













Professional Development

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

High-quality professional development is focused on attaining school reading goals and is guided by assessment data.

	 Goals	 Assessment	 Instruction	 Leadership	 Professional Development	 Commitment
 Schools						
 Districts						
 State						

Six Principles of High-Quality Professional Development:

- ★ Guided by assessment data to attain school reading goals
- ★ Focused on the implementation of research-based programs and practices
- ★ Consistent time allocated for educators to plan, reflect on, and refine instruction
- ★ Multifaceted, coordinated, and ongoing to support teachers and instructional staff on the assessment and instruction of reading priorities
- ★ Differentiated by position and need
- ★ Results in a thorough understanding of, and ability to implement reading priorities and practices effectively

The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is aligned to Response to Intervention (RTI)

Through ongoing professional development teachers learn how to provide the instruction students need to be successful readers. High-quality professional development at the school level addresses both theoretical foundations of effective practice as well as the “how-tos” of delivering effective instruction.¹ The most effective professional development plans are coordinated, ongoing, and guided by student performance data. The National Council for Staff Developmentⁱⁱ recommends that **“at least 25 percent of an educator’s work time be devoted to learning and collaboration with colleagues.”**² While professional development also includes workshops at state and national conferences, making professional development available within the school setting and aligned to the School Reading Plan (see [Commitment](#) chapter, 2) provides an ongoing, sustained, and focused approach. Examples of professional development within the school setting are teacher study groups, grade-level and department-level meetings to analyze data and to plan and reflect on instruction, focused professional development offered by a master teacher or a coach on a specific aspect of implementation, and ongoing observations by instructional experts and mentors.³ In this chapter, six principles of high quality professional development are discussed.

Principle 1: Professional Development Is Data-driven to Attain School Reading Goals

Professional development for teachers and those who support teachers should be data-driven.⁴ At the most fundamental level, professional development needs to be based on whether or not students are meeting formative reading goals or whether or not they are on track for meeting formative and summative reading goals (see [Goals](#) chapter, 5-8).⁵ The National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching recommends, **“Professional development should be based on analysis of the difference between (a) actual student learning and (b) goals and standards for student learning.”**⁶

For example, in an elementary school in which all students grades K-3 are making adequate reading progress and are meeting formative and summative reading goals, a reasonable conclusion would be that few adjustments in reading instruction are necessary. Professional development could therefore focus on ways to sustain strong outcomes; supporting the concept of continuous improvement increase outcomes by a small, measurable degree each year. However, in schools where some or many students are not meeting formative and summative reading goals, professional development needs to focus on specific targets identified by direct evidence. **The idea is to implement professional development to increase to a clearly specified**

School improvement happens when a school develops a professional learning community that focuses on student work and changes teaching . . . Any school that is trying to improve has to think of professional development as a cornerstone strategy. (Michael Fullan, 1999)

¹ Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Richardson, 2003; National Staff Development Council, n.d. (Retrieved from <http://www.nsd.org/standards/resources.cfm>)

² National Staff Development Council, 2001 (Retrieved from <http://www.nsd.org/standards/resources.cfm>)

³ Garet, Porter, Desimone, Briman & Suk Yoon, 2001; National Staff Development Council, 2001

⁴ National Association for State Boards of Education (NASBE), 2006

⁵ National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching (NPEAT), 1999

⁶ NPEAT, 1999

and measured degree the percentage of students who meet reading goals. For example, at a middle school, grade 8 data may indicate that fewer than 60% of the students are meeting formative reading goals. **First**, the school needs to analyze its school-level data and perhaps also examine data from previous grades to pinpoint possible causes of this overall low performance. And **second**, after the possible causes have been identified and linked to actions to address them, the school needs to specifically target the professional development necessary to increase student achievement.

The specific goals set for students become the targets for professional development activities for teachers—based on reading data.⁷ For example, if a school's data indicate there is a particular problem with students most at risk for reading difficulties making adequate progress toward formative reading goals, then the school needs to provide teachers with professional development opportunities that will intensify instruction for these students. This intensification may involve professional development on using an intervention program designed to accelerate the progress of students at risk. It might also involve bringing in a consultant or coach to observe instruction and provide teachers with feedback and support on how to modify instruction so it better fits what students need.

Principle 2: Professional Development Targets the Implementation of Research-Based Practices and Programs

Two general types of texts play an important role in K-12 reading instruction: reading instruction texts and subject-area texts and materials. When reading is taught separately as a subject, teachers use a text (e.g., basal reading program) that provides explicit focus on reading instruction. When reading is taught across the instructional areas, teachers use subject-specific texts and materials. The subject-area text may or may not also include a secondary focus on how teachers can enhance understanding of the text by teaching specific reading skills and strategies students can apply when reading the text. For example, a history text used in middle school or high school will address the history content directly, but some information may also be included suggesting how teachers can provide explicit instruction in reading the textbook for deeper comprehension. In all cases, **professional development needs to focus on how teachers use texts and other materials for reading instruction.**

Teaching Reading

In elementary schools, and also in middle schools and high schools when reading is taught separately as a subject, it is important for schools to use research-based reading texts that address one or more of the five essential elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. When teaching a reading class, teachers typically use a combination of the core reading program and supplemental materials and intervention programs (see [Instruction](#) chapter, 27-37).

With regard to core reading programs and supplemental materials and intervention programs, high-quality professional development **focuses precisely**

Research shows that teachers' professional development can positively affect student achievement, which is sufficiently suggestive to warrant policies that encourage sustained, imbedded professional development in secondary schools.

(Kamil, 2003)

⁷ NSDC, 2001; Renyi, 1998; NASSP, 2005

on how to use these materials to provide effective explicit reading instruction. Teachers receive professional development on strong implementation of the core, supplemental, and intervention programs adopted by the school.⁸ This professional development comes from multiple sources. Publishers of the programs and materials can provide initial exposure in how programs are organized and a basic overview of how they should be taught in the classroom. However, relying only on what the publisher provides will result in uneven implementation. Even when teachers use a highly structured program, implementation of the program will vary.⁹ Teachers need more extensive professional development than what is provided by the publisher to achieve the high level of expertise required to meet the needs of all students.

In-depth professional development on the “how-to’s” of the reading program is critical for successful implementation.¹⁰ This approach focuses on how to implement components of the program in a manner that is **highly engaging**. Sessions cover effective program-delivery techniques such as how to facilitate group responses, provide effective corrective feedback, and offer enough practice to ensure all students master important concepts and skills. Topics such as how to combine students for small group instruction and integrate activities from auxiliary program supports are also included.

Teaching Reading in the Instructional Areas

Teaching reading through subject-area texts and other materials presents a number of challenges.¹¹ Professional development targeting the teaching of advanced literacy skills required to comprehend academic content is very different from professional development on how to use texts that focus on reading instruction.¹² iii

Teachers need effective professional development that addresses two major areas.¹³ The first area for grades 4-12 teachers focuses on preparing teachers to ensure that students learn key content in their classes, even if students do not have the reading skills to learn this content from reading the course textbooks and other materials. To that end, professional development for this area addresses effective and explicit content instruction. The second area of high-quality professional development for grades 4-12 teachers (and one of two major areas of instructional emphasis in the framework) **focuses on preparing teachers to ensure students learn how to read subject-specific texts and materials so they can access content through reading.** Professional development for this area addresses effective and explicit instruction necessary for teaching students to read subject-area texts.

Teachers need to spend time during each lesson explicitly teaching the reading and writing skills that are essential to the discipline.¹⁴ This instruction should focus on the following concepts: understanding key vocabulary, the organization of content in the text, and reading strategies students need to use to understand the text. Teachers may need a variety of materials to teach these concepts. In some cases, this instruction can rely on the textbook as the source material. Depending on students’ reading skills, however, and on the objectives of the lesson, it may be beneficial to use additional materials as the source documents for teaching students how to read text in a particular discipline. Although teaching

⁸ Lehr & Osborn, 2005; Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007

⁹ Kinder, Gersten, & Kelly, 1989

¹⁰ Gersten & Dimino, 2001

¹¹ Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; Metzler, Smith & Clark, 2001

¹² O’Brian, Stuart & Moje, 1995

¹³ Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; NICHD, 2007; Torgesen et al., 2007

¹⁴ NASBE, 2006; Heller & Greenleaf, 2007

reading across the instructional areas is different from teaching reading separately as a subject (the other major area of instructional emphasis in the framework) it contains some pedagogical similarities.

Systematically integrating explicit content instruction with explicit reading instruction to teach students how to read and understand content text is critical in grades 4-12. Ensuring that teachers receive the professional development to do this effectively while also ensuring that leaders, coaches, school psychologists, and specialists also receive the professional development they need to effectively support teachers requires a focused School Plan and integrated service delivery¹⁵ as referenced in the [State](#) and [District](#) sections of the framework.

Principle 3: Allocate Time for Planning Instruction, Reflecting on Instruction, and Refining Instruction

If Louisa Moats is correct, that “Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science,” then professional development must involve much more than detailed descriptions of what teachers should do in the classroom to teach reading effectively.¹⁶ Expertise must be aligned with the needs of students from many different backgrounds with diverse instructional needs. To provide effective instruction in the classroom, **teachers need sufficient time to prepare that instruction.**¹⁷ There are a number of professional development sources including the National Center for Staff Development^{iv} website and other web resources¹⁸ that recommend strategies for “making the time” for professional development activities. Teachers need time before instruction to prepare lessons, and they need time after instruction to evaluate the lessons and determine what changes need to be made.¹⁹ Some of this time to plan and analyze reading instruction should be individual time teachers have for reflection and some should be time teachers have to work collaboratively with their colleagues.

One important objective of grade-level and department-level team meetings is to provide regular, dedicated time for planning reading lessons and determining how reading will be taught across the instructional areas. Schools can utilize a portion of each grade-level team meeting for professional development on lesson planning. For example, a team may work collaboratively to identify appropriate target vocabulary words for an upcoming theme in the core program, write student-friendly word definitions, and find pictures and objects for targeted words. A middle or high-school department-level team may focus on teaching a particular reading strategy that many students need work on such as summarization or comprehension-monitoring. **Having a coach, expert teacher, peer, or administrator regularly observe instruction and provide feedback assists teachers in reflecting on and refining their instruction.**²⁰ Research on the importance of coaching in the classroom as a component of professional development is illustrated in the following table.

¹⁵ NASBE, 2006; National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices, 2005

¹⁶ Moats, 1999

¹⁷ Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; McLaughlin, 1999; Showers, Joyce, & Bennett 1987; Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Raywid, 1993

¹⁸ Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Renyi, 1998

¹⁹ Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Gersten, Chard, & Baker, 2000

²⁰ Joyce & Showers, 2002; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Sturtevant, 2003

TRAINING COMPONENTS	OUTCOMES (% of Participants who Demonstrate Knowledge, Demonstrate new Skills in a Training Setting, and Use new Skills in the Classroom)		
	Knowledge	Skill Demonstration	Use in the Classroom
Theory and Discussion	10%	5%	0%
..+Demonstration in Training	30%	20%	0%
...+ Practice & Feedback in Training	60%	60%	5%
...+ Coaching in Classroom	95%	95%	95%

Joyce and Showers, 2002

In **grades K-8** reading classes, even **brief, five-minute observations can provide teachers with useful feedback on how to refine their instruction to meet student needs.**^v Scheduling longer observations by a coach or expert teacher can provide additional benefit. Observers can collect detailed information on student responses to instructional opportunities, and this can be used to determine areas of student mastery and difficulty. Such data, when shared with the teacher in a post conference, provides objective information on the performance of the group as a whole and on the performance of individual students. **When teachers utilize this type of data to reflect on instruction, they are better able to determine necessary adjustments in the instruction and next steps.** For example, in grade 1 the data may indicate that the group had incorrect responses on five out of the seven words they were asked to segment in the phonemic awareness section of a lesson. On the basis of this information the teacher may decide to provide additional modeled examples and guided practice on segmenting words into their component sounds in small group formats that day or at the beginning of the next day's lesson. Based on feedback regarding student responses to the instructional tasks, teachers may decide to apply techniques such as preteaching content, intensifying correction procedures, providing additional group practice opportunities, reteaching the last five lessons in the program, and so forth.^{vi}

In **grades 4-12** across the instructional areas, observations focus on what teachers do to help students with textbook comprehension. In particular, **observers look in every lesson for instruction that targets subject-specific vocabulary and the use of reading comprehension strategies as they are applied to understanding material.** Strong teacher focus on building subject-specific vocabulary is demonstrated when key vocabulary terms are clearly highlighted and their common meanings and subject-specific meanings are discussed when/where applicable. Observers note the depth of knowledge teachers expect on target vocabulary. On vocabulary terms in which teachers expect deep knowledge, observers look for opportunities for students to develop the level of knowledge expected—such as teacher expectations that students will use these words in their own writing and/or have opportunities to use these words in academic discussions with the whole group, with their peers (pair-share), and in small group contexts. In advancing subject-specific comprehension, observers provide feedback to teachers on

the concreteness of the modeling teachers use to help students understand what is expected when they read the text and what they should do if they encounter difficulty. Observers prepare comments on the feedback that teachers provide students as students attempt to apply these comprehension strategies during supported practice and during independent practice. **By noting the degree to which lessons balance both content instruction and reading instruction for enhanced content understanding, observers can provide valuable information teachers can use to improve their planning and delivery of instruction.**

Principle 4: Professional Development Is Multifaceted, Coordinated, and Ongoing

Studies of **teacher change** indicate that for effective instructional changes to take place in the classroom, teachers need ongoing consultation, feedback, and support to adopt and maintain new teaching strategies and practices.²¹ Implementing new teaching strategies is difficult. Participation in single, decontextualized professional development events that provide large amounts of information do not result in changes in teacher behavior in the classroom.²² **Strong professional development goes beyond single session workshops. Instead, it targets repeated exposures to learning and applied-learning opportunities in which new teaching behaviors are learned and practiced in the classroom, over time.**²³

There are a number of potential avenues for providing professional development activities including the following:

- State or regional institutes
- District-level professional development
- Web-based platforms
- School-based consultation and professional development
- Grade-level/department-level teams or staff meetings
- Classroom observations and feedback

Professional development that is provided through multiple avenues or sources may result in the adoption of successful new teaching strategies as long as the different activities are focused on a common goal and are data-based. **Although the initial presentation of new teaching strategies or content may be in a large-group format such as a state-level or district-level institute, follow-up formats should assist with embedding new skills within the context of actual classroom practice.** For example, an expert on vocabulary instruction may provide a large-group presentation on

Professional development does not refer to the typical onetime workshop, or even a short-term series of workshops, but to ongoing, long-term professional development, which is more likely to promote lasting, positive changes in teacher knowledge and practice.

(Biancarosa & Snow, 2006 Reading Next, pg. 20)

²¹ Garey et al., 2001; Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Gersten, Morvant & Brengelman, 1995; Gersten et al., 1986; Gersten et al., 1995; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Little, 1987; Hamilton & McInerney, 2000; Havelock & Zlotolow, 1995

²² Lehr & Osborn, 2005

²³ Torgesen, Houston Miller, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Torgesen, Houston Miller, & Rissman, 2007; NASSP, 2005

research-based vocabulary strategies. A school could follow up on this experience by contracting with the consultant to visit the building to provide in-class demonstrations of the strategies and an after-school review of the professional development with the teachers. Demonstrations would be based on the core program or subject textbooks adopted by the building. The consultant may leave several instructional targets or goals for a grade level to focus on after the visit. A coach or lead teacher could follow up on these targets by reviewing the vocabulary strategies in grade-level or department-level meetings, observing vocabulary instruction in the classrooms, and providing feedback to the teachers regarding appropriate use of the strategies. The principal could incorporate these vocabulary strategies as “look fors” during classroom observations. This type of multifaceted, professional development needs to be highly coordinated to be effective; professional development across all formats must be consistent and focus on equivalent content. A multifaceted approach to professional development allows for ongoing support at increasing levels of intensity and specificity for teachers. **Professional development experiences are linked by a common objective—a clear focus on effective instruction and sustainability.**

As schools gain experience with programs and practices, they develop their own **cadre of experts within the building** that can provide ongoing professional development to other staff. Teachers who have taught a program extensively and do so with fidelity and effectiveness can assist other teachers in developing expertise. This type of professional development may involve something as straightforward as having expert teachers open their classrooms to others who would like to observe a lesson. Building experts may also observe reading instruction in other classrooms and provide teachers with assistance on implementation. Establishing building experts fosters the school's internal capacity to establish high standards for reading instruction in the classroom and bring all teachers to high levels of quality implementation.

In addition to the formats used in professional development, it is important for schools to consider the **timing** of professional development experiences. Professional development should provide teachers with the information and skills they need at that time to effectively instruct their students. If a kindergarten teacher, for example, is just beginning the first theme in the core program that focuses on introducing letter names and sounds, professional development on sound-blending to read words is not a good use of time because it will not be helpful to the teacher at that point in the year. If the teacher learns ways to teach sound-blending at the beginning of the school year, but does not have a chance to apply these strategies until the winter, it is highly unlikely there will be an improvement in classroom instruction. **Schools can maximize benefit by organizing professional development offerings so they are as close as possible to “just in time learning” for teachers.** Careful consideration of the timing of the professional development can also help prevent overloading or overwhelming teachers with too much information at once.²⁴ A prominent expert recommended that professional development efforts “need to be sufficient in scope to challenge teachers, but not so ambitious that they require too much too soon.”²⁵

Effective professional development will help school personnel create and maintain indefinitely a team-oriented approach to improving the instruction and institutional structures that promote better adolescent literacy.

(Reading Next,
pg. 20)

²⁴ Gersten & Dimino, 2001; McLaughlin, 1999

²⁵ McLaughlin, 1999

The beginning of the school year represents an annual “just in time learning” opportunity for many teachers and instructional assistants. By offering a menu of professional development opportunities at the start of the school year, schools and districts can provide first-time professional development on new programs and materials, refresher or advanced professional development for experienced staff, professional development on assessment practices, and foundational professional development on the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework for new staff. Follow-up sessions can also be offered during in-service days throughout the school year. The menu of professional development opportunities is guided by **data** and possibly a carefully-designed **survey** taken at the end of the previous school year. For example, one Oregon district provides a week of optional paid workshops prior to the first in-service week of the school year and a series of workshops throughout the year. Most of the professional development is led by district staff members that have developed expertise in the target areas. **Most importantly, professional development opportunities should be aligned with the School Reading Plan** (see [Commitment chapter, 2](#)).

Principle 5: Professional Development Is Differentiated by Position and Need

Professional development must target effective administrative support as well as effective classroom implementation.²⁶ At the school level, the principal, coach, classroom teachers, specialists, instructional assistants, new staff members, and substitutes should receive appropriate professional development in how to implement the School Reading Plan. Because different responsibilities are associated with each of these positions, **professional development should be differentiated by position**. However, because the school team must work as a unit, it is also important that professional development include **opportunities for the school staff to learn to work together** to implement the School Reading Plan.

Professional development should also be **differentiated based on the knowledge and skill of individual school staff members**.²⁷ Individuals bring different background experiences, previous professional development experiences, and skills and talents related to their positions. Professional development content should be adjusted based on these factors. Below, professional development considerations for each position are outlined.

Principal

Above anything else, principals should be able to provide leadership to the school to attain increasingly higher levels of reading achievement²⁸ until all students are meeting summative reading goals. Ongoing professional development can help principals do this effectively. For example, **most principals need preparation on the five essential elements of reading** so they can participate meaningfully in discussions about ongoing school actions to improve reading instruction and outcomes. **Middle school and high school principals also need to develop a broad understanding of literacy strategies that work across the instructional areas**. They need to be able to converse with teachers about strategies that help students to activate prior knowledge, develop metacognition, and expand thinking and understanding of subject-specific text. Principals also need to be highly knowledgeable about

²⁶ Togneri & Anderson, 2003

²⁷ Klingner, 2004

²⁸ Education Week, 2007; NASBE, 2006; NASSP, 2005; Togneri & Anderson, 2003

features of instructional delivery in the classroom. **Distinguishing effective from ineffective reading instruction and providing constructive feedback to individual teachers is a necessary skill.**

Principals must also be able to summarize this information across multiple teachers to **determine areas that require concentrated professional development throughout the school.** They need to be well versed in the school's assessment system and be able to analyze data to summarize performance and help plan instruction.

Principals can develop instructional leadership skills by **attending professional development sessions provided to the teaching staff** in their districts and buildings. Participation with teachers in professional development targeting assessments, programs, and strategies for teaching reading as a subject and for teaching reading across the instructional areas is invaluable. Attending these sessions will help principals gain the knowledge and credibility necessary to provide meaningful feedback to teachers from observations and to make well-informed decisions about the school's reading program at school-level meetings.

It is also critical to provide **field-based professional development** experiences for principals. Principals can continue their professional growth on reading implementation by shadowing consultants who come to the building to work with teachers. Consultants can explain critical implementation issues to principals and model how to set targets and provide feedback to teachers. Another field-based experience, Principal Walk-Through Training (online modules), gives principals the opportunity to practice classroom observations and debrief with others to confirm and validate the feedback that would be appropriate for teachers. As part of the Principal Walk-Through Training, it is important to provide observation tools for the principals to help focus their attention on critical lesson components. ^{vii viii}

Coach/Designee Performing Coaching Functions

Research on successful school change consistently indicates the importance of an individual or group of individuals charged with providing **ongoing technical assistance related to change targets.**²⁹ Reading coaches serve a key function in this regard. Research supports the use of coaches as a means to assist teachers in implementing effective approaches in the classroom.³⁰ **Effects appear to be strongest when coaches receive formal professional development and support in learning to be a coach and are provided with specific frameworks for organizing feedback sessions and discussing student performance data.**³¹

Because of the nature of the position, coaches may require more hours of professional development than other positions.³² As described in the section on leadership, coaches have three main responsibilities. **First**, they work with teachers in the classroom on improving reading instruction. **Second**, they ensure that the major components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework are being implemented throughout their buildings and necessary pieces are incorporated into the School Plan. **Third**, they make sure student reading data are being used to make decisions about instruction.

²⁹ Gersten et al., 1995; Hegstad, 1999; Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Gersten, et al., 1995; Little, 1987; Hamilton & McInerney, 2000; Havelock & Zlotolow, 1995

³⁰ Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Giebelhaus & Bowman, 2000; Hegstad, 1999; Kamil, 2003; Kyle, Moore, & Sanders, 1999

³¹ Evertson et al., 2000

³² Baker, Smith, Fien, Otterstedt, Katz, Baker, et al., 2007

Improving Reading Instruction in the Classroom

To effectively support teachers in the classroom, coaches need considerable expertise in the core, supplemental, and intervention programs used when reading is taught as a subject and in how reading is taught across the instructional areas. To build this expertise, coaches need to **attend the professional development teachers receive** on using specific reading programs and on subject-area reading instruction. **Participation at “training-the-trainer” sessions** on specific programs is also highly recommended for coaches. Schools can also incorporate the use of **planned internships** for coaches to help them develop program expertise. A coach who needs to become more familiar with the core program in an elementary school, for example, can plan a four-week program internship in each grade. In this type of internship, the coach might take over an instructional group and teach all aspects of the program each day for four weeks.

To support teachers, coaches must also be able to demonstrate how to deliver effective instruction in the classroom. An important criterion in selecting a coach or lead teacher will be their ability to demonstrate effective instructional delivery for teachers. If a coach is not able to demonstrate effective instruction in the classroom, then the coach will need extensive professional development or another coach should be found. Like principals, coaches can benefit from **shadowing** reading consultants working in the building. Observing consultants as they work with teachers will help coaches identify critical delivery features (e.g., expected pacing, explicit language, multiple opportunities to practice, corrective feedback, etc.) and techniques for demonstrating these features to teachers.

In order to provide strong classroom support, coaches must be skilled in developing and maintaining a positive teacher-coach relationship. This involves providing both positive and critical feedback to teachers in meaningful ways. Because at times a coach may have to work with a resistant teacher or assistant, coaches need to receive professional development on building a coaching relationship. Important professional development for coaches includes **strategies specific to teaching adult learners**. The “Mentoring Educators: Supporting Excellent Oregon Educators” website (www.mentoringeducators.org) provides coaching professional development resources.

Implementing Components of the Literacy Framework

To ensure that all components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework are implemented, it is important for coaches to have a thorough understanding of the six component chapters of the framework and how they are integrated. In addition to professional development on the framework, coaches can visit schools that are effectively implementing the framework.^{ix} Coaches need

- ✦ To understand the school’s formative and summative reading goals

In the new view of professional development, teachers are engaged in professional learning every day, all day long. It pervades the classroom and the school. It is embedded in the assignments and analyses that teachers perform every day as they continually draw understanding about their performance from student performance. Teachers learn together. They solve problems in teams or as a whole faculty because every teacher feels responsible for the success of every student in the school community.

- ✳ To communicate these goals to other staff and parents
- ✳ To guide teachers in assessing students' progress toward meeting these goals
- ✳ To know how to use data to drive instructional decision making.

The coach must have a good working relationship with the principal to keep the staff focused on attaining critical reading goals. Resourceful coaches are able to help roll out professional development from various sources such as state-level opportunities, regional institutes, web-based learning, and outside consultants at the building level. Coaches must know how to facilitate the implementation of new strategies and techniques in classrooms. Finally, coaches must be able to report student performance data to administrators, teachers, and parents and use the data to develop and refine the school's action plan that contains the yearly implementation targets for the School Reading Plan.

Using Student Reading Data to Inform Instruction

Coaches must make sure student reading data are being used to make decisions about instruction within and across grade levels in the building. Coaches can facilitate this by prioritizing the attention school-based teams give to effective reading instruction in the classroom. In these meetings, coaches can model how to interpret data and use it to inform instruction. This will require coaches to have deep expertise on the assessments used in the school to measure reading performance. Ideally, coaches would participate in “training-the-trainer” sessions on the assessment instruments the school uses so they can provide professional development to teachers and other staff members on the measures. Coaches should also be able to provide “refresher training” sessions to the assessment team prior to large data collection activities. **Coaches must know and understand all of the associated data reports and how to use the information to make instructional changes at both a systems level and an individual student level.**^{xiii} One recommended professional development activity is for coaches to sit in on effective team meetings at other buildings to gather tips for facilitating efficient, effective, data-focused team meetings.^{xiii}³³

Teachers

Teachers need on-going professional development support to implement the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework effectively. As critical background knowledge, **teachers need to know the school's summative and formative reading goals and Oregon's Reading Standards.**

Teachers also need ongoing professional development on the following key features of reading instruction:

- Positive classroom management that engages all students
- The five essential elements of reading instruction
- The purpose of reading assessments and how to administer them
- Using assessment results to group students and planning effective instructional programs for all students
- Using assessment results to adjust and modify instruction as needed

³³ National Partnership for Excellence in Accountability and Teaching, 1999, p. 2.

- Delivering core, supplemental, and intervention programs with fidelity
- Setting lesson-pacing goals and tracking lesson pacing and mastery
- Effectively teaching the reading skills necessary to understand subject-area text
- Providing differentiated instruction to groups of students who are at increased risk of reading difficulty

Potential avenues for teacher professional development include the following:

- Participation at state, regional, district, and school-level professional development institutes
- Technology-based professional development such as video teleconferences, webinars, and online coursework
- Feedback from classroom observations by a consultant, coach, or lead teacher
- Participation at grade-level/department-level team meetings—Coaches can develop and target professional development activities for these meetings that are based on (a) student need as determined by a review of the data, and (b) common implementation issues identified through teacher observations. A portion of each grade-level/department-level team meeting can be dedicated to providing professional development.
- Observations of model teachers within the building and/or visits to model demonstration sites across the state
- Opportunities to collaborate with other teachers—Professional development efforts must recognize the important role that teacher collaborative structures play in improving and sustaining effective practice. This may involve planning lessons as a grade-level/department-level team, group reflection on lesson implementation, and problem solving for groups or individual students who are not making adequate progress. **It is critical that teachers have regular opportunities to discuss the impact of new practices on student learning in a supportive, collaborative atmosphere.**³⁴
- Participation in study groups—Teachers need opportunities to review research on effective reading instruction. Forming study groups that focus on scientific research help teachers understand best practice, be critical consumers of information, and avoid making important instructional decisions with insufficient evidence. Authoritative reports such as Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children,³⁵ Report of the National Reading Panel,³⁶ xii Reading Next,³⁷ xiii and Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers³⁸ xiv are examples of documents that can be particularly helpful in teacher study groups because they synthesize a great deal of information in a user-friendly way. A professional book study focused on targeted areas for improvement is another option. Websites such as the What Works Clearinghouse^{xv} also provide additional resources for teachers to learn about effective programs and practices.

³⁴ McLaughlin, 1999; Showers, 1987; Lewis, 1999

³⁵ NRC, 1998

³⁶ NRP, 2000

³⁷ Biancarosa & Snow, 2006

³⁸ Boardman et al., 2008

- Actively engaging teachers in program training³⁹—**Teachers need extended opportunities to practice implementation and get feedback on their efforts.** In contrast to attending professional development experiences as a passive participant, program professional development has teachers actively participating throughout the experience. This means providing ample opportunities for teachers to practice presenting the various exercises and activities in the programs. This may involve large group practice with the trainer leading the group and/or small group or paired practice with the teacher practicing an activity from the program with a peer or peers who can act as the student(s). This type of professional development has multiple advantages. **First**, it facilitates the application of the techniques in classroom settings. **Second**, it reinforces the importance of teachers having opportunities to become comfortable with engaging in a serious analysis of instruction as it is practiced in the classroom—their own instruction as well as the instruction of their colleagues. **Third**, it provides a shared learning opportunity among teachers to contribute to a professional learning experience that places the highest value possible on classroom instruction.

Teachers vary in their knowledge and skill in implementing effective reading instruction in the classroom. **Schools need to differentiate professional development based on teacher practice and need.**⁴⁰ A school, for example, may need to provide more extensive professional development for teachers who implement intensive interventions for students (e.g., Tier III support). Among the teachers who provide intensive instructional intervention for at-risk students, only some teachers may need additional support to effectively apply the instructional delivery features students need, such as appropriate lesson pacing. The coaching position is pivotal to organizing and providing this type of differentiated professional development for teachers.

Instructional Assistants

In grades K-8 instructional assistants may play an important role in providing instructional support in the school's reading program. For example, schools have often relied on assistants to help implement small group instruction. A common understanding within schools is that during small group instruction, instructional assistants are often assigned to work with the most challenging students, although there is little research to support this practice. Instructional assistants frequently provide the "double dose," or an additional instructional period, for those students not making adequate progress toward meeting formative reading goals—even though they may lack preservice preparation and often begin work at a building with little or no background knowledge and professional training. **Prior to providing instructional support for students, assistants need to receive effective professional development on instructional programs or techniques.** Assistants also need professional development and follow-up on behavior management in order to maximize the impact of instruction.

Ongoing support is necessary through follow-up professional development sessions and classroom observations by a lead teacher, specialist, or coach in order to maintain effective program delivery. **The School Leadership Team can make thoughtful decisions about how to most effectively use instructional assistants within a building and document these decisions in the School Reading**

³⁹ Briman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet et al, 2000; Garet, 2001; Joyce & Showers, 2002

⁴⁰ Pedigo, 2003; Klingner, 2004

Plan. Incorporating a comprehensive professional development plan for instructional assistants based upon these decisions is critical.⁴¹

New Staff

Anticipating staff turnover each year, schools need to have a **professional development plan in place for new staff members**. This professional development plan could include the following: an introduction to the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework; the purpose and administration of reading assessments; the interpretation of assessment results for instructional purposes; and preparation in the use of specific programs, textbooks, and approaches in reading instruction. In many cases, it would be best if schools work in conjunction with the district to provide this new staff preparation as the district can provide it across multiple schools. For most new staff members, it is suggested that schools assign a mentor to support the new staff member's transition. The **mentor** could be, for example, a master teacher from the same grade level. Participation in grade-level team meetings and department-level team meetings is another avenue for assisting new staff members with the transition. The coach also provides ongoing professional development and support at the classroom level for new staff members.

Substitute Teachers

Many schools rely on substitutes to provide teachers time to debrief with coaches after observations or for grade-level and department-level team meetings. Given that substitutes can play a significant role in providing reading instruction on a regular basis, schools should consider including substitutes in professional development opportunities. **Schools can invest in providing professional development to a few key substitute teachers** and then request these substitutes regularly at the building. By incorporating substitutes this way, reading instruction will not be significantly interrupted when the teacher is out of the classroom for professional development, team meetings, or due to illness. Also, when reading instruction is aligned at the state, district, and school levels, investments in providing professional development to any one group becomes more efficient, instructionally effective, and cost effective.

People can be encouraged to change, but if the structure of the system in which the individuals work does not support them or allow enough flexibility, improvement efforts will fail. Similarly, if the organization's governance, policies, structures, time frames, and resource allocation are changed but the individuals within the organization do not have opportunities to learn how to work within the new system, the improvement effort will fail.

(Todnem & Warner,
1994, p. 66)

⁴¹ NREL, 2002; NCLB, 2001

Principle 6: Professional Development Results in Understanding How to Implement Reading Priorities and Effective Practices

Professional development should have a measurable impact on both teachers' conceptual understanding of the instruction they are being asked to provide as well as on the effective use of instructional practices in the classroom. Research evidence suggests that **professional development which combines conceptual knowledge and classroom-practice application increases student achievement and is more likely to be sustained** than professional development that focuses on only one of these aspects.⁴² A major goal in the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is that professional development should target both the mechanics of instruction—the accurate delivery of comprehensive reading programs and interventions as well as the use of effective teaching techniques and strategies—and the underlying conceptions that support the use of specific programs and instructional approaches. That is, professional development must address teachers' understanding of the scientific basis of reading instruction and give clear demonstrations of what effectively translating that knowledge into classroom practice means.^{xvi}

Whether professional development focuses on the effective implementation of new programs, better use of instructional time, how to provide more effective grouping arrangements with students, or how to use data to provide instruction that is more sensitive to student needs, the end result should be professional development guided by student reading data and focused on the attainment of student reading goals. **The value or success of professional development can be determined largely by whether student reading goals are being met.** Ratings by teachers and others of the quality of the professional development they receive are also considered in determining the effectiveness of professional development, but these evaluations play a secondary role to student outcomes in determining the effectiveness of professional development efforts.

Summary

High-quality professional development is focused on six principles: attaining grade-level reading goals guided by assessment data; using research-based practices and programs; allocating time for educators to plan, reflect, and refine instruction; providing multifaceted, coordinated, and ongoing support to teachers and instructional staff on the assessment and instruction of reading priorities; delivering targeted support differentiated by position and need; and ensuring thorough understanding of, and ability to implement, reading priorities and effective practices.

The following table summarizes the features of a high-quality professional development plan and contrasts these features with a low-quality professional development plan.⁴³

⁴² Showers, 1987; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Klingler, 2004; Lehr & Osborn, 2005; NASBE, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2004

⁴³ Adapted from National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching (1999) *Revisioning Professional Development: What learner-centered professional development looks like*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council

A High-Quality Professional Development Plan	A Low-Quality Professional Development Plan
Is focused on attaining grade-level reading goals and is guided by assessment data	Is fragmented, unfocused and not based on evidence of need
Targets research-based practices and programs	Is based on familiar practices, regardless of efficacy
Is multifaceted, coordinated, and ongoing to support teachers and instructional staff on assessment and instruction of reading priorities	Provides one-shot, decontextualized workshops with little focus on how to effectively deliver instruction and little or no follow-up, feedback or practice
Focuses on learning about as well as how to actually do ...	Focuses just on learning about ...
Is differentiated by position and need	Does not differentiate by position and need
Builds within-school leadership capacity	Depends on external support and resources
Is aligned with district and state reading focus	Introduces competing initiatives and conflicting messages
Results in thorough understanding of, and ability to implement, reading priorities and effective practices	Results in general knowledge without direct application to reading practices

Links to Resources

ⁱ For resources on professional development, see *Professional Development and Technical Assistance* at ED.gov: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/assistance.html>

ⁱⁱ The National Staff Development Council website (<http://www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm>) provides standards for staff development and annotated bibliography list of resources related to staff development.

ⁱⁱⁱ The *Reading Next* report discusses the importance of on-going professional development in improving literacy outcomes for adolescents. See: http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/reports/reading_next

^{iv} For an annotated bibliography on the topic of allocating resources for professional development, see the National Staff Development Council website (<http://www.nsd.org/standards/resources.cfm>).

^v Two versions of five-minute observation forms can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_obs.html

^{vi} For a complete module on how to conduct data-based observations, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_obs.html (includes most presentations related to conducting observations) OR http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/pd_coaches.html#cohortb

^{vii} For a guide that can help principals monitor and support adolescent literacy instruction see the Center on Instruction's *Adolescent Literacy Walk-through for Principals: A Guide for Instructional Leaders – Grades 4-12* at

http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=&grade_start=4&grade_end=12

^{viii} A Principal Walk Through Module and corresponding observation tools may be downloaded at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_obs_tools.html

^{ix} For information on model demonstration sites to visit in Oregon, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/beacon_schools.html.

^x For modules and templates for Data-Based Decision Making, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_data_based.html.

^{xi} For a complete list of coach training modules developed for the K-3 Literacy Framework, please see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/pd_coaches.html (access all statewide coaches' training presentations for Cohorts A & B)

^{xii} The National Reading Panel Report can be downloaded for free from <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org>.

^{xiii} *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy* can be downloaded at <http://www.all4ed.org/files/ReadingNext.pdf>.

^{xiv} The Center on Instruction's *Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers: 2nd Edition (4-12)* is available for download at http://centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=&grade_start=4&grade_end=12

^{xv} The What Works Clearinghouse has many helpful resources, visit <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

^{xvi} The Center on Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the University of Oregon offers PowerPoint presentations and webinars on professional development of reading instruction, visit <http://ctl.uoregon.edu/pd/cf09>.