities. Schools will be asked to submit comprehensive plans for school-based professional development. These plans will align with the goals outlined in this document.

PARENT & COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

- Parent and Community workshops provide time for parents, community members and educators to work together to support District and school-wide goals. Each secondary building will be required to conduct a yearly presentation for parents and community members. This presentation will be

based on research and information gathered during the cohort professional development opportunities.

STATEWIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Statewide professional development days provide opportunities to align District and school priorities to those of the Delaware Department of Education. Statewide professional development days will be vetted to make sure that the offerings are relevant and aligned with the goals of the SSLL.

WHEN

The following timeline explicitly identifies professional development opportunities from June 2015-June 2016. These professional development opportunities will be face-to-face and digital. The professional development activities for 2016-2017 will be determined by the outcomes of year one.

YEAR ONE- JUNE 2015-JUNE 2016

JUNE 2015

June 22, 2015—8:00 am to 3:00 pm, Springer Middle School Library

- SSLL Kick-off event
- Face-to-face professional development
- Complete Needs Assessment Survey (AIMS for Literacy Survey) via Google Form
- Log-on to Schoology group
- Choose Book Study Group

SEPTEMBER 2015

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- Get familiar with platform and the resources

OCTOBER 2015

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- School-based Professional Development- *Explaining Response to Intervention*
  - Creating a Sense of Urgency around RTI
  - How can this team raise a sense of urgency so that people start telling each other "we must do something" about the problems and opportunities?
  - Resource: *The Heart of Change: Real-life stories of How People Change Their Organizations* (Kotter, 2002)

NOVEMBER 2015

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- School-based Professional Development- *Cracking the Common Core: Choosing and Using Texts in Grades 6-12* (Lewis, Walpole & McKenna, 2014)
  - Choose one strategy from this resource to model with staff

DECEMBER 2015

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- Progress Update
- Book Group

JANUARY 2016

- Schoology Log-in (synchronous)
- Interpreting STAR Winter Assessment Benchmark Data

FEBRUARY 2016

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- Book Group
- School-based Professional Development- Explaining Reading: What's the Difference between a Skill and a Strategy?

MARCH 2016

March 9, 2016—3:00 pm to 6:00, Springer Middle School Library

- Face-to-face professional Learning
- After School, 3-hour planning meeting
- Data Interpretation
- Complete Kotter's Eight Stage Process for Change
- Finalize plan for full day April PD

APRIL 2016

April 26, 2016—8:00 am to 3:00 pm, District-wide Professional Development Day

- SSLL lead District PD

MAY 2016

- Schoology Log-in (asynchronous)
- Book Group
- School-based Professional Development- What's the Connection between Reading and Writing?

JUNE 2016

June 13, 2016—8:00 am to 3:00 pm, Mount Pleasant Elementary School, Multi-purpose room

- Data review, Spring 2016 STAR scores and Student Growth Reports
- Planning for 2016-2017: What does literacy instruction need to look like and sound like in BSD?

YEAR TWO- JUNE 2016- JUNE 2017

- Common Core Alignment (Continuation)
- SmarterBalanced Alignment (Implementation)
- Response to Intervention (RtI) (Continuation)
- Choose a Research area related to the Cognitive Model of Reading (group research)

BSD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION DOCUMENTS MATRIX

The following table outlines the documents that must be communicated in order for all stakeholders to be updated and engaged in the SSLL cohort.

Document	Recipients	Responsibilities	Update frequency
Current District and School Data	Administration, SSLL participants and teachers	Julie Schmidt	Quarterly
District documents related to literacy instruction, resources guides, guidelines for assessment	Administration, SSLL participants, teachers and parents	Cary Riches	Beginning of School Year, prior to teachers' first day
District PD Timeline, Calendar	All BSD employees	Cary Riches	April of previous year for upcoming year: beginning July 1
PD Planning Document	BSD Curriculum and Instruction Division	Cary Riches	Monthly
Facilities Usage Forms	BSD Facilities Office	Kim Smallwood	30 days prior to each event
Facilities Usage Matrix	Cary Riches	Kim Smallwood	Update monthly
PIP/Trade-in forms, Matrix	SSLL Participants	Kim Smallwood	Update monthly via Data Service Center
Schoology Updates and Resources	Administration and SSLL	Cary Riches	Monthly

	participants		
PD Evaluations	Administration and SSLL participants	Cary Riches	Via Data Service Center

LITERACY LEADERS BOOK RESOURCES

Along with the resources housed on our Schoology site, the following books will be provided to each participant. During the two-year professional development series, we will reference these resources frequently. These are your books to keep. You may, and are encouraged to, write in them and take notes. Each participant is asked to choose one of the literacy resources to read on his/her own and participant in an online book group via our Schoology page. We will use the curriculum and leadership resources throughout the PD series. We are reading literacy books to build general background knowledge in development and instruction so that we can see how developmental approaches can be applied in secondary settings and understand some of the underlying causes of weak literacy achievement.

Literacy Resources

Bringing Words to Life, Second Edition: Robust Vocabulary Instruction

Isabel L. Beck, Ph.D., Margaret G. McKeown, Ph.D., and Linda Kucan, Ph.D.

If you are interested in vocabulary instruction, this is the book for you. This book is grounded in research-based vocabulary instruction. This book provides strategies for selecting words for instruction, introducing word meanings and increasing word knowledge. Robust vocabulary instruction is clearly defined and examples are given from real teachers' classrooms.

Cracking the Common Core: Choosing and Using Texts 6-12

William Lewis, Ph.D., Sharon Walpole, Ph.D., and Michael McKenna, Ph.D.

Bill Lewis and Sharon Walpole are both professors at the University of Delaware and Dr. Walpole is currently working with our district on literacy initiatives. This book provides content area literacy examples as well as advice for teachers and building leaders regarding the use of texts in all content areas. Instructional routines, like PALS and Reciprocal Teaching, are highlighted in this book. The instructional routines in this book were piloted in Delaware high schools.

Explaining Reading, 3rd Edition, A Resource for Explicit Teaching of the Common Core State Standards

Gerald G. Duffy. Ed.D.

This book is a great resource for leaders who really want to understand the difference between skills and strategies. Duffy gives 30 concrete examples for classroom use. Duffy explains that skills are things that are taught and eventually become strategies. Duffy breaks down skills like

identifying main idea and even gives teachers suggestions for how to introduce and teach these skills.

Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching

Anita Archer, Ph.D., and Charles A. Hughes, Ph.D.

Decades of research support the work of Anita Archer. This book clearly shows the difference between explicit instruction and teacher talk. When we hear the term explicit instruction, one might think, "more teacher talk." Direct explicit instruction is not about teachers talking at students but rather teachers directing students to learn and practice cognitive skills. Remember—reading is learned; therefore, it must be taught.

Teaching Through Text: Reading and Writing in the Content Areas (2nd Edition)

Michael C McKenna, Ph.D. and Richard D. Robinson, Ph.D.

This book gives strategy examples for all of the content areas. The strategies are grounded in empirical research and are aligned with the other resources we will be using. This book is great to use with content area teachers who struggle with how to incorporate texts and instructional strategies into their lessons.

Leadership Resources

The Heart of Change: Real-life stories of How People Change Their Organizations

John P. Kotter, Ph.D.

John P. Kotter gives us real life examples of how people have changed their organizations. We will study Kotter's 8-Step Change process through our interactions on Schoology. This book is a complement to Kotter's 8-Step Change Process. Kotter reminds us that change is very difficult and if we want lasting change we must change people's behaviors, not their minds.

Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change

William Bridges, Ph.D.

Along with John P. Kotter's work, *Managing Transitions* will be hugely helpful as we think about the leadership qualities that must be present in order to make a lasting change. Bridges writes, "It isn't the changes that do you in, it's the transitions" (p. 3). As we embark on our Literacy Leadership journey, we'll need to remember that change is difficult for most people. This book will help guide us through the three phases of transition: 1) Ending, Losing Letting go, 2) The Neutral Zone and 3) The New Beginning.

Glossary

Asynchronous – asynchronous learning uses online learning resources (in our case-Schoology) to facilitate learning outside of the constraints of time and place. Participants can learn at their own time and place.

Schoology- Schoology is a learning management system, LMS. Learning management systems are software or web-based systems that organize information for specific learning purposes.

Synchronous- synchronous learning uses online learning resources to facilitate learning within the constraints of time and place. All participants are required to work together at the same time.

References

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching.* New
York, NY: The Guilford Press.

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PA: Da Capo Press.

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Appendix J

SCHOOLOGY SITE WITH RESOURCES FOR LITERACY LEADERS

In order for the Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy (SSLL) professional development cohort to utilize a blended approach to professional learning, I constructed an online learning group. The Brandywine School District adopted Schoology, an online learning management system (LMS) in 2014. I created a Schoology Group entitled: Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy. The purpose of the Schoology site is to house necessary and relevant resources, facilitate collaboration among leaders from other schools in an online environment, and capture the progress of professional learning. This Schoology site is the online component of the Secondary Strategic Leaders of Literacy professional development plan that is outlined in Artifact I.

Blended learning is an instructional design where students participate in face-to-face learning as well as learning online with digital tools. Since the Brandywine School District adopted Schoology as our LMS, I created a Schoology site as a complement to the face-to-face professional development sessions for the SSLL participants. The resources that are housed in the SSLL Schoology site are meant to be resources for instructional leaders to use during school-based professional development. In this case, the Schoology site was created to house digital resources and provide an Internet-based system that organizes information and allows cohort members to communicate and

collaborate. Schoology is a private system that is password protected. The Schoology site is organized to help facilitate online learning for teachers and administrators.

The Schoology site is organized with the following structure:

- **Updates:** The Updates portion on the site allows members to add general information and reminders that are relevant to the whole group.

- **Discussions:** Discussion boards allow participants to engage in an online discussion that is focused on a specific topic. Unlike the Updates portion, the discussion boards focus on very specific questions. The discussion boards and participants' posts show online collaboration.

- **Albums**: the Albums portion of the Schoology site allows members to share digital media, pictures, and video.

- **Members:** the Members portion of the Schoology site lists all of the members of the group.

- **Resources:** The Resources folder houses all of the digital resources, or assets, that the group will be required to read or reference. The Resources folder is a digital filing cabinet.

The screen shots below are taken directly from Schoology. The first screen shot is the resources page for the SSLL group. Information is organized into three folders: Literacy Leadership Resources, Literacy Resources, and RTI Resources.

The screenshot below shows the resources folders and the organization of the content.
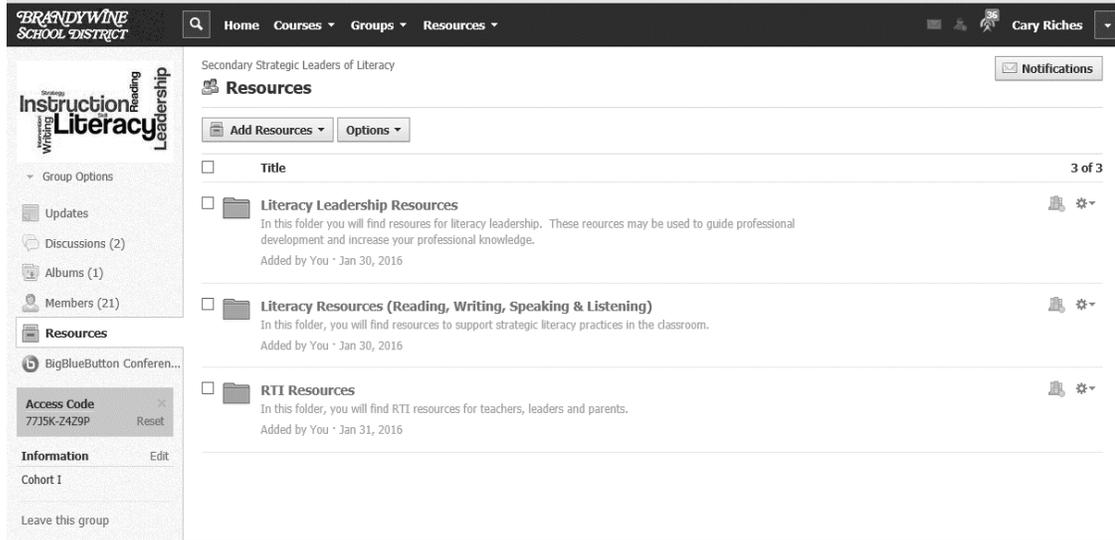
I organized the three folders to align with the themes outlined in the AIM for

Literacy Survey. The AIM for Literacy Survey was given to the school-based teams at

our first SSLL sessions. The survey themes are: Collaborative Leadership and School

Capacity, Content Area Classes, Intervention and Support for Adolescent Readers, and

Professional Development to Support Leaders.

The first folder in the Schoology site, Literacy Leadership Resource, provides

resources for collaborative literacy leadership, building school capacity for literacy, and

professional development resources. The second Schoology folder, Literacy Resources,

houses evidenced-based literacy strategies for use in content-area classes. The third

Schoology folder, RTI Resources, houses evidenced-based intervention strategies and

supports for adolescent readers.

For each of the resources listed in the Literacy Leadership Resources, Literacy

Resources or RTI Resources, I will use the same structure to introduce all of the

resources listed in each folder. I will build the participants' background knowledge, during our face-to-face sessions by:

- explaining the piece (including the research base),

- asking them to read a portion of the piece during our face-to-face session,

- asking them to talk to their teammates about the use of the resources.

- asking them to commit to reading the rest of the resources and posting about it in the Discussion Board.

The screenshot below shows the type of resources that are listed inside the folder, Literacy Leadership Resources. There are 17 professional articles or meta-analyses posted in this folder.

The 17 professional articles or meta-analyses that are in this folder were chosen based on research and readings that I did during my doctoral coursework and my continued work as a district-based researcher. I pulled resources from the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Center on Instruction, the Florida Center for Reading Research and the What Works Clearninghouse. Many of these resources will be used during our face-to-face professional devleopment sessions. For example, the first resource listed in this folder, *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading* (Graham & Hebert, 2010), is a publication from the Alliance for Excellent Educaiton. During the June 22, 2015 Kick-off Session, I introduced this resource to the whole group. I asked all particpants to log on to the Schoology site and read the Forward, Executive Summary and the Introduction (pp. 1-7). I then asked the participants to get into small groups and discuss how this resource could be used in their school-based professional learning sessions. I asked the participants to read the section, Recommendations for Using Writing to Improve Reading, as Indentifed by Meta-Analysis (pp. 9-23), before our September meeting. I also asked the participants to think about how they could use this resource with teachers in their buildings. Participants commented on the discussion board entitled Wows and Wonders from Meta-Analysis. Each time the participants read a meta-analysis, I ask that they comment on this discussion board. This will give our group a running record of the conversation around reading research as well as provide collaborative opportunities.

The screenshot below shows the resources that are embedded in the folder

Literacy Resources. There are five folders embedded, each with additional resources or

discussion boards.

The following screenshot shows the resources that are embedded in the folder,

RTI Resources. There are nine articles, guides or regulatory documents posted in this

folder.

During the June 22, 2015 kick-off session, participants logged in to the Schoology group with the Access Code: 77J5K-Z4Z9P. During that session, participants familiarized themselves with the structure of the content. All participants in the cohort group have used Schoology in the past as part of their professional responsibilities. During the kick-off session, I asked participants to log on and post a comment on the first discussion board: Wows and Wonders About Reading and Students Who Struggle. I wanted participants to articulate what they wanted to learn about reading, reading research, reading interventions and students who struggle. The discussion board will continue to provide participants opportunities to collaborate with others outside of their school. Participants are able to ask each other questions and post additional resources within the discussion boards.

The SSLL Professional Development Plan, Artifact I, outlines the use of all of the professional development resources, including the Schoology group page. The Schoology site is a resource for the group. As we navigate blended learning and test Schoology, we will use the Schoology site a resource repository and a means for online discussion. Structured activities will be provided during the face-to-face professional development sessions.

As of February 1, 2016, the following analytics reveal the usage of the SSLL Schoology page. There have been 143 total page views and 94 total comments posted in the five discussion boards. The screenshot below shows the course analytics.

Course Analytics   Note: Statistics may take up to 24 hours to fully propagate

Course | User | Assignment | Discussion | Links

Total Hits per Day

Analytics Summary

143   Total page views

94   Total comments

Page Breakdown for the Month

Assignments

Discussions
Profile
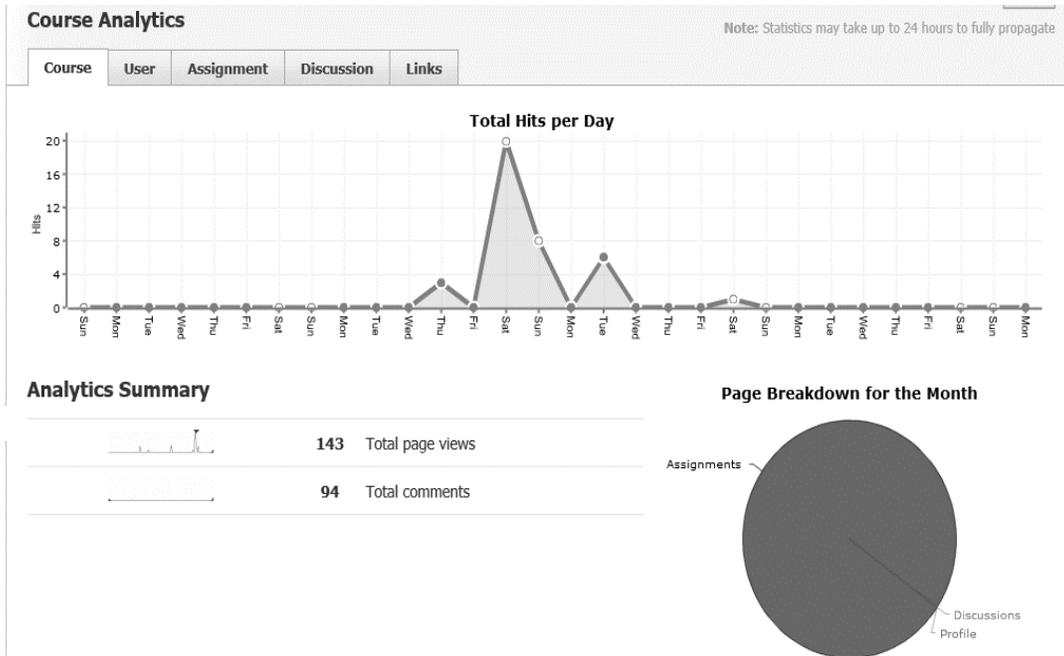
The following screenshot shows the topics of the discussion boards and the number of total posts.

Discussion	Posts
Wows and Wonders about Reading and Students who Struggle.	15
Wows and Wonders about Reading Research	8
1.) I wonder...	25
4.) Wows and Wonders from meta-analysis.	12
Things to Consider...	34
Total	**94**

Using Schoology in this fashion models for teachers what a blended approach to learning looks like. The Schoology site is a resources for the SSLL participants.

Reference

Graham, S., and Hebert, M. A. (2010). Writing to read: Evidence for how writing can improve reading. A Carnegie Corporation Time to Act Report. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education