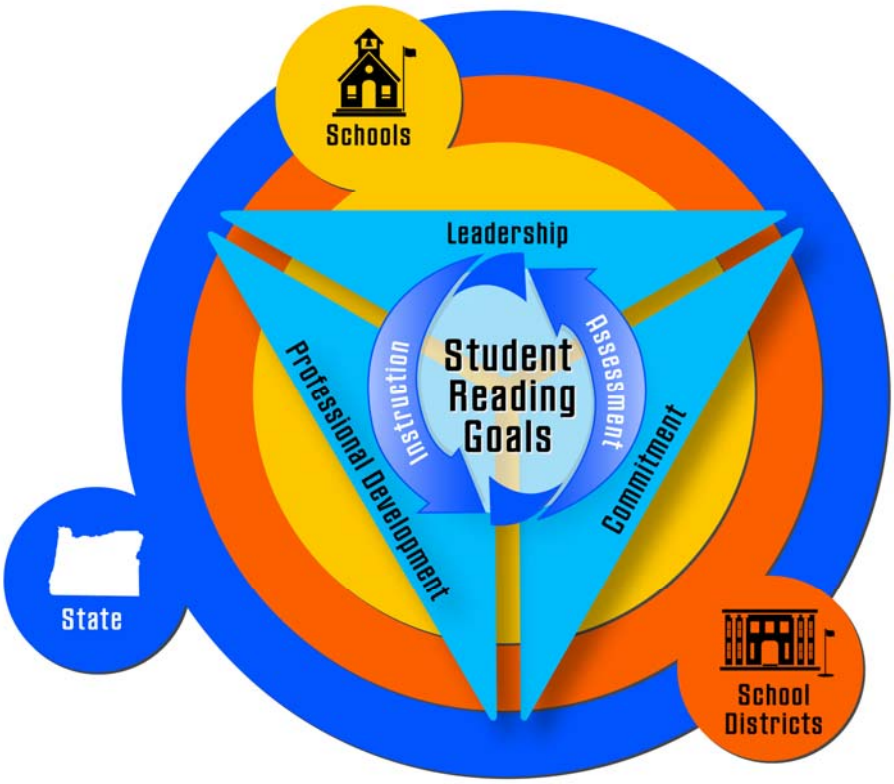
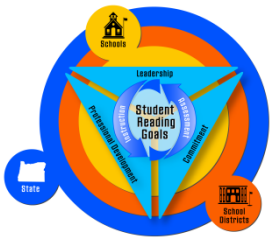
Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

Working together to improve reading instruction and outcomes throughout K-12



Acknowledgements
Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

The Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) would like to acknowledge the work of the Center on Teaching and Learning (CTL) in the College of Education at the University of Oregon for the work which CTL staff have done over the past decade to make the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework possible. From the research of Ed Kame'enui and Deb Simmons in first developing the schoolwide reading model to the work of Scott Baker and Carrie Thomas Beck in implementing the model in dozens of schools throughout the state, extending the model to adolescent literacy and writing the original Framework documents, CTL has played a significant role in bringing this resource to educators across Oregon. The work of Stan Paine, who wrote the State and District portions of the Framework, is greatly appreciated.



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Preface

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

Developed by the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC)
in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education

December 4, 2009: **The Oregon State Board of Education adopted the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework as a tool to support the Essential Skill of Reading, a requirement of the Oregon Diploma.**

The **Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC)** offers this resource tool, the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework, to the state of Oregon, its Legislative committees on education, the State Board of Education, and the Oregon Department of Education; to Oregon school districts, Education Service Districts, and higher education partners; and to Oregon schools—October 2009.

The purpose of the framework is to ensure that **all** Oregon K-3 students read at grade level or higher each academic year, no later than grade 3, and that all students progress at grade level or higher in reading throughout their school career. The LLSSC envisions the state, districts, schools, and partners working in concert to make this vision a reality for every Oregon student.

The most important responsibility of public education is to prepare all students for meaningful postsecondary opportunities. These opportunities include postsecondary education, meaningful employment, and lifelong learning and citizenship. Reading, while not the only key skill necessary to access these opportunities, is the first that must be mastered for success in school and beyond. Students learn about themselves and their world through reading; reading enriches the human experience and opens doors. While reading has always been a paramount focus of education, proficiency in the **Essential Skill of Reading** is now required to earn an **Oregon Diploma**.

To this end, the LLSSC designed the framework as a support for all levels of our education system—**state**, **district**, and **school**—to work together to enable all students to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skill of Reading. Although not all graduates may continue formal education beyond high school, all graduates should have access to a full range of postsecondary education options.[1] It is important that public schools make it clear to students that a strong education is the basis of lifelong learning and the foundation of citizenship essential in a democratic society.[2] Increasingly, public education also has a fundamental responsibility to promote postsecondary education to students and their parents as a necessary step toward meaningful employment, financial independence, and long-term security. Nearly 85% of today's jobs and almost 90% of the fastest-growing, high-wage jobs in the country require some postsecondary education.[3]

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[1] Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century Workforce, http://21stcenturyskills.org/documents/key_findings_joint.pdf

[2] Conley, 2008; National Academy of Sciences, 1998

[3] Alliance for Excellent Education; http://www.all4ed.org retrieved September 15, 2008

Mindful of this concern that all graduates should have access to a full range of postsecondary education options, in the fall of 2004 Governor Ted Kulongoski and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo jointly appointed members to the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC) to oversee K-12 literacy in the state:

> *As stewards of the state's resources, particularly our most valuable resource—children, it behooves us to bring together those individuals in the state who understand literacy and who also understand the need to address change through leadership structures such as the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee . . . To that end, we have selected you for this appointment. Compelling changes call us to serve as overseers of literacy in our state. These coordinates of change include demographic diversity, fiscal constraints, public accountability, exponential growth of information, and marketplace pressure points. To address these cultural and economic realities, (we have) outlined three top priorities: 1) closing the achievement gap, 2) taking a comprehensive approach to literacy, and 3) focusing on middle and high school improvement. Through its oversight and coordination of statewide literacy outreach, the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee will impact each of these priorities.*
>
> *—Excerpts from appointment letter sent to members of the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC)*

The LLSSC has met quarterly since this appointment to carry out the Governor and Superintendent's charge. The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework embodies the work of the LLSSC.

The Need for a Statewide K-12 Literacy Framework

Public education's responsibility to prepare students for postsecondary experiences begins the first day children enter elementary school, and it continues until they graduate from high school.[4] Students who leave high school without a diploma and are inadequately prepared for postsecondary opportunities will almost certainly lead a life of financial strain and employment in low wage, unskilled jobs.[5] Compared to high school graduates, students who drop out of school are at substantially higher risk for life-long difficulties associated with unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, incarceration, and chronic stress.[6]

Thirteen years of public school require sustained collaborative work to achieve common goals that prepare students for the challenges and experiences of college, university, or immediate employment.[7] Learning is cumulative, and what kindergarteners are taught about learning to read and working with numbers is directly connected to what high school seniors learn about the global economy, literature, mathematics, science, and history. It is critical that kindergarten teachers understand what high school teachers do to prepare students for the future. And high school teachers need to know why kindergarten teachers stress knowledge of the sounds of the alphabet and number sense and how instructional goals in kindergarten are connected to proficiencies in reading comprehension and mathematics. Oregon's K-12 public school system must foster the understanding that all educators are responsible for the

[4] Ensminger & Susarick, 1992; Kamil et al., 1998
[5] Finn & Owings, 2006; Harlow, 2003; McCaul, et al., 1989
[6] Finn & Owings, 2006; Harlow, 2003; McCaul, et al., 1989
[7] Christenson et al., 2001; Dynarski et al., 2008; Fasholoa & Slavin, 1998

academic health and welfare of students and that the best way to make sure all students get an excellent education is to ensure that instruction is seamless, focused, and purposeful throughout K-12.[8]

This formidable and extraordinary opportunity requires us to regularly ask: **How well are we preparing our students for the future, for the world-class postsecondary education and careers they deserve?**

This question requires careful analysis because the answer should determine our course of action. If we believe we are doing an adequate job preparing world-class students, then our actions should largely be to stay the course and build on our success. If our answer is that public education in Oregon can do a substantially better job preparing world-class students—then our course of action should be to make important changes that better prepare students for experiences beyond high school. And, if our answer is that **we can do substantially better**, then we must further ask ourselves: **What should we do to better prepare our students? And how do we do it?**

Oregon's K-12 public school system must foster the understanding that all educators are responsible for the academic health and welfare of students and that the best way to ensure that all students get the best education possible is to make sure that instruction is seamless and focused and purposeful throughout K-12.

While our public schools are doing a good job in many areas, we can and must do a substantially better job educating our students for the 21st Century. **A key foundation for improvement is stronger reading instruction and outcomes for all students throughout K-12.** This challenge should remain a central focus until all students in Oregon are acquiring the reading skills they need to take advantage of the full range of postsecondary education opportunities available to them.

The purpose of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is to provide direction for the state, districts, and schools based on evidence of effectiveness for improving reading instruction and outcomes throughout K-12. The focus on reading does not imply, however, that other literacy areas are unimportant. Helping students to write effectively, for example, is an essential school priority. As in reading, schools should provide daily writing instruction to all students. But, far less scientific evidence is available about effective writing instruction compared to effective reading instruction. How writing instruction is best organized and delivered, how writing performance should be measured and progress determined are still fundamental questions being addressed in scientific research. As the precise role the state, districts, and schools should play in teaching other areas of literacy to students is established through scientific research, this information will be organized and incorporated into the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

In the remainder of the preface, important information about the performance of Oregon students in reading is presented as well as a description of the education challenges students face beyond high school. The framework itself opens with guidance for the state and for districts on how to support a comprehensive system of reading. This **guidance is organized around six components**: (a) goals, (b) assessment, (c) instruction, (d) leadership, (e) professional development, and (f) commitment. How the state and districts can implement each of the six components is presented. The body of the framework is divided into six individual chapters that target priorities at the school level (K-12) to establish a comprehensive approach to reading instruction and support for students. Each of these six chapters

[8] Kame'enui, 1995

addresses one of the six components referenced above: 1) Goals, 2) Assessment, 3) Instruction, 4) Leadership, 5) Professional development, and 6) Commitment.

Current Reading Skills of Oregon Students

Determining how well Oregon students are learning to read in K-12 requires an examination of the evidence used to reach conclusions. Because the question is complex, the evidence presented comes from multiple sources. We need to examine this evidence carefully, as should anyone who believes that the quality of the education being provided in Oregon public schools should be determined on the basis of evidence.

Performance on the Oregon Reading Assessment

In Oregon, strong measures of student learning in reading, mathematics, science, writing, and history are available to help determine how well students are being prepared for postsecondary education and other important experiences. This information clearly indicates that many Oregon students are doing well and some are doing very well. If these students pursue postsecondary education, we can be confident of their potential success. But indisputable evidence also indicates that many Oregon students are not prepared for academic challenges beyond high school. The basic fact is that too many students are graduating from Oregon high schools without the key reading skills necessary for postsecondary education and career opportunities. **The paradox is that many students who are graduating from high school but are not well prepared for postsecondary opportunities were actually experiencing difficulties learning to read as early as kindergarten.** These students could have been easily identified at that time, and if scientifically-based instructional interventions had been used, the chances are good that many of them would have acquired the reading skills they needed for a lifetime of learning.

The following graph shows how well students in grade 10 are able to read on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) for Reading/Literature. Overall, about **34% of students read below grade level** (from the three combined categories, Nearly Meets, Low, and Very Low). This means that 34% of grade 10 students do not have the fundamental reading skills necessary to read grade-level textbooks with proficiency. It also means that if these students do not substantially improve their reading skills in their final two years of high school (and research would suggest the chances of this are small[9]), they will be far less likely to go to community college or college than other students. And, if they do enroll in community college or college, they will be far more likely than other students to drop out before earning their degrees.[10] [11]

> In today's knowledge-based world, our students need to be expert readers, writers and thinkers to compete and succeed in a global economy.

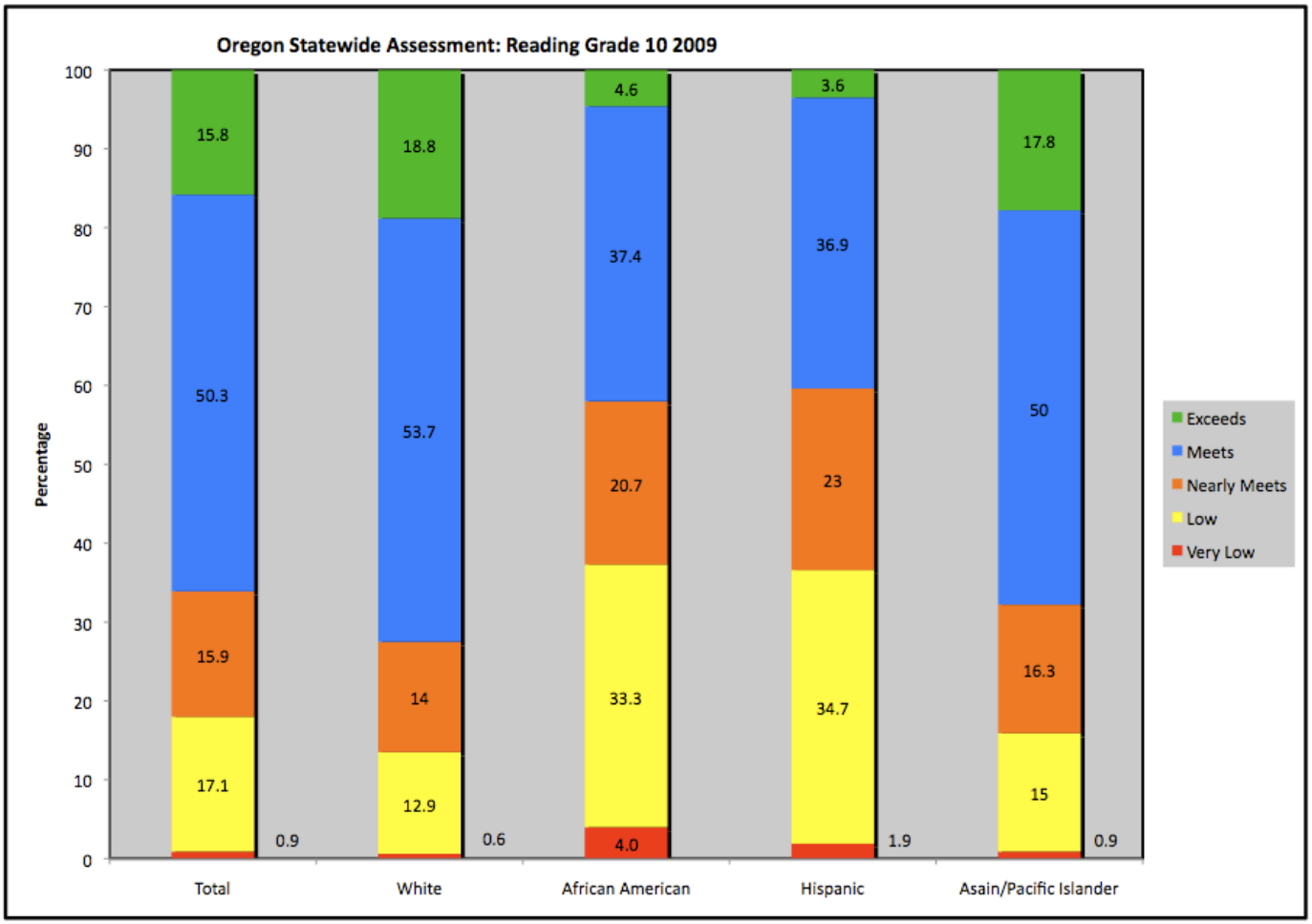
This information is more alarming when the performance of students from specific racial and ethnic groups is examined. Among African American students, 58% are not reading at grade level, and among Hispanic students, 60% are not at grade level.

[9] Juel, 1988; Carnevale, 2001

[10] ACT (2005). *Crisis at the core: Preparing all students for college and work.* Retrieved from http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/crisis_report.pdf

[11] Kamil, 1999, pg. 30

There is another source of concern in the grade 10 reading data. The top category in the graph shows the percentage of students who are **exceeding** the expected Oregon standard for reading proficiency. These students, if they maintain this trajectory, have the best chance for success in postsecondary education. They also are in the best position to compete for the most desirable jobs in the U.S. and throughout the world. Overall, only 15.8% of Oregon's grade 10 students exceed standards. In Oregon and across the country, there are not enough U.S. college graduates able to compete for the highest-paying, highest-skilled, entry-level positions.[12] Consequently, many U.S. companies are finding it necessary to outsource work to other countries. Students in Oregon face more competition than ever before for these jobs. Students who are exceeding Oregon's expected standards in reading, mathematics, and science have the best opportunity to secure these positions once they enter the job market. We must, as a state, increase the number of students exceeding standards. **The fact that only 16% of Oregon grade 10 students are on a trajectory to exceed basic Oregon standards is a cause for serious concern.**



[12] Friedman, The World is Flat; Achieve, Inc. (2005). Rising to the Challenge: Are high school graduates prepared for college and work? Washington, DC: Peter D. Hart Research Associates.

Performance on a “National” Reading Assessment

There is no national reading test for all students in public schools. The closest thing is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Every two years, grade 4 and grade 8 students across the U.S. take the NAEP reading assessment. This test provides the best opportunity to examine how well Oregon students perform when compared to other students outside of Oregon. On the NAEP, student scores are divided into four categories: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient and Advanced. If the “Below Basic” category is taken to mean students reading below grade level, **the performance of Oregon students on the 2009 NAEP validates concern regarding the state of reading proficiency in Oregon, particularly for students of color.** The NAEP data offers clear evidence that Oregon is near the bottom of the country for grade 4.

Seen in the context of NAEP, 35% of Oregon grade 4 students read **below grade level**. In other words, more than 1 out of 3 students in grade 4 does not have the reading skills necessary to meet Basic (grade-level expectations) on the NAEP. Nearly 24% of grade 8 students read below grade level. This means that nearly 1 out of 4 grade 8 students does not have the reading skills necessary to read grade-level material.

Similar to the Oregon assessment data, the problem is the most acute for the students who are the most dependent on public education to meet their education needs: students from minority backgrounds and students living in high poverty environments. For example, when the focus is on African American and Hispanic students, the percentage of grade 4 students reading below grade level is 53% and 59% respectively. In other words, more than half of African American and Hispanic students do not have the reading skills necessary for grade 4 academic work. Among grade 4 students living in high poverty environments, 50% are not reading at grade level.

How we perform compared to other states is important to examine. On the grade 4 NAEP assessments, among all 50 states (plus the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education schools, 52 jurisdictions in all), only 16 states had lower overall average scores than Oregon. In other words, 67% of states / jurisdictions had a higher average score than Oregon. Among the 48 states where it was possible to calculate a separate score for Hispanic students, only 3 states scored lower than Oregon. The low performance of Hispanic students is not confined to reading. On the 2009 NAEP mathematics assessment, only 5 states performed lower than Oregon for grade 4 Hispanic students.

Taken together, OAKS and NAEP reading assessments provide strong evidence that Oregon schools need to do much more in K-12 to prepare stronger readers. To support this effort, we all must do much more to make sure schools have the resources and tools they need to accomplish this task. **Early intervention as part of a coordinated, comprehensive educational system can make it more likely that all students will do well in reading by the time they reach grade 4.** The technology and the measures are available to assess all students early in school (as early as kindergarten) to provide accurate information about whether a student is at risk for reading difficulty. **This information, coupled with what is known about effective early reading instruction and intervention, strongly suggests that the number of students in grade 4 who do not have basic reading skills can be substantially and immediately reduced.** How well children read in grade 4 is the single best predictor of how well they

will read in grade 8, and how well students read in grade 8 is the best predictor of how well they will read in grade 12. Early reading skills are better predictors of later reading skills than other factors including race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.[13] If students have strong reading skills in grade 12, the odds they will do well in postsecondary education, obtaining meaningful employment, and sustaining lifelong learning are demonstrably better than if they graduate from high school without strong reading skills.

Graduation Rates and Postsecondary Education

It is no surprise that reading proficiency is strongly related to high school completion and how well students do in college once they graduate. Across the nation, there is a serious problem with low high school graduation rates. Nationally, about 1 in 3 students leaves high school without a diploma (1.23 million students each year).[14] Given the reading data presented above, it is not surprising that graduation rates for students of color and students from high poverty backgrounds are even lower. **In Oregon, 71% of White students graduate from high school, but only 56% of Hispanics graduate and 33% of African American students graduate.[15]**

The costs associated with dropping out of school go beyond diminished opportunities for postsecondary education. The direct financial cost is a growing concern among business, government, and education sectors across the country. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, just from the Oregon class of 2007, the cost of school dropouts to the state will total almost 3.5 billion dollars in lost wages, taxes, and productivity over the lifetime of students who drop out of school. Our best solution to reduce the dropout rate must include real incentives for students to stay in school. Meaningful incentives must include the realization that if students stay in school and work hard they will obtain the knowledge and skills they need for education opportunities after graduation. **With some justification, students who do not read proficiently in grade 8 or grade 10 are not convinced that completing high school will give them the same options after high school as students who read proficiently.**

When it comes to school dropout rates, the U.S. is an outlier. With 70% of students graduating from high school, the U.S. has one of the lowest graduation rates among industrialized nations in the world.[16] Despite this discouraging statistic, American high school students appear to be serious about the importance of education to their future goals. A full 81% of American high school students say they expect to attend college.[17]

What becomes of high school graduates who do attend colleges and universities? How well prepared are they for postsecondary education? Data addressing these answers offer another reason to seriously consider what we can do to better prepare students for life after high school. **Only about 50% of high school graduates across the country are prepared for postsecondary education.[18]** This figure is mirrored by data from the ACT, where only 50% of high school juniors and seniors taking their college entrance exam are ready for college-level reading assignments in subjects like math, history, science, and English.[19]

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[13] Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998
[14] Laird et al., 2008; Editorial Projects in Education, 2008; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007
[15] http://www.all4ed.org/files/Oregon_wc.pdf; retrieved 1-25-08
[16] Greene & Winters, 2006
[17] High School Survey of Student Engagement, 2005
[18] Greene and Winters, 2006
[19] ACT, 2006

Enrolling high school graduates who are not prepared for college-level work forces colleges and universities to offer **remedial courses** to many students.[20] Approximately one in three (33%) college freshmen enroll in at least one remedial course during college.[21] The vast majority of students who take remedial courses in college do so to gain the skills and knowledge they should have learned in high school, skills that are necessary for them to succeed in "regular" college classes.[22] These remedial courses focus on basic proficiencies in reading, writing, and mathematics, with remedial reading courses being the most necessary.

Unfortunately, providing remedial classes in college does not appear to be a particularly effective approach, and it certainly is not cost effective.[23] The leading predictor that a student will drop out of college is the need for a remedial reading course. Students who take a remedial reading course are 41% more likely to drop out of college than other students.[24] And whereas 58% of students who take no remedial course in college earn a Bachelor's degree within eight years, only 17% of students who enroll in a remedial reading course receive a degree within that same period.[25]

Context and Purpose of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

The challenge of providing a quality education to every Oregon student is enormous and complex if the goal is for every high school graduate to have the full range of educational opportunities available. **Only a well-coordinated effort that begins in kindergarten, proceeds purposefully through the final year of high school, and involves the active and sustained effort of all levels of the public school system will succeed.** This means that state, district, and school priorities have to be aligned and focused on a common set of key learning goals and objectives.

The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is a roadmap for improving literacy outcomes for students in grades K-12 through the coordinated effort of the state, districts, and schools.

Why a Focus on Reading

Traditional definitions of literacy target specific subject areas, particularly the ability to read and write. Expanded definitions sometimes include reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Moats, 2000). More recent definitions, which also frequently incorporate additional literacy areas such as quantitative literacy and technology literacy, emphasize the application of literacy skills for personal and social purposes. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines literacy as the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society."

All definitions of literacy include the ability to read and write. The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework focuses specifically on reading development for two primary reasons. First, the purpose of the framework

[20] Conley, 2007
[21] National Center for Education Statistics, 2004; Ali & Jenkins, 2002
[22] Conley, 2007
[23] Conley, 2007
[24] NCES, 2004
[25] NCES, 2004

is to delineate variables directly under the school's control (e.g., group size, instructional time, or materials) for the development of student learning and outcomes. Second, the purpose is to provide clear guidance for how schools, districts, and the state can use scientific evidence to teach students the literacy skills they need for advanced education.

The reality is that much more scientific evidence exists about what schools can do to teach students the literacy skills they need in reading than all other areas of literacy combined. In reading, we know **what to teach** and **when to teach it**. We know what strong reading instruction looks like in the classroom and we know how to support teachers to provide that instruction. We know how to measure reading outcomes as well as critical indicators of those outcomes. Of course, our knowledge of how schools can provide effective reading instruction will continue to expand and improve as scientific evidence expands. But the knowledge base is sufficiently mature in reading right now to provide clear direction in the six fundamental components that organize this framework. This is not true of other areas of literacy including writing, speaking, and listening.

Despite this strong research base, however, implementation of these strategies has been somewhat uneven. The framework is designed to provide the state, districts, teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, and other stakeholders with a strategic "blueprint" of what schools in Oregon need to do to help students develop key reading skills. This literacy framework emphasizes that the "architecture of reading instruction" must be well designed and executed throughout K-12. For schools, the critical period of teaching students to decipher a new symbolic system—an alphabetic writing system—generally takes place from kindergarten through grade 2. **The goal is for students to learn this alphabetic system before grade 3, but all students should have a thorough command of it no later than grade 3**. A deep knowledge of the alphabetic system allows students to negotiate the often treacherous transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." Throughout grades 4-12, and in earlier grades to a lesser degree, directing students' academic focus toward learning **deep, grade-level reading comprehension skills and strategies** so they are able to apply the skills and strategies across the instructional areas—results in **full content access for students**.

For students who are not successful readers in grade 3, it will be more difficult for them to direct their academic attention on developing reading comprehension strategies or on using their reading skills to develop subject-area knowledge. **After grade 3, the odds are against students becoming grade-level readers without intense intervention.** Therefore, what schools do to teach children to read in the early years of schooling matters greatly.

Increasingly in the later grades, effective reading instruction is characterized by explicitly teaching students how to read specific subject areas, including history, science, mathematics, and literature.[26] Thus, **all teachers including kindergarten teachers in elementary schools and science teachers in high school need to be effective reading teachers.** Effective reading instruction throughout K-12 requires that teachers receive extensive support, including strong and sustained professional development on teaching reading

The body of this framework focuses on what schools must do to promote effective reading instruction in every classroom and across all instructional areas. But while this school-level focus is essential, it is not sufficient. The **state** needs the commitment and the capacity to support **districts** as they strive to effectively support all of the **schools** under their direction. The ongoing work of districts includes

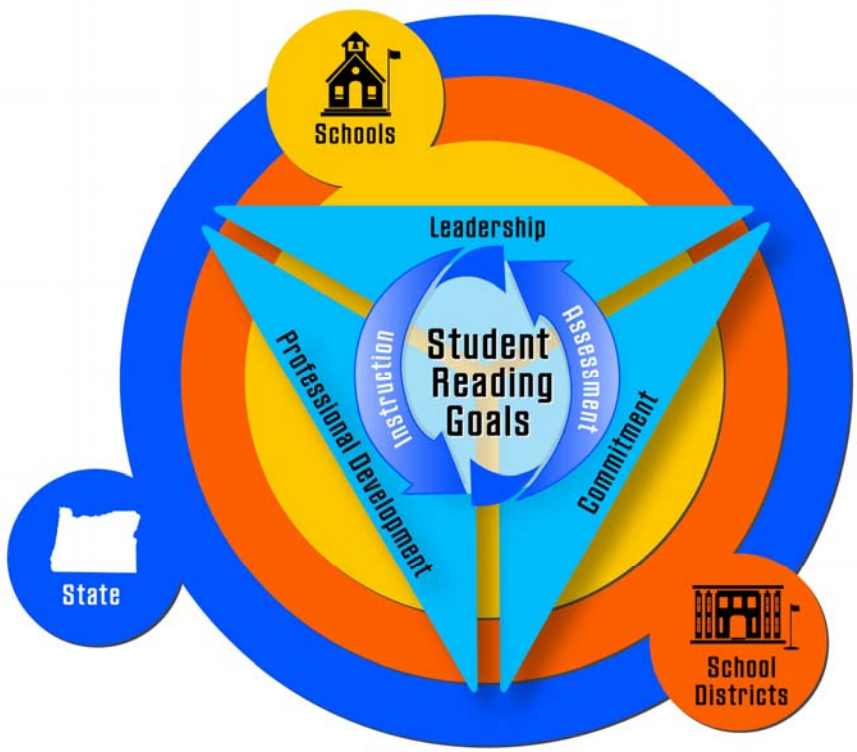
[26] Biancarosa, & Snow, 2006; Heller, & Greenleaf, 2007

establishing an integrated system in each school that is able to structure, deliver, and sustain effective reading instruction throughout the school. Consequently, it is the **three levels working in concert—state, district, and school**—that create the conditions necessary for effective reading instruction to take place in every Oregon classroom so that all students are able to develop the reading skills they need to do well in school, earn an Oregon Diploma, and succeed in their next steps.

Major Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

The following **six components** form the structure of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework for each of the **three levels**—state, district, and school:

1. Goals
2. Assessment
3. Instruction
4. Leadership
5. Professional Development
6. Commitment



These six components are systemically connected and the connections are easy to understand. In the figure above, understanding the connection begins in the center with student reading **goals**. Without measurable reading goals that anchor the framework, it will be impossible to achieve consensus on what

is and is not working in providing effective reading instruction, what should be maintained and firmly established, and what should be revised and closely monitored. Reliable and valid **assessments** are used to determine if students have met key reading goals. For students who have met reading goals, **instruction** is provided that keeps them on track and accelerates their reading development. For students who have not met reading goals, instruction is provided that will allow them to reach these goals and to further enhance their reading achievement.

Perhaps **the** essential aspect of the framework is providing a comprehensive system of support—state, district, and a school—that will enable teachers to provide the reading instruction students need to meet key reading goals. **Leadership** and **professional development** are the mechanisms for providing this support. How all of the pieces fit as a comprehensive system is articulated in the **commitment** made to provide the instruction students need to meet reading goals. Three levels of support are needed to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of reading instruction that works for all students:

- The state level
- The district level
- The school level

The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework focuses on what must be done at the **state, district,** and **school levels** to develop effective policies and procedures in each of these six components. The state and districts should provide detailed policies and procedures that will enable them to effectively support the implementation of the framework. State and district responsibilities are described in separate documents entitled "State Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" and "District Support for the Essential Skill of Reading."

School efforts to implement the framework are delineated in the school review entitled "School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading." In addition to the school review, the school-level portion of the framework includes six chapters on implementation, one chapter devoted to each of the six components: 1) Goals, 2) Assessment, 3) Reading Instruction, 4) Leadership, 5) Professional Development, and 6) Commitment.

Implementing the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework means implementing a framework fully aligned with Oregon's Response to Intervention Initiative (Or-RTI).[27] Or-RTI integrates high-quality instruction, assessment, and intervention in a way that allows schools to match the level of intensity and instructional support to student needs in reading and in reading across the instructional areas.[28]

A brief description of each of the six major components of the framework as they relate to schools is provided below.

[27] http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=315 Oregon's Response to Intervention Initiative
[28] ODE "OrRTI Technical Assistance to School Districts," 2007

Goals

An overarching goal for every Oregon school should be to ensure that all students **read at grade level or higher each academic year**. Student performance on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature is used to determine whether students have met the summative goal and are able to read proficiently at grade level in **grades 3 through high school**. Progress monitoring/formative reading measures in grades K-3 indicate whether students are on track to read at grade level in grade 3, and they may also be used as summative or outcome measures for specific elements of reading in **grades K-2.** To accomplish this overarching goal, schools must make sure students reach formative reading goals that provide critical information about whether students are on track to read at grade level.

Assessment

Reliable and valid reading assessments determine if students are reading at grade level and are meeting formative reading goals. A comprehensive system of **formative and summative reading assessments** should be a central part of each school's reading plan. The Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) anchors the summative assessment system. Formative measures of reading should be used to determine if students are on track for grade-level reading. These formative measures should include early measures of phonemic awareness and alphabetic understanding that determine if students are developing foundational reading skills. Formative measures should also include measures of fluency and comprehension that help determine if students are developing advanced skills necessary to read complex academic material.

Instruction

Once children begin public school, effective reading instruction is the most important determinant of whether they will develop the overall reading proficiency necessary for academic success. High-quality reading instruction in Oregon's K-12 Literacy Framework involves the integration of **six** guiding principles. First, it is critical that schools **allocate sufficient time to teach reading and use it effectively**. Second, **data** is used to form fluid instructional groupings. Third, instruction is focused on **the essential elements of reading.** Fourth, teachers need to utilize **research-based strategies, programs, and materials**. Fifth, schools must **differentiate instruction** based on what supports students need to reach target goals. How instruction is differentiated for students should be communicated formally through grade-level plans. Sixth, all teachers should provide **effective teacher delivery** of content by focusing on nine general features of instruction. When schools successfully implement these six guiding principles, they increase the probability that all students will reach grade-level reading goals.

Leadership

Coordinated leadership is needed at the state, district, and school levels if all students are to read proficiently.[29] At the school level, leadership is responsible for collecting and analyzing valid data that can be used to determine whether students have met key reading goals. On the basis of student **reading data**, school leadership must establish and maintain the infrastructure necessary to support teachers in the delivery of effective reading instruction that will enable students to meet key reading goals. School leadership must also regularly evaluate classroom reading instruction to determine how professional development and other means can be used to support teachers to provide the reading instruction

[29] Haynes, 2007

students need. **Effective school leadership is distributed** among individuals and groups within the school including the principal, coach, the School Leadership Team, and grade-level and department-level teams. Schools can utilize these leadership groups to collectively accomplish essential leadership functions.

Professional Development

Professional development provides teachers and other school personnel with the support, learning opportunities, and experiences they need to provide effective reading instruction in the classroom. Coaching is an important form of professional development. All professional development related to reading outcomes should **target what needs to occur in the classroom** in order for all students to meet grade-level reading goals. To do this, the state, districts, and schools need to integrate content and resources to provide **coherent, multifaceted, and on-going** professional development. The closer professional development occurs to the school level, the more it becomes focused on specific classroom instructional practices. Professional development should be **differentiated** based on need. This is true for teachers, as well as for administrators, coaches, and others who need professional development to improve the support they provide teachers to meet students' instructional needs.

Commitment

The final area of focus of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is commitment, defined as "an act or process of entrusting or putting together and delivering on an agreement." Commitment consists of a vision that inspires and motivates the staff and the broader school-wide community, including parents and school board members, to do whatever it takes to ensure students **learn to read in K-3**, continue to **read at grade level or higher each year in school across the instructional areas**, demonstrate **proficiency in the Essential Skill of Reading**, and earn an **Oregon Diploma**. Commitment includes a **School Reading Plan** that delineates the following: dedication of resources, transparent reporting and accountability mechanisms and processes, and sharing responsibility for the successes and challenges involved in implementing a comprehensive reading program focused on meeting the instructional needs of all students.

How to Read this Framework

This framework is organized around six components: 1) Goals, 2) Assessment, 3) Instruction, 4) Leadership, 5) Professional Development, and 6) Commitment. State and district responsibilities to support implementation of the framework, also organized around these six components, are described in separate documents entitled "State Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" and "District Support for the Essential Skill of Reading." School efforts to implement the framework are overviewed in the school review entitled "School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading." Individual chapters describe implementation of each of these components at the school level.

To assist the reader, throughout the document an **icon** appears in the top right hand corner of the page to indicate which level (state, district, or school) is the current focus. In addition, a **matrix** at the beginning of each chapter provides a guide to the component and level. For example, the star in the following matrix indicates that the content to follow will describe school level implementation of the instruction component.

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools						
Districts						
State						

Within each chapter there are both footnotes and endnotes. **Footnotes**, appearing at the bottom of each page, are used to cite references and provide clarifying information. A reference list is included at the end of the document with complete references for all resources cited in the footnotes. **Endnotes,** appearing at the end of each chapter, are used to provide additional web resources, tools, and supporting documents. Endnotes are denoted in the chapter by a Roman numeral that indicates the specific endnote reference.

Getting Started

The state and district documents, "State Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" and "District Support for the Essential Skill of Reading," are designed for strategic planning at the state and district levels respectively; a main feature of each includes the formation of leadership teams—the State Leadership Team and District Leadership Teams.

The comparable school-level document entitled "School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" functions as a **school self-audit**. It also provides **electronic links directly to the explanatory narrative and resources within the six chapters** of the school-level portion of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

"School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" is a useful starting point for planning after school administrators and teachers have read the six chapters of the framework. Organized as a school review, "School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" covers the six critical components of a healthy schoolwide system and provides an opportunity for schools to note their strengths and areas for improvement in developing a school reading plan. The school review guides discussion about the major elements of the current reading program. The items and criteria listed in the review represent the "ideal" conditions. To complete the school review, it is suggested that schools assemble a team that includes building administration, teachers, and specialists. The review can be completed in a number of ways. One way is for each member of the team to fill it out individually, and the results can be summarized across team members. Or the team can complete the school review together by discussing and coming to

agreement on each item. The summary scores can be used to determine relative strengths and weaknesses of the current reading program and to assist in prioritizing goals. Using the school review can be an important first step before a school begins to implement a School Reading Plan. The tool can also be used to re-evaluate the School Reading Plan at the end of each school year and refocus the leadership team towards meeting the needs of each student and all students.

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework:
State Support for the Essential Skill of Reading

Part I: State Support by Framework Component

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
I. Goals	***Rationale:*** *When states set clear, measurable reading goals, they create accountability at each level. When states align reading goals and priorities with the needs reflected in their data, they leverage progress at the district and school level.*					
	1. Specific, measurable statewide reading goals at each grade level or grade span are defined and communicated, Kamil (2007).					
	2. Reading goals at the state level are coordinated across departments, programs, and initiatives to convey to districts and schools a single, coherent vision of student reading success, Haynes, M. (2007).					
	3. Reading expectations are made specific within each subject area by incorporating reading skills into state content standards, Kamil (2007).					
	4. Districts are supported and encouraged to use the Growth Model Probability Curve as part of their goal-setting process for reading, the Oregon Department of Education (2009). http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495 (bottom of web page)					
	5. The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework was adopted by the State Board of Education a) To support implementation of the kindergarten through high school Oregon reading standards b) To ensure that all students acquire the Essential Skill of Reading required to earn an Oregon Diploma.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
II. Assessment	***Rationale:*** *When states provide support and leadership for effective reading assessment practices, educators have the data needed to guide improvement.* *States can develop comprehensive reading assessment plans (measures, purposes, administration guidelines, desired benchmarks, etc.) and support districts and schools to do the same at their respective levels.*					
	1. State assessments are reviewed and strengthened to make sure a) They reflect real-world reading demands, including the expectations of respected national assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) b) They accurately indicate whether students are adequately prepared for subsequent schooling, Kamil (2007).					
	2. The state monitors the standardization of assessments across all schools to control the number of times a student can take the assessment and the window within which the assessment is given; such controls are important if data are to be compared across schools, districts, or time.					
	3. Progress toward state reading goals is reviewed at the state, district, and school levels, and plans are created to address shortcomings at each level, Kamil (2007).					
	4. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, recommended reading assessments are made available for district and schoolwide reading assessment plans; each recommended assessment meets standards for technical adequacy appropriate to the type of measure, U.S. Department of Education (2008).					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	5. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, districts are encouraged to conduct a reading screening with a valid and reliable tool three times per year with all K-8 students and to consider screening all students in grades 9-12 at the beginning of the school year.					
	6. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, districts and schools are encouraged to conduct a diagnostic screening on students who score below a proficient level on state reading tests so that their reading deficiencies can be addressed.					
	7. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, districts are encouraged to administer their choice of a summative reading assessment at grades K-2, for district use only, to ensure that reading programs at these grade levels are giving students the start they need to be successful in school later on.					
III. Instruction	***Rationale:*** *States can promote "Research to Practice" guides (from the U.S. Dept. of Education's Institute of Education Sciences) and other national reports to inform effective reading practices.* *States are uniquely positioned to act on these guides by providing leadership and support for implementation of effective reading practices statewide.*					
	1. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, the state encourages and supports districts in adopting policy governing time allocated for reading instruction in elementary and secondary across the instructional areas.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	2. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, resources are available for districts and schools for selecting effective reading programs, including core reading programs and supplemental and intervention reading programs, either a) By providing a list of programs **or** b) By providing criteria by which effective programs can be identified, Kamil (2007).					
	3. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, districts are encouraged to select instructional practices with a strong evidentiary base such as those endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and Doing What Works (DWW) websites.					
	4. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, districts are encouraged and supported in using the breadth of assessment data (including valid and reliable assessments and district and statewide summative assessments) to differentiate the programs and materials, time allocations, and instructional group sizes for reading instruction within and outside of the designated core reading block.					
	5. Through the framework and guidance provided by the state, a strong collection of useful web-based literacy resources for elementary and secondary reading and for incorporating reading across the instructional areas is made available to districts.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
IV. Leadership	***Rationale:*** *States are uniquely positioned to bring about reading improvement on a large scale. Strong state leadership significantly increases the likelihood of improved reading outcomes at the state, district, and school levels; local leaders look to states for clear expectations and strong guidance on how to improve reading outcomes.*					
	1. The State Literacy Leadership Team is maintained and supported by state resources					
	2. The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is integrated into regular education, special education, Title 1, ELL, and TAG programs.					
	3. A State Reading Plan is developed that articulates a) The vision and goals for strong reading outcomes at the state, district, and school levels b) Capacity-building at the state and regional levels c) Successful implementation of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework at district and regional levels including high-quality professional development on the framework.					
	4. The State Literacy Leadership Team develops consistent guidance for districts on leadership team membership, roles of team members, and implementation.					
	5. State Department of Education leaders collaborate across departmental lines so that districts and schools receive a consistent message (goals, training, resources) about how to increase student reading outcomes, U. S. Department of Education (2008).					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	6. The State Literacy Leadership Team creates opportunities to disseminate the framework and to support implementation of the framework. Implementation guidance (e.g., high-quality training in literacy leadership including the capacity to support implementation of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework) is provided for school, district, and Education Service District (ESD) literacy leaders (e.g., principals, coaches, literacy team members, instructional and data specialists, district leaders, ESD specialists), Kamil (2007).					
	7. An online state literacy network is supported to connect and coordinate the work of various districts, groups, and stakeholders in working toward improved reading outcomes.					
	8. The state provides incentives for districts to coordinate local literacy improvement projects and professional development with those provided at the state level, Kamil (2007).					
	9. The State Literacy Leadership Team implements a schedule in which knowledge and research from other sources (e.g., other states, district exemplars, higher education, etc.) is continually integrated into planning and development.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
V. Professional Development	***Rationale:*** *When states have a plan for providing sustained professional development in K-12 reading, significant progress can be made.* *States can work through preservice, inservice, and certification channels to help ensure strong reading instruction for all students.*					
	1. Districts are supported in using the state developed Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework to provide literacy professional development for elementary and secondary teachers across the instructional areas that meets standards for high-quality training as defined by the National Staff Development Council (e.g., focused, ongoing, job-embedded, data-based, collaborative), Kamil (2007).					
	2. The state provides and requires discipline-specific high school reading endorsements based on adolescent literacy standards, Kamil (2007).					
	3. Induction and mentoring programs are supported for aspiring literacy leaders (teachers, administrators, district leaders) within their districts, Kamil (2007).					
	4. Requirements and training from state licensure, higher education, and professional organizations are coordinated and aligned with federal requirements such as No Child Left Behind for those who lead and who provide instruction in literacy programs at all levels.					
	5. Collaboration among districts/schools (especially those that are demographically similar) is supported and facilitated, whereby districts/schools that are struggling can learn from those that are making progress.					
	6. A State Reading Plan is developed that articulates a vision for strong reading outcomes at the state, district, and school levels and that supports districts and schools in meeting these goals, Haynes (2007).					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
	7. The state supports districts in developing and implementing a District Reading Plan as part of the district and school improvement planning process, Haynes (2007).					
VI. Commitment	***Rationale:*** *When states embrace literacy planning, use of data, stakeholder engagement, and alignment of goals and resources and initiatives across programs—and when these components are supported at the highest levels of state government—the stage is set for improved outcomes at all levels.* *States that demonstrate strong, visible, and ongoing commitment to student reading achievement provide powerful leadership to districts and schools.*					
	1. Stakeholder groups are identified and engaged in the dissemination of the statewide reading vision, goals, outcomes, and effective solutions for poor reading outcomes.					
	2. A means to disseminate to districts updates on recent developments in reading research at the national level in such areas as reading comprehension and effective instruction for English Language Learners (ELL) is available, Kamil (2007).					
	3. Demonstration sites with model reading programs and strong student reading outcomes are established at exemplar districts at all levels K-12, Kamil, (2007).					
	4. Recognition is provided to schools and/or districts that make significant progress in improving student reading scores, Kamil (2007).					
	5. The Governor, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, members of the Literacy Leadership State Steering Committee (LLSSC), mayors, and other public figures are asked to promote the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework in their formal and informal interactions around the state.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
	6. A comprehensive set of policies is developed and supported by the Governor, Legislature, State Board of Education, and State Superintendent, to advance improved reading outcomes at all levels, SREB (2009).					

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework:
State Support for Implementation of the Essential Skill of Reading

Part II: State Support by State Function

State Functions	Recommended Strategies and Actions to Support Implementation at the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
I. Policy	***Rationale:*** *State policy and administrative rules provide strong tools for strengthening reading practices statewide; they command attention, carry "weight," and transcend the tenure of successful leaders.*					
	1. State legislation and administrative rules are created based on the recommendations provided by the U.S. Department of Education's resources on evidence-based reading practices and as reflected in the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.					
	2. Knowledge gained from the Scaling Up Project is used to expand effective reading practices statewide, Fixen, D., Blasé, Horner, & Sugai (2008).					
II. Communication (including accountability)	***Rationale:*** *States that engage stakeholders as partners from the highest levels (Governor, Legislature, State Board of Education) to the local community (school boards, parents, businesses, civic organizations, and foundations) and share data transparently enable accountability.*					
	1. The state's vision, mission, and goals to improve student reading outcomes in elementary, across the instructional areas in secondary, and in all sub-groups, is regularly communicated to educators and community stakeholders, U. S. Department of Education (2008).					
	2. The state requires districts to report reading outcomes at all levels; districts are supported in creating action plans to address areas of low performance.					
	3. The state supports districts in reporting detailed reading outcomes and reading plans to stakeholders.					

State Functions	Recommended Strategies and Actions to Support Implementation at the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	4. A strong collection of highly useful web-based reporting tools is maintained by the state.					
III. Organization and Systems Support for Districts and Schools (Capacity and Infrastructure)	***Rationale:*** *When states develop the capacity and infrastructure to promote and support improved instructional practices in reading, change is possible and can be sustained.* *States harness all of the pertinent structures, functions, and resources of state government to drive improved reading achievement.*					
	1. Regional reading support is provided for districts and schools through the Education Service Districts.					
	2. The state establishes and maintains partnerships for reading leadership with other agencies and providers that have expertise to support improved reading practices, U. S. Department of Education (2008).					
	3. Districts are supported in implementing evidence-based practices in reading to produce improved results, Fixen, D., Blasé, Horner, & Sugai (2008).					
	4. Districts are supported in evaluating their reading outcomes so that program changes can be made as needed in a timely manner.					
	5. State systems-level structures are in place to support districts in bringing effective reading practices and their sustained implementation to scale over time, Fixen, D., Blasé, Horner, & Sugai (2008).					
	6. Structures, roles, and job descriptions within the state department of education are reviewed to determine optimal leveraging of resources that can be used to impact district and school delivery systems, thereby increasing student reading outcomes, Fixen, D., Blasé, Horner, & Sugai (2008).					

State Functions	Recommended Strategies and Actions to Support Implementation at the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	7. The state department of education increases its capacity to a) Initiate and manage change b) Ensure that districts are supported in implementing improved reading practices c) Create sustainable systems to support improved reading practices and outcomes, Fixen, D., Blasé, Horner, & Sugai (2008).					
	8. Evidence-based programs and initiatives are aligned to create broader and deeper support for reading outcomes statewide (e.g., RTI, EBISS, RF).					
IV. Ensuring Highly Qualified Staff	***Rationale:*** *States define the reading training that elementary teachers, secondary teachers, administrators, and other literacy leaders need to ensure high-performing schools; they create incentives and structures to ensure that teachers and leaders receive this training.*					
	1. Incentives are created and support is provided for currently practicing and new school administrators to complete a state-approved professional development program in reading leadership related to evidence-based practices for the grade span in which the candidate intends to work, Kamil (2007).					
	2. Teacher preservice training and/or licensure requirements are changed and incentives are created for teaching candidates to complete a minimum number of hours in evidence-based reading instruction related to the grade span in which they will be teaching, Kamil (2007).					
	3. The state supports districts in developing reading leaders and planning for the succession of current reading leaders.					

State Functions	Recommended Strategies and Actions to Support Implementation at the State-Level Framework	State Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
V. Financial Consideration	***Rationale:*** *States can provide fiscal leadership for improved reading outcomes by focusing scarce resources on priorities derived from reading data and by helping districts blend resources to reach goals.*					
	1. Guidance is provided to districts in how federal and state funds can be used to support recommended reading practices, U. S. Department of Education (2008).					
	2. Federal and state resources are prioritized to support improved reading outcomes in elementary and secondary classes, U.S. Department of Education (2007).					

Guiding Questions for State Systems Support Planning[1]

1.	What are our state reading goals, and what support systems/strategies do we have in place (or do we have available) at the state level for reaching these goals?
2.	What are our state reading assessments and other pertinent evaluations (e.g., NAEP) currently telling us about student reading outcomes in Oregon? What are the successes in these data, and what can we learn from these successes? How can we extend them to other students, schools, or districts? What are the concerns in the data, and what is the level of urgency in addressing them?
3.	To what degree are schools in our district actually implementing the components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework currently? What support do they need to implement these components more fully? In particular, to what extent are low-performing schools implementing components of the framework? What is ODE's capacity to support low-performing schools to improve their outcomes?
4.	What are the systems' support issues we need to address at the state level to provide a more effective catalyst for improved reading outcomes and to support district and school abilities to improve these outcomes?
5.	What can we learn from the experiences of other states in state-level reading leadership?
6.	What resources are available to guide state-level reading leadership?

[1] Adapted from "Discussion Guide for District Leaders," a tool for improving and sustaining school district literacy efforts. Developed under contract ED04CO0041 from the U.S. Department of Education to RMC Research Corporation, 2009.

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Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Highlighting Success to Build Support for Evidence-Based Reading Programs

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Using Your State Longitudinal Data System to Sustain Your Evidence-Based Reading Program

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Reaching Out to Higher Education to Align Pre-Service Preparation with Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR)

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Writing State Literacy Plans that Sustain Your Evidence-Based Reading Model

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Structuring State Professional Development to Sustain Scientifically-Based Reading Instruction

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Integrating the Components of Effective Reading Instruction into State Content Standards

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Providing Effective State Leadership for Sustaining Evidence-Based Reading Programs

Here's How—State Sustainability Strategies: Institutionalizing Your Evidence-Based Reading Model in State Legislation and Policy

Resources and Related Initiatives

Oregon K-12 Diploma (including the Essential Skill of Reading)
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=368

Oregon EBISS Project (Effective Behavioral and Instructional Support Systems)
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=1389

Oregon's Response to Intervention Initiative (Or-RTI)
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=315

Oregon Reading First/Reading First Outreach
http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

The IES Practice Guides form a series of publications which summarize the results of rigorous research studies on various topics of importance in education and provide practical recommendations for educational practitioners. Several practice guides have been published on topics related to reading. These include:

- Assisting Students Struggling with Reading: Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-Tier Intervention in the Primary Grades (2009)
- Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices (2008)
- Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades (2007)

(See the What Works Clearinghouse at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ to view or download copies of these practice guides.

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework:
District Support for the Essential Skill of Reading

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the District-Level Framework	District Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
I. Goals	**I. (A) District goals for reading attainment are established.**[i] ***Rationale:*** *Goals focus effort, guide allocation of resources, and make accountability possible. When set at the district level, goals serve as a cohesive force, drawing everyone together in working toward a common purpose.*					
	1. District level reading goals are established across grades K-12. Goals are a) Specific, observable, and measurable b) Aligned with state standards at all levels c) Supported by effective instructional resources and measured by valid and reliable assessments d) Adopted by the school board and communicated widely throughout the community e) Used to guide budgeting, planning, and other operational functions f) Monitored closely and used to inform ongoing improvement efforts g) Maintained indefinitely until goals are consistently met and sustained over time.					
	I. (B) Annual achievement growth in early literacy (K-3) and adolescent literacy (4-12) are key parts of the district's Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP)[ii] **and School Improvement Planning (SIP) process.**					
	I. (C) The ODE Growth Model Probability Curve is used as part of the goal-setting process for reading (ODE, 2009).[iii] **http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495 (bottom of web page)**					

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	I. (D) Plans, actions, and support for district reading goals are annually aligned. ***Rationale:*** *Without cross-district alignment, goals have little chance of being met. With cross-district alignment, goals become much more attainable.*					
	1. District policies, procedures, expenditures, and the actions of district leaders are aligned with and support attainment of the district's reading goals.					
	2. Instructional resources and assessment tools are aligned and support attainment of reading goals.					
	3. School level goals, plans, and activities are aligned with district goals, plans, and activities. District personnel work with principals to modify school plans as necessary to align with district goals.					
	I. (E) Current data are compared to reading goals, and the district responds according to results. ***Rationale:*** *Goals are most often met not in "one giant leap forward," but in a series of small, incremental steps over time.*					
	1. Progress toward goals and school plans to improve these results is reported periodically (e.g., three times per year) to stakeholders including staff, parents, school board, and community members.					
	2. Positive attention, recognition, and support is provided to schools throughout the district that are making steady progress in meeting district goals.					
II. Assessment	**II. (A) District personnel provide leadership for reading assessment.**[iv] [v] ***Rationale:*** *District leadership enables and empowers school improvement actions; a plan for effective assessment practices is essential for monitoring ongoing improvement of student reading skills.*					

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	1. A "data culture" is developed and nurtured throughout the district including a system to support building administrators in the use of reading assessment data in schools and follow-up plans to adjust instruction as needed, Kamil (2007).					
	2. A districtwide reading assessment plan has been developed including purposes, measures to be used, schedules, procedures, and targeted students at each grade level in every school.					
	3. A district-level database is established, implemented, and maintained to collect and summarize school-level reading data and to provide immediate and easy access to information.					
	II. (B) The district selects reading measures that are valid and reliable and that provide information on the essential elements of reading instruction.[vi]					
	1. Selected assessment measures have strong evidence of validity and reliability. These measures are used on an established schedule to screen, diagnose, monitor, and determine reading outcomes of K-12 students districtwide.					
	2. Selected measures provide information on the essential elements of reading instruction appropriate for each reading level or grade span and are explicitly linked to district and state reading goals. The district avoids duplication of assessment measures.					

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	II. (C) The district has developed capacity to gather and use data.[vii]					
	1. A pool of competent trainers is established and maintained who are available locally to a) Train district staff on data collection and interpretation b) Provide a comprehensive initial training on data collection to all new staff members c) Provide quarterly follow-up and retooling trainings as needed d) Conduct brief reliability checks to ensure that the data collected are reliable for all data collectors.					
	2. Ongoing training and support for data interpretation and data utilization is provided to all certified/ licensed staff that teach or supervise reading programs.					
	3. At least one individual per school is designated to become the expert on specific reading measures used at that school. Ongoing training and support is provided for this role.					
	II. (D) Assessments are administered in a timely manner and with standardized procedures. ***Rationale:*** *Assessments should be administered early and (for repeated measures) with sufficient frequency to detect lack of progress and thereby avoid loss of valuable instructional time. Because data are used for comparison purposes, it is essential that assessment measures be standardized.*					
	1. Assessments are given in a standardized manner across students, classes, and schools.					
	2. A districtwide assessment calendar is established that specifies testing windows for each measure which is a part of the district assessment plan.					

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	3. Screening measures are administered districtwide very early in the year to identify students who may need additional instructional support. New students who move into a school are assessed very soon after their arrival and placed into instructional groups immediately thereafter.					
	II. (E) Formative and summative evaluations are incorporated at all grade spans. ***Rationale****: Formative assessments are essential to ensure that each student is making adequate progress. Summative (outcome) assessments are critical to know if students have met benchmarks (or targets) and to know if programs are effective. Both allow for important changes to be made in a timely manner if desired results are not being attained.*					
	1. Support for a districtwide formative assessment process is provided at each level. Necessary resources are dedicated to ensure each school has a viable plan for collecting ongoing progress-monitoring data on students receiving interventions. District recommendations are established regarding the frequency of data collection for students at risk of reading difficulties.					
	2. A valid summative assessment for grades K-2 is adopted to allow for evaluation of the early literacy program, (e.g., year-end targets on DIBELS-like measures can serve this purpose in K-2 if data are reviewed in light of percentage of students meeting grade -level targets).					
	II. (F) Data are reviewed regularly, and instruction and support are adjusted accordingly across the district.[viii] ***Rationale:*** *District support of ongoing review of data and adjustment of instruction based upon that data is at the center of a continuous improvement model. This district strategy empowers schools to be responsive to students' instructional needs.* *(Note: Provisions for low-achieving students in subgroups or achievement gap groups are discussed in the section on tiered instruction in the Instruction chapter of the school -level portion of the Framework).*					

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		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	1. Districts support schools by ensuring that teachers are provided the time needed to conduct regularly scheduled data meetings to a) Review results of reading performance assessments on an ongoing basis (e.g., every 2-4 weeks for students below benchmark levels and 3 times/year for those at/above benchmark level). b) Make necessary adjustments to reading instruction programs as indicated by the data. Periodic school and district-level data summits are scheduled (part-day meetings of literacy leadership teams 2-3 times/year) for more comprehensive data review and planning purposes.					
	2. Based on the review of data, district leaders are encouraged to participate in selected reading team meetings at the school level in order to assist with systems-level problem solving and identify possible professional development needs and district supports.					
III. Instruction	**III. (A) Reading instruction is explicitly organized on a grade-appropriate basis around the five essential elements of reading including phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.** ***Rationale****: The five elements of reading are the building blocks to becoming a successful reader; mastering them allows students to fully develop their reading ability.*					
	III. (B) School administrators are strong instructional leaders and ongoing support is provided for this role.[ix] ***Rationale:*** *Principals have the authority and direct accountability to assure that effective practices are implemented and are working. The principal's position should be structured to assure that each school has a strong leader who provides the support needed for an effective reading program for all students.*					

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	1. School administrators are supported in conducting regularly-scheduled instructional walk-throughs to ensure that effective instruction is being provided to all students and programs are being implemented with fidelity.[x] [xi]					
	2. School administrators' efforts to provide instructional leadership in reading are supported by scheduling administrative meetings at times other than during reading instruction.					
	3. School administrators are assisted in (a) providing structure and support for grade-level and school-level reading team meetings and (b) participating in them directly or indirectly through briefings following the meetings.					
	4. School administrators' job descriptions and evaluations are structured to support strong, effective reading program leaders in their buildings.					
	III. (C) The district provides sufficient instructional time in reading for all students to learn. ***Rationale:*** *Learning new, complex, and highly important skills takes more time than once thought and takes some students longer than others. District support of principals and teachers giving individual students the time and instruction they need to learn helps ensure student success.*					
	1. A minimum amount of reading instruction is provided to all K-12 students as follows: a) Grades K-3: 90 minute reading block daily b) Grades 4-5: 90 minute reading block daily and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas					

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	c) Grades 6-8: 40-60 minutes daily dedicated specifically to a reading class for all students (as data dictates) in addition to the literacy-connected instruction and practice that takes place across the instructional areas d) Grades 9-12: 2-4 hours of literacy-connected instruction and practice that takes place across the instructional areas.[xii] School board policy has been considered to ensure that the need for sufficient instructional time in reading is met.					
	2. Necessary funding and personnel are secured to support small group, teacher-directed reading instruction for a portion of daily reading instruction for K-3 students.					
	3. Small group, teacher-directed intensive reading intervention is provided beyond the core reading block for all K-5 students across the district that are reading below grade level.[xiii]					
	4. Each student in middle and high school with below-grade-level reading skills is provided with at least an additional period of reading instruction support every day.[xiv]					
	5. Beyond providing additional instructional time during the school day, intensive after-school and/or summer school intervention programs are considered for students reading below grade level based on their assessment information.					
	III. (D) Evidence-based instructional materials and practices are adopted for core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs. (Note: Many schools use technology as part of the instructional tool set for reading. To date, there is little evidence on which to base recommendations for this use of technology in reading instruction.) (See http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20094041/index.asp and http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20074005/index.asp.)					

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	Rationale: *District support of both evidence-based instructional materials and effective instructional practices are important in order to reach district instructional goals.*					
	1. Formal district policies and procedures are established that result in the adoption of evidence-based instructional programs which align with and support state standards.					
	2. The district has adopted a single, districtwide, scientifically-based core reading program for Pre-K through Grade 5.					
	3. Effective evidence-based supplemental and intervention programs are adopted for use with students needing additional instruction beyond the core reading program.					
	4. When more than one type of reading program is being used with individual students within the district (e.g. core and intervention programs), these programs are aligned with each other.					
	5. Teachers across the district use adopted evidence-based programs and materials with consistency and fidelity.					
	III. (E) All federal instructional programs are aligned with general education reading instruction. ***Rationale:*** *Without alignment of goals and resources across various programs, efforts may be scattered and results limited. Alignment of all district reading programs maximizes funding and leverages effective instruction for all students.*					
	1. Across the district, federal programs that provide reading support (e.g., Special Education, ELL, Title) are aligned with general education reading instruction in order to provide consistent reading instruction for students at risk in learning to read.					

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	III. (F) Students are provided differentiated reading instruction based upon student assessment data.[xv] ***Rationale:*** *Assessment data provides an objective basis for placing students at instructional levels and in flexible instructional groups. For effective and equitable placement, district support of the use of assessment data first, followed by consideration of other factors, ensures that minority students are not over-or under-represented at any level of instruction.*					
	1. A set of data-based decision rules is used consistently across the district which guides student placement into differentiated intervention and enrichment reading programs and materials.[xvi]					
	III. (G) Effective teacher delivery of robust reading instruction is promoted across the district.					
	1. District personnel work with building administrators to ensure that teachers across the district are incorporating features of effective delivery of reading instruction. [xvii]					
IV. Leadership	**IV. (A) Strong reading leadership is provided at the district level.** ***Rationale:*** *Nothing provides more support for an initiative than championing it from the top of the organization.*					
	1. Leadership and vision are evident at the district level to ensure that all staff actively support district reading goals and outcome-based reading improvement practices.					
	2. Policies, personnel, budgets, training, and other operational resources are used as fiscal and administrative strategies to produce improved outcomes at the district and school levels.					
	3. Programs to recruit, train, and mentor future literacy leaders as well as make stronger literacy leaders of those already in leadership positions are developed within the district.					

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		Already in Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place		
	4. Principals and other staff are assigned to buildings based on training, experience, knowledge, and skills matched to the instructional needs of students and the support needs of staff in that building.					
	5. Reading is kept "front and center" as a district priority. Positive results are acknowledged and consistently high-performing schools are recognized.					
	6. District leadership consistently asks schools, "How can we (district leaders) support your reading improvement efforts?"					
	IV. (B) Strong reading leadership at the school level is supported by strong reading leadership at the district level. [xviii] ***Rationale:*** *School-level leadership supported by district-level leadership drives real instructional improvement.*					
	1. Coordination of reading goals, assessment, instruction, and professional development at the school and district levels is emphasized.					
	2. If funds are available and/or if the district is large enough, a district-level staff member is assigned as a reading coordinator. If funds are not available and/or in smaller districts, the function of reading leadership is distributed to people in other leadership roles; these staff members organize reading leadership teams at the school or district level.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the District-Level Framework	District Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
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	3. The reading coordinator or district reading leadership team performs the functions of reading coordination including (a) Supporting district principals and reading specialists (b) Making regular walk-through visits to classrooms to see reading instruction in action (c) Coordinating data collection in reading (d) Coordinating district-level professional development and data summits in reading.					
	4. If at all possible, district funds are allocated to provide coaching support to staff in each building in the district. More coaching support is provided to the buildings with the greatest numbers of students reading below grade level. If it is not possible to support coaching positions, key coaching functions are assigned within each school and at the district level.					
	5. The district provides leadership and regular meetings times for professional learning teams. The focus is on the following questions: What do we want students to learn? How will we know when they have learned it? What will we do when they haven't learned it? Principals are provided with guidance to give structure and support for these meetings which they participate in directly through attendance or indirectly through briefings following the meetings.					
	6. Supervision and ongoing support needed for principals to fulfill their roles as instructional leaders are provided by district personnel.					

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V. Professional Development	**V. (A) The most strategic and productive use of professional development resources is provided.** ***Rationale:*** *Professional development resources will always fall short of what is needed. Districts should utilize all opportunities to achieve maximum impact from them.*					
	1. Professional development resources including time and funding are aligned with district reading goals; this alignment is sustained and focused across years.					
	2. District professional development time (e.g., staff development days, late starts, early dismissals, etc.) is utilized strategically by focusing on content that will result in meeting district reading goals and by sustaining that focus over time.					
	V. (B) Professional development meets standards for <u>effective</u> professional development.[xix]					
	1. All professional development reflects the characteristics of effective professional development programs. Professional development is a) Focused on goals and guided by assessment data b) Ongoing c) Engaging and interactive d) Collaborative e) Job-embedded.					
	2. Application of the content from the formal professional development setting to the application setting (classroom) is stressed. Coaching, instructional supervision, ongoing teacher collaboration, peer coaching, and related strategies are used for this purpose.					

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	V. (C) Differentiated professional development is provided for all staff that teach or supervise reading. ***Rationale:*** *Although most professional development focuses on teacher preparation, districts should also plan high-quality professional development for administrators, specialists, educational assistants, volunteers, and anyone else whose work helps shape student learning. Students need a well-prepared and supported staff to maximize their chances to learn and to succeed.*					
	1. Initial and ongoing in-class professional development is provided specific to the reading programs school personnel will be teaching: a) Before the start of the year, teachers new to a building receive detailed preparation in the school's reading model, reading assessments, and how to implement the program(s) they will be using b) Periodically, returning teachers receive follow-up guidance to enhance implementation of the core, supplemental, and intervention programs c) Instructional specialists (Title I, special education, ELL and TAG specialists) are included in reading professional development that classroom teachers receive.					
	2. Principals attend district and building-level professional development sessions on reading programs and assessments. Scheduling conflicts with district leadership meetings are avoided on these dates. Additional professional development is provided for principals on becoming instructional leaders at regular sessions throughout the school year.[xx xxi]					
	3. Teaching staff are provided with opportunities to collaborate, study, observe others, visit model demonstration sites, and make plans to improve instruction.					

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	4. A comprehensive professional development plan and support system for instructional assistants who support reading groups is developed including instruction and guidance on instructional programs they will use.					
	5. The district is committed to integrating reading across the instructional areas at the middle and high school levels. Professional development and ongoing in-class support necessary to make this happen are provided including subject-specific comprehension and vocabulary strategies.					
VI. Commitment	**VI. (A) The district has built capacity from within to support effective reading practices.** ***Rationale:*** *By building capacity to support reading—distributing capacity among staff—districts expand support to the instruction and assessment processes. As a result, they increase the likelihood that the reading programs they create can last over time and through personnel turnover.*					
	1. Capacity is built districtwide by identifying teachers, coaches, and/or district personnel who can serve as trainers of core, supplemental, intervention, and enrichment reading programs as well as provide training on standardized assessment procedures which teachers are expected to use.					
	2. Instructional coaches are provided with the time, preparation, and continuous support needed to properly fulfill this role.					
	VI. (B) District and school reading planning is used to guide reading improvement efforts. ***Rationale:*** *Planning provides direction; actions derived from plans produce results.*					
	1. A comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable K-12 District Reading Plan is adopted and incorporated that includes a multi-tiered instructional model for all students. The District Reading Plan is recorded, disseminated widely, and referenced frequently.					

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	2. Schools are expected to develop a School Reading Plan that is aligned with the District Reading Plan; it is used to guide reading improvement.[xxii]					
	VI. (C) Personnel practices are aligned with and support improved reading outcomes. ***Rationale:*** *Hiring, assigning, supervising, supporting, and evaluating staff all impact the quality of instruction. In order to reach district goals, all factors that link to learning should be optimized.*					
	1. Personnel practices are aligned to support reading goals. Job descriptions, hiring practices, supervision protocols, and staff evaluation criteria have been developed that articulate the components of literacy leadership.					
	2. Leadership is developed from within by providing opportunities for future literacy leaders to develop the knowledge, skills, and experience that will allow them to fulfill such roles.					
	VI. (D) Fiscal resources are aligned with reading goals; resources are blended to support reading activities. ***Rationale:*** *Coordinating and aligning resources with district goals creates a momentum which carries a district further along the road to success.*					
	1. District (general fund) resources are dedicated to meeting reading goals. Budgets from multiple programs are blended, as allowed and necessary, to support reading outcomes (e.g., Titles I, II, III, IV, V, IDEA, Perkins).					
	2. Additional resources are systematically sought out at the local and state levels to support district reading goals.					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the District-Level Framework	District Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
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	VI. (E) A strong reading culture within the district and its schools is developed and maintained.[xxiii] ***Rationale**: A reading culture can be defined as "how we do things here in reading." It includes shared mission, vision, beliefs, language, and practices pertaining to reading. By shaping these elements to support improved reading outcomes, chances of achieving goals are greatly enhanced.*					
	1. Reading success is a prominent part of the district's mission. A clear and compelling vision for reading success is articulated. All staff members are committed to a philosophy of doing "whatever it takes" to help all students succeed in reading.					
	2. A culture of creating and promoting activities that are consistent with a Schoolwide Reading Model and linked to district reading goals is developed and nurtured.					
	VI. (F) Communication strategies are used to promote reading goals and progress toward them. ***Rationale:** Communication with stakeholders about the District Reading Plan enlists broader support and helps drive accountability.*					
	1. External stakeholders receive communication about the District Reading Plan and student progress on the district's goals within that plan on a regular basis.					
	2. The message that the principal's primary responsibility is to be an instructional leader is communicated to all staff, the school board, parents, and community.					
	3. The superintendent communicates regularly with all district leaders (i.e., Curriculum Director, Special Education Director, Title Director, ELL Director), principals, teachers, staff, and stakeholders in order to sustain the vision, beliefs, expectations, goals, and commitments for reading success.					

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	4. The commitment to data-based decision making is modeled by a) Addressing data regularly at meetings with school leadership b) Identifying successes and targets for improvement c) Leading discussions on how targets will be addressed and resources will be allocated to support these targets.					
	5. Schools are assisted with writing yearly school-based reports on progress toward reading goals for parents, the school board, and others.					
	6. Staff efforts that help make a difference in student performance are acknowledged. Events are planned to celebrate reading success.					

Guiding Questions for District Support Planning[1]

1. What are our district literacy goals, and what support systems/strategies do we have in place (or do we have available) at the district level for reaching these goals?
2. What are our district reading assessments (including our local results on the state assessment) currently telling us about our students' reading outcomes? What are the successes in these data, and what can we learn from these successes? How can we extend them to other students or schools? What are the concerns in the data, and what is the level of urgency in addressing them? What do we see when we look at data by sub-groups? What do we see when we look at data across schools within the district?
3. To what degree are schools in our district actually implementing the components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework currently? What support do they need to implement these components more fully? In particular, to what extent are low-performing schools implementing components of the framework? What is our district capacity to support low-performing schools to improve their outcomes? What other resources do we have access to for improving reading outcomes?
4. What are the systems' support issues we need to address at the district level to provide more effective support for improved reading outcomes and to support schools' abilities to improve these outcomes?
5. What can we learn from the experiences of other districts in providing district-level reading leadership?
6. What resources are available to guide district-level reading leadership?

[1] Adapted from "Discussion Guide for District Leaders," a tool for improving and sustaining school district literacy efforts. Developed under contract ED04CO0041 from the U.S. Department of Education to RMC Research Corporation, 2009

Sources

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U.S. Department of Education, 2007. Sustaining Reading First Series: District Level Self-Assessment Tool. Washington, D.C.: Author. (downloadable at: http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/sustaining.html)

U.S. Department of Education, 2008. Reading First Sustainability: "Here's How" Series. Washington, D.C.: Author. These forthcoming items in the series will be downloadable in mid-2009 at: http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/sustaining.html :

Here's How—Local Sustainability Strategies: Coordinating Funds at the District Level to Sustain Your Evidence-Based Reading Model.

Here's How— Local Sustainability Strategies: Institutionalizing Continuous Improvement with Comprehensive Data Management Systems.

Here's How— Local Sustainability Strategies: Maintaining Fidelity of Implementation with Walkthroughs.

Here's How— Local Sustainability Strategies: Managing Staffing Practices to Sustain Student Achievement.

Here's How— Local Sustainability Strategies: Upholding Your Evidence-Based Reading Program in District Policy.

Here's How— Local Sustainability Strategies: Working from Standards to Practice in Sustaining Scientifically-Based Reading Instruction.

Links to Resources

[i] For more information on the importance of goal setting, see the Institute of Education Sciences *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools* Practice Guide, pp. 14-17, at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/

[ii] See Oregon Department of Education's Continuous Improvement Planning website at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=201

[iii] The Longitudinal Student Growth model is available on the ODE website at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495 (bottom of web page)

[iv] For detailed information on establishing a comprehensive K-3 reading plan, see http://www.fcrr.org/assessment/pdf/k-3%20reading%20assessment.pdf

[v] The Center on Instruction offers a helpful summary of potential adolescent literacy assessments with its document *Assessments to Guide Adolescent Literacy Instruction* which can be found at http://www.center-for-instruction.org/files/Assessment%20Guide.pdf

[vi] Information on selecting reliable and valid measures can be found at the Florida Center for Reading Research (http://www.fcrr.org/forAdministrators.htm) and the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring (http://www.studentprogress.org/).

[vii] For a module on strategies for team approaches to collecting screening data, see "Approaches and Considerations of Collecting Schoolwide Early Literacy and Reading Performance Data" (Harn, 2000) http://dibels.uoregon.edu/logistics.php

[viii] For more information on progress monitoring, including a technical review of progress monitoring tools, see the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring at http://www.studentprogress.org/chart/chart.asp.

[ix] For information on how districts can support the role of the principal as the instructional leader within a school building, see *The District Leadership Challenge: Empowering Principals to Improve Teaching and Learning* available at http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/EducationLeadership/Pages/District-Leadership-Challenge-Empowering-Principals.aspx

[x] The Five-Minute Observation Form (Phase 2) provides schools with an observation tool that focuses on the nine general features of effective teacher delivery. A word document of the Five-Minute Observation Form (Phase 2) is available at (http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/).

[xi] A guide for conducting adolescent literacy walk-throughs for principals is available through the Center on Instruction at http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Adol%20Lit%20Walk%20Through.pdf

[xii] For more information on this recommendation, see *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*, A Report to Carnegie Corporation of New York. This report can be downloaded at http://www.all4ed.org/files/ReadingNext.pdf

[xiii] For more detailed information on providing instruction to students below grade level in the elementary grades, see the Institute on Education Sciences Practice Guide for RTI and Reading at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/#rti_reading_pg

[xiv] For more detailed information providing instruction to students reading below grade level in the middle and high school grades, see the Institute on Education Sciences Practice Guide for Adolescent Literacy http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/#adlit_pg

[xv] For an example of a decision-making framework that includes both systems-level and individual-level decision making, please see the "Going from All to Each" (GATE) Map on the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework website: http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/toolbox.html#rti

[xvi] Types of decision rules are available at the National Center for Student Progress Monitoring (http://www.studentprogress.org/) and the Oregon RTI Initiative (http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=315).

[xvii] A module on the Nine General Features of Effective Instructional Delivery is available at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu.

[xviii] A detailed study on the role districts can play in improving instruction and achievement entitled *Beyond Islands of Excellence: What Districts Can Do to Improve Instruction and Achievement in All Schools* was conducted by the Learning First Alliance. It can be found at http://www.learningfirst.org/publications/districts/

[xix] The National Staff Development Council website (http://www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm) provides standards for staff development.

[xx] *Teaching All Students to Read in Elementary School: A Guide for Principals* provides critical elements of effective reading programs; it is available for download at http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Principals%20Guide%20Elementary.pdf

[xxi] *Improving Literacy Instruction in Middle and High Schools: A Guide for Principals (6-12)* can be downloaded at http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=materials&grade_start=6&grade_end=12#121

[xxii] Templates for the introduction and details sections of the School Reading Plan may be downloaded at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/commitment.html#litplans.

[xxiii] For guidance on creating a school reading culture, see http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=reading&subcategory=materials&grade_start=6&grade_end=12#128

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework:
School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading

School

* Reminder: Items with the designation (x2) are considered even more important to the overall implementation of a school's reading program. In these cases, multiply your rating by two and record that number in the blank to the right of the item.

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
I. Goals	**I. (A) School goals for reading achievement are clearly defined, anchored to reading instruction, and prioritized in terms of importance to student learning.**					
	1. Goals are clearly defined and quantifiable at each grade level. [*Goals, 5*]					
	2. Goals are aligned with state standards and focus on the development of the Essential Skill of Reading required for receiving the Oregon Diploma. [*Goals, 6*]					
	3. K-3 goals target how well students are learning phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills. Goals in 4-12 focus on both foundational reading skills and the ability to apply skills and strategies to read proficiently across the instructional areas. [*Goals, 3*] (x2)					
	4. The school, in conjunction with district leadership, uses the ODE Growth Model Probability Curve as part of the goal-setting process for reading. http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495 (bottom of web page) [*Goals, 7*]					
	5. Summative and formative goals anchor reading instruction as detailed in the School Reading Plan. [*Goals, 2*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	I. (B) School goals are consistently employed by school leadership and teaching personnel as instructional guides for decision making.					
	1. Goals and assessment of progress toward these goals guide instructional and curricular decisions at a schoolwide level including, for example, time allocations for reading instruction, reading program adoptions, group sizes, etc. [*Goals, 10*]					
	2. Progress toward goals guides daily instructional decisions by teaching personnel for groups of students as well as individual students. [*Goals, 12*]					
		Total = _____/16 Points			**_____%**	
II. Assessment	**II. (A) Instruments and procedures for assessing reading achievement are clearly specified, measure key reading skills, and provide reliable and valid information about student performance.**					
	1. A schoolwide reading assessment plan and database are established and maintained for documenting student performance within and across school years. (x2) [*Assessment, 6*]					
	2. The school's assessment system is explicitly linked to the school's reading goals. Measures assess student performance on prioritized goals. [*Assessment, 2*]					
	3. Measures used are technically adequate (have high reliability and validity) as documented by research. [*Assessment, 2*]					
	4. The school ensures that all assessment users receive training and follow-up observations on standard administration procedures, scoring, and data interpretation on all measures. [*Assessment, 14*]					
	5. The building has a "resident" expert or experts to manage the assessment system, ensure that measures are collected reliably, make certain data are scored and entered accurately, and provide feedback on data results to appropriate personnel in a timely fashion. [*Assessment, 14*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	II. (B) Assessments inform instruction in important, meaningful, and maintainable ways.					
	1. As early in the school year as possible, screening measures are administered to all students in Grades K-9 (recommended for Grades 10-12 as well) to identify each student's level of reading performance (Advanced, Grade Level, Somewhat Below Grade Level, Significantly Below Grade Level) and determine students' instructional needs. [*Assessment, 5*] (x2)					
	2. Progress-monitoring measures are administered formatively at least three times per year to all students in Grades K-5. Students below grade level and all students at risk of reading difficulties in Grades 6-12 are administered progress-monitoring assessments more often (2-4 times per month) based upon each student's level of risk, i.e., students at higher risk are administered progress-monitoring assessments more often. [*Assessment, 6*]					
	3. Diagnostic measures are used to pinpoint the possible cause(s) of lack of progress of at-risk students. Interventions are then matched to students' specific needs. [*Assessment, 10*]					
	4. Student performance data are analyzed and summarized in timely, meaningful formats and routinely used by grade or department-level teams to evaluate and adjust instruction as needed for all students. (x2) [*Assessment, 17*]					
	5. Summative data are used for decision making at individual, group, and systems levels at all grade levels K-12. (x2) [*Assessment, 9*]					
		Total = _____/28 Points _____%				

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
III. Instruction	**III. (A) Instructional Time: A sufficient amount of time is allocated for instruction, and the time allocated is used effectively.**					
	1. The School Reading Plan allocates a sufficient amount of time for instruction and follows minimal recommended times for daily reading instruction as presented in the School-Level Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework (see *Instruction*, p. 4) as follows: a) Grades K-3: 90 minute reading block daily b) Grades 4-5: 90 minute reading block daily and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas c) Grades 6-8: 40-60 minutes daily dedicated specifically to a reading class for all students (as data dictates) in addition to the literacy-connected instruction and practice that takes place across the instructional areas d) Grades 9-12: 2-4 hours of daily literacy-connected instruction and practice that takes place across the instructional areas (x2) [*Instruction, 2*]					
	2. Literacy instruction at all levels is prioritized and protected from interruption. [*Instruction, 2*]					
	3. In elementary, the school uses time allocated for reading instruction to provide both whole-class and small- group instruction to all students on a daily basis. In middle school, the size of reading groups is determined by student need and the number of students appropriate for the type of instruction being delivered. [*Instruction, 6*]					
	4. Students who are English learners receive more than the minimal recommended time for reading instruction; this instruction is coordinated with instructional time allocated for English language development. [*Instruction, 3*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	Somewhat Below Grade and Significantly Below Grade Level Students					
	5. For students not yet reading at grade level, the number of minutes of daily or weekly reading instruction is increased above minimum amounts. The amount of extra time is based on how far students are below grade level. [*Instruction, 5*]					
	6. The composition of reading groups is fluid and revised regularly based on student reading progress. [*Instruction, 6*]					
	III. (B) Instructional Programs and Materials: The instructional programs and materials used with all students target the essential elements of reading, have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with state standards, and support the full range of learners.					
	1. Instructional time is allocated to skills and practices most highly correlated with reading success: a) K-3 instructional time is dedicated to the five essential elements of reading as identified by the National Reading Panel. b) 4-12 instructional time focuses on fundamental reading skills including word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as well as motivation and text comprehension instruction needed for success across the instructional areas. [*Instruction, 10*]					
	2. Instructional materials and programs align with and support evidence-based practices as well as state standards. They provide explicit and systematic instruction on the essential elements of reading taught at each grade level. (x2) [*Instruction, 27*]					
	3. Programs and materials are implemented with a high level of fidelity throughout the school by teachers who have undergone thorough professional development on implementing the programs/materials. [*Instruction, 30*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support: Already in Place 2	School Support: Partially in Place 1	School Support: Not in Place 0	Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
	4. An integrated set of scientifically-based programs and materials is used to meet the needs of the full range of students in the building. For elementary grades, this includes (a) A core reading program (b) Supplemental materials to address short-comings in the core program (c) Intervention programs that are specifically designed for students who are significantly below desired reading goals. In middle school and high school, this includes (a) Reading textbooks (b) Subject-area texts (c) Supplemental programs to be used with students somewhat below grade level (d) Intervention programs that focus on foundational aspects of reading development with students significantly below grade level (e) Strategies to promote the access to text across the instructional areas. [*Instruction, 29*] (x2)					
	III. (C) Differentiation: Instruction optimizes learning for all students by tailoring instruction to meet current levels of knowledge and prerequisite skills as well as organizing instruction to enhance student learning.					
	1. A tiered instructional system (e.g., Advanced, Grade Level, Somewhat Below Grade Level, and Significantly Below Grade Level or Tier I, II, III) is used to group students for instruction. [*Instruction, 38*] (x2)					
	2. An Instructional Support Plan (ISP) is used at each grade level to describe the instruction that will be provided for students at different tiers. [*Instruction, 40*]					
	3. Performance levels and other assessment information are used to determine each student's instructional materials and programs, instructional time, and group size. These are adjusted according to learner performance. [*Instruction, 37*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	III. (D) Instructional Delivery: Teachers actively engage students in reading content using essential features of effective delivery.					
	1. Teacher modeling is evident in all elementary, middle, and high school classrooms across the instructional areas. Teachers provide clear and vivid examples of the knowledge and skills they want students to develop. [*Instruction, 43*]					
	2. Explicit instruction is used in all elementary, middle, and high school classrooms across the instructional areas. Teachers (a) Set a purpose for learning (b) Identify critical details that define the concept being taught (c) Use highly specific examples (d) Connect new concepts to previously-learned material. [*Instruction, 44*]					
	3. Teachers provide multiple opportunities for students to practice new skills. Group/partner responses are used when possible to provide multiple opportunities for practice. [*Instruction, 48*]					
	4. Teachers provide students with many opportunities to use language in meaningful ways. In the early grades, teachers read aloud books to students and use visual tools to scaffold and model language. In middle and high schools, teachers provide regular opportunities for students to engage in high-quality discussions of the meaning and interpretation of complex texts. [*Instruction, 44*]					
	5. Teachers actively engage students and encourage student effort. They deliver feedback to students before, during, and after task completion relative to effort and quality of response. The majority of feedback students receive is positive. [*Instruction, 48*]					
		Total = _____/44 Points _____%				

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
IV. Leadership	**IV. (A) Strong instructional leadership at the school level prioritizes attainment of reading goals for all students.**					
	1. School leadership provides clear communication to staff regarding a) Which reading goals have been met and which goals have not been met b) Data to identify possible reasons why students did not meet reading goals c) Variables the school has the ability to change in order to improve outcomes. [*Leadership, 2*]					
	IV. (B) Administrators and leadership teams are knowledgeable about and maintain a focus on high-quality instruction; they organize and allocate resources to support high-quality reading instruction.					
	1. Administrators and leadership teams at the school level are knowledgeable about state standards, priority reading skills and strategies, assessment measures and practices, and evidence-based instructional programs and materials. (2x) [*Leadership, 4*]					
	2. Administrators and leadership teams maximize instructional time and organize resources and personnel to support high-quality reading instruction needed for all students. [*Leadership, 4*]					
	3. School leadership personnel ensure that concurrent instruction (Title programs, Special Education, ELL, TAG, etc.) is coordinated with and complementary to general classroom reading instruction. [*Leadership, 2*]					
	IV. (C) Within the school, leadership functions associated with the principal, reading coach/designee, grade-level and department-level teams, and the school reading leadership team contribute to effective implementation of the School Reading Plan.					
	1. Reading leadership is distributed among different individuals and groups within the school. [*Leadership, 5*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	2. Among other responsibilities, the principal a. Utilizes formative and summative data to drive decision-making regarding staffing, resources, and professional development [*Leadership, 6*] b. Ensures time is designated for teachers to plan reading instruction and that planning time is used effectively [*Leadership, 6*] c. Observes classroom instruction on a regular basis (walk-throughs) and provides timely, specific, and student-focused feedback. [*Leadership, 7*] (x2)					
	3. The reading coach or designee performing reading coach functions a. Ensures that the major parts of the School Reading Plan are being implemented b. Works with teachers in the classroom to help them provide robust reading instruction c. Assists grade-level and department-level teams in using student data to make decisions about reading instruction. [*Leadership, 11*] (x2)					
	4. Grade-level/Department-level teams are established and meet regularly to analyze reading performance and plan instruction. [*Leadership, 12*] x2)					
	5. A school-level reading leadership team is established and meets regularly to a. Oversee the overall implementation of reading instruction across the school b. Analyze data on reading performance at the grade level and systems level c. Recommend adjustments to instruction that enable more students to reach better reading outcomes d. Help grade-level and department-level teams solve challenging problems. [*Leadership, 12*]					
		Total = _____/26 Points _____%				

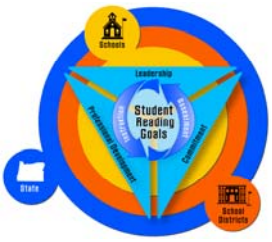
Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
V. Professional Development	**V. (A) High-quality ongoing professional development is focused on attaining school reading goals and is guided by assessment data.**					
	1. Targets for professional development activities are based on the school's reading goals and ongoing data collection. [*Professional Development, 2*]					
	2. Professional development resources (time and funding) are aligned with the school's reading goals and are sustained in focus across years. [*Professional Development, 3*]					
	3. Through professional development efforts, teachers and other instructional staff have a thorough understanding and working knowledge of grade-level instructional reading priorities and effective teaching practices. [*Professional Development, 5*]					
	4. Professional development efforts are explicitly linked to practices and programs that have been shown to be effective through documented research. [*Professional Development, 3*]					
	V. (B) Professional development plans are multifaceted, coordinated, and ongoing to support teachers on the assessment and instruction of reading priorities.					
	1. Professional development at the school level reflects the characteristics of effective professional development. Professional development is a) Focused on school goals and guided by data collected toward reaching these goals b) Ongoing and includes time for staff to plan, reflect on, and refine instruction c) Engaging and interactive d) Collaborative e) Job-embedded. [*Professional Development, 5*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support			Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Already in Place 2	Partially in Place 1	Not in Place 0		
	2. Professional development experiences are not single, decontextualized professional development events; rather, teachers receive ongoing consultation/ coaching, feedback, and support within their classrooms to adopt and sustain new teaching strategies and practices. (x2) [*Professional Development, 7*]					
	V. (C) Professional development is differentiated by position and need.					
	1. Professional development is differentiated by position and includes the principal, coach, classroom teachers and specialists, instructional assistants, new staff members, substitutes, and volunteers. [*Professional Development, 9*]					
	2. Teachers and instructional staff receive professional development on how to provide explicit reading instruction using all of the specific programs and materials the school has selected. Follow-up guidance is provided to teachers periodically to enhance implementation of the core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs. Teachers receive ongoing professional development and support to integrate subject-specific comprehension and vocabulary strategies across the instructional areas in grades 4-12. (x2) [*Professional Development, 7*]					
	3. Principals attend district and building-level professional development sessions on reading instruction, programs, and assessments. [*Professional Development, 9*]					
	4. A professional development plan and support system for instructional assistants who support reading instruction is developed. [*Professional Development, 14*]					
	5. Professional development is differentiated on an ongoing basis based upon the knowledge, skills, and performance levels of individual school staff members. [*Professional Development, 14*]					
	6. Teaching staff are provided opportunities to collaborate, study, observe others, and visit model demonstration sites as methods for improving reading instruction. [*Professional Development, 12*]					

Components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework	Strategies and Actions Recommended to Support Implementation of the School-Level Framework	School Support: Already in Place 2	School Support: Partially in Place 1	School Support: Not in Place 0	Evidence and Notes	Timeframe for Actions (if needed)
		Total = _____/28 Points			_____%	
VI. Commitment	**VI. (A) A schoolwide commitment to the structure necessary to implement instructional practices that will help all students develop the skills they need to read successfully is evident.**					
	1. The school has developed a culture of shared responsibility in which staff work together to make important decisions regarding reading instruction and supports needed for all students in the school. [*Commitment, 11*]					
	2. The school has developed an overall School Reading Plan detailing schoolwide reading goals for students and specifying what the school is going to do to help students reach these goals. [*Commitment, 2*] (x2)					
	3. The district prioritizes and commits the resources necessary to meet districtwide and schoolwide reading goals. [*Commitment, 10*]					
	4. Action plans are developed at least twice a year to make adjustments to the School Reading Plan based upon the ongoing needs of students. [*Commitment, 4*]					
	VI. (B) The school actively seeks involvement of parents and other community members in their literacy efforts.					
	1. The overall reading progress of students throughout the entire school district is communicated regularly to various stakeholders throughout the school, district, and community. [*Commitment, 7*]					
	2. The school actively seeks out the involvement of parents and other community members in their literacy efforts. (x2) [*Commitment, 12*]					
					Total = _____/16 Points	_____%

Guiding Questions for School Systems Support Planning

What are our school literacy goals, and what support systems/strategies do we have in place (or do we have available) at the school and district levels for reaching these goals?
What are our school literacy assessments (including our school results on the state assessment) currently telling us about our students' literacy outcomes? What are the successes in these data, and what can we learn from these successes? How can we extend them to other students in our school? What are the concerns in the data, and what is the level of urgency in addressing them? What do we see when we look at data by sub-groups? What do we see when we look at data across classrooms and grade levels within the school?
To what degree are teachers in our school actually implementing components of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework currently? What support do they need to implement these components more fully or more effectively? In particular, to what extent are teachers of low-performing students implementing components of the framework? What is our school and district capacity to support teachers of low-performing students to implement the components more skillfully so as to improve outcomes? What other resources do we have access to for improving literacy outcomes?
What are the systems support issues we need to address at the school and district levels to provide more effective support for improved literacy outcomes and to support teachers' abilities to improve these outcomes?
What can we learn about providing effective school-level literacy leadership from the experiences of other schools that have been effective in improving student outcomes?
What resources are available to guide school and district-level literacy leadership?



Executive Summary

School-level Implementation of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

The School-level Implementation portion of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is a roadmap for schools on how to improve reading outcomes for students grades K-12. Making sure **all** students read at grade level or higher each year—no later than grade 3—and that they continue to read at grade level or higher each year of school is critical because **reading well increases the likelihood that students will do well in school.** What that means for our students, our education system, and our state is significant beyond what we've experienced, and to that end, the framework provides structures to ensure that all students read well. Reading opens doors, levels playing fields, and enriches the human experience.

Getting all students to grade level and higher requires focus and coordination from educators at every level. **Grade K-3** teachers provide timely and critical reading foundations and interventions. Intervening early to bring students to grade-level is the most helpful to students because being a grade-level reader or higher positively impacts students' lives and their school career. Also, early intervention is timely, and as such, it is the most efficient and cost-effective. **Grade 4-5** teachers continue foundational reading instruction and also transition students to subject-specific textbooks. **Grades 6-12** teachers provide reading instruction specific to subject-area texts. While they do not teach the foundations of reading, they are the only teachers of reading specific to grade-level text. It is their efforts across the instructional areas that support students' growth in reading skills year by year during the second half of their K-12 schooling. Effective foundational reading preparation combined with effective subject-specific reading preparation is what will make it possible for **all** students to demonstrate proficiency in the **Essential Skill of Reading**, a requirement for earning an **Oregon Diploma**.

Schools are charged with helping **all students** become proficient readers, and the following six chapters are designed to help **all schools—**elementary, middle and high**—**become proficient deliverers of reading instruction. The School-level Implementation portion of the framework is divided into six chapters representing **six components** that need to be strategically integrated in order to improve the reading achievement of **all** students*:* 1) **Goals, 2) Assessment, 3) Instruction, 4) Leadership, 5) Professional Development, and 6) Commitment.**

While schools are on the front lines in this critically important endeavor, only a well-coordinated system involving state, district, and school-level entities will be able to harness and apply the resources necessary to provide all students with the instruction and support they need to develop strong reading and academic skills. That is why the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework addresses the six strategic components across all **three levels – state, district, and school**. State and district roles are described in

the framework documents entitled "State Support for the Essential Skill of Reading" and "District Support for the Essential Skill of Reading."

The document entitled **"School Support for the Essential Skill of Reading"** functions as a school review or school self-audit. It also provides **electronic links directly to the explanatory narrative and resources within the six chapters.**

What follows are chapter summaries of the six components for school-level implementation.

GOALS

First, schools must establish strong **summative reading goals** that all students meet. The most important reading goal is reading at grade level or higher each year. Students who read at grade level or higher are proficient readers and proficient readers are far more likely to learn content across the instructional areas than students who are not proficient readers. Student performance on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature is used to determine whether students have met the summative goal and are able to read proficiently at grade level or higher in **grades 3 through high school**. Progress monitoring/formative reading measures in grades K-3 indicate whether students are on track to read at grade level in grade 3, and they may also be used as summative or outcome measures for specific elements of reading in **grades K-2. Formative reading goals** determine if students are developing reading skills in the essential elements of reading such as phonics and reading fluency, and they help determine if students are on track for grade-level reading.

ASSESSMENT

Second, schools must administer **valid and reliable reading assessments** to determine if students are reading proficiently for their grade level and are meeting formative goals. Screening assessments determine if students are at risk for reading difficulties. For those at-risk, schools need to administer systematic progress-monitoring assessments to make sure students are developing the reading skills they need to read at grade level. In this respect, the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework is entirely consistent with a Response to Intervention (RTI) model of service delivery. A strong assessment system also helps schools determine whether reading problems are unique challenges individual students face or whether they are symptomatic of larger challenges relating to the school's ability to provide effective reading instruction at an overall system level.

INSTRUCTION

Third, schools must provide **effective reading instruction throughout K-12**. In grades K-3, effective reading instruction ensures that students develop the foundational reading skills they need to read and learn successfully in school and beyond. In grades 4-12, effective reading instruction ensures that students maintain strong foundational reading skills and are able to apply those skills in reading increasingly complex material across the instructional areas. Schools must have four components in place to ensure effective reading is provided to all students.

- Schools allocate **sufficient time** for reading instruction and make sure that **time is protected**. In grades K-3, all students receive at least 90 minutes of daily reading instruction. Schools strive to

continue a 90-minute reading block in grades 4-5. In grades 6-8, it is recommended that 40-60 minutes per day be designated specifically to a reading class for all students (as data dictates) in addition to the literacy-connected instruction and practice students receive across the instructional areas daily. In grades 9-12, the recommendation is for two to four hours of literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas daily. Schools use both whole-class and small-group instruction to effectively provide students with reading instruction that meets their specific needs. In all grades, additional instructional time outside of the regular reading block is allocated for students who are not meeting important reading goals.

- **Data** is used to form fluid instructional groupings.
- Instruction is focused on **the essential elements of reading**. For students in grades K-3, the essential elements include phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. For students in grades 4-12, the essential elements include advanced word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation.
- Schools use **research-based strategies, programs, and materials** that target the essential elements of reading.
- Schools **differentiate instruction** based on what supports students need to reach reading goals. How instruction is differentiated for students should be clear and documented through grade-level plans.
- Schools use a common set of strategies and instructional approaches to **deliver instruction effectively**. When effective teacher delivery converges with strong programs that focus on the essential elements, schools increase the probability that students will reach grade-level or higher reading goals.

LEADERSHIP

Fourth, **effective building leadership** must prioritize student attainment of grade-level reading goals by vigorously supporting teachers to provide classroom instruction that meets student needs. Leadership needs to be **distributed** among different individuals and groups within the school and conceptualized as leadership functions, not linked to specific key individuals. Effective leadership ensures there is sufficient **time for planning instruction** and that this **time is used productively**. Effective leadership **regularly observes classroom reading instruction** to understand how instruction is being delivered and uses this information to support teachers so they provide effective instruction to all students. If possible, the opportunity for classroom teachers and school-based teams to work with a coach on reading instruction is highly effective.

Finally, school-based **leadership teams should oversee the day-to-day implementation of reading instruction and subject-specific reading instruction**. School-based leadership teams occur at two levels. One team includes membership that cuts across multiple grades and/or departments. A second team is specific to grade levels and/or departments (e.g., grade-level teams or department-level teams). Both teams focus on the attainment of reading goals and objectives.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fifth, **high quality professional development** enables teachers to provide the instruction students need to be successful readers. Professional development also enables leaders and other personnel to provide the support teachers need to improve reading instruction.

Six principles of high-quality professional development:

- Guided by assessment data to attain school reading goals
- Focused on the implementation of research-based practices and programs
- 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 effectively, reading priorities and practices.

COMMITMENT

Sixth, making sure **all** students read at grade level or higher each year and that all students can demonstrate proficiency in the **Essential Skill of Reading**—a requirement for earning an **Oregon Diploma**—requires a high level of **commitment** and coordination from educators at every level. Elementary, middle, and high schools need to ensure they have the structures and systems in place to support **all** students in becoming proficient readers. This effort requires ongoing commitment.

Oregon's K-12 Literacy Framework describes the structure necessary to implement a comprehensive reading program. A comprehensive reading program includes instructional practices designed to help all students develop the skills they need to read at grade level or higher each year in school. The **School Reading Plan** summarizes the school's commitment to proficient, grade-level reading for all students, and describes how each of the six components of the framework will be implemented in the building. Making this commitment publicly through a School Reading Plan or through a dedicated section of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), part of the district's Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP), increases the likelihood that the commitment will be met, maintained, and carried forward.

The data a school collects during the year to make ongoing adjustments to the reading program are described in a **School Action Plan**. A clear demonstration of commitment is for the school to provide **regular reports** throughout the year to teachers and to stakeholders, including parents, the school board, the district office, and community members, on progress in reading achievement and reading instruction.

Goals

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

Measurable reading goals anchor a school's comprehensive reading plan and the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools						
Districts						
State						

Setting and Meeting Measurable Reading Goals:

- A critical school responsibility is helping K-12 students meet grade-level or above reading goals each academic year.
- Research-based formative reading goals are set in grades K-3 to track students' progress on the essential elements of reading and to help them become grade-level readers as soon as possible after they enter school.
- Research-based formative reading goals are set in grades 4 through high school to track students' progress as grade-level readers each academic year.
- The most important reading goal in grades 3 through high school is for students to read texts and materials at grade level or higher each year. This summative goal is measured by student performance on the OAKS in Reading/Literature.
- Meeting or exceeding grade-level formative and summative reading goals means that students have the knowledge and skills they need to read a variety of academic materials with understanding, are able to use reading as a tool to deepen their knowledge of challenging academic content across a variety of instructional areas, and

may read for a variety of purposes throughout their lives, including reading for enjoyment and enhancement.

- Not meeting grade-level formative and summative reading goals means that students need instruction and interventions designed to improve their opportunities to meet them for the reasons listed above.

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

Teaching all students grade-level reading skills **early in school,** and maintaining and advancing all students' reading skills across the instructional areas **later in school,** will result in all students being grade-level readers or above. With strong reading support each year, students will be successful throughout school, proficient in the **Essential Skill of Reading**, and eligible to earn an **Oregon Diploma** at the end of high school. Setting goals is the first step.

Reading Goals Anchor Reading Instruction

The major purpose of reading instruction is to ensure that ALL students read at grade level or higher each academic year, no later than in grade 3, and that they progress at grade level or higher in reading across the instructional areas throughout their school career. Helping students learn to read at grade level as early as possible after entering school—and to maintain grade-level reading throughout their public school experience—is a critically important education objective that impacts their success in school and beyond. Students who read at grade level early in school substantially improve their opportunities for long-term success both inside and outside of formal school settings.[1] **From the time students enter kindergarten, the work schools do instructionally is the single greatest factor determining whether students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to read proficiently—that is, to read at grade level or higher.[2]**

Learning to read at grade level as soon as possible after entering school is optimal. When students are reading at grade level or higher in **grade 3**, they have the foundational reading skills firmly in place to begin learning challenging content the next year in **grade 4**. With strong reading instructional support each year, students are likely to continue to learn challenging content through **grade 12**. Students who enter grade 4 as grade-level readers are far more likely to have the foundation needed to read a variety of texts and other material their teachers expect them to read with deep understanding than if they enter grade 4 without having met or exceeded the grade-level standards at grade 3. Grade-level readers in grade 4 are more likely to be grade-level readers in grade 5 and so on.

When students read at grade level or higher in grade 3, they will have the reading skills necessary to learn challenging academic content in grades 4.

In grades 4-12, the most important measurable goal associated with continued reading growth and development is for students to learn

[1] Finn, Gerber, & Boyd-Zaharias, 2005
[2] Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998

reading strategies for understanding texts and other materials at increasing levels of difficulty across the instructional areas. In the past, instruction in grades 4-12 has varied considerably as to the degree to which teachers have explicitly taught students the reading strategies and skills necessary to understand content across the instructional areas. Instead, the role of the teacher was primarily to synthesize essential information contained in textbooks and other written documents. Relatively little attention was paid to explicitly teaching students how texts are structured, how written language is used in different disciplines, and what strategies students should use to unlock the meaning of complex and nuanced subject-specific material.

However, major changes are occurring in education practice. Grades 6 through high school teachers are increasingly expected to explicitly teach students the reading strategies and skills they need to read textbooks and other documents used across the instructional areas.[3] More and more teachers are aware of this expectation that they support students in reading course textbooks and materials at increasingly higher levels each year of school, and they are addressing reading in their classrooms. This expectation will increase in the coming decades. The central expectation will be that teachers instruct students in the specific reading strategies necessary for understanding science texts and social sciences texts, major works of literature, and mathematics texts and problems.[4] In addition, as information on the internet continues to expand, teachers will need to increasingly work with students on how to access, understand, and analyze information read online.

> The whole world opened to me when I learned to read.
>
> (Mary McLeod Bethune)

For students who are reading below grade level in grade 3, the challenges immediately ahead are significant. For students who are reading below grade level beyond grade 3, the challenges can be daunting. **In grades 4-12, students reading below grade level not only must learn foundational reading skills, but they must also learn advanced reading strategies necessary for understanding specific textbooks and materials.** The degree of explicit instruction targeting the development of foundational reading skills needs to be directly related to how far these students are below grade level. Not only must instructional resources be devoted to helping these students develop the skills necessary to read at grade level or higher, but until they develop grade-level reading skills, teachers must adjust instruction to meet the needs of students who struggle with comprehending subject-specific texts and materials.

Reading goals in grades 4-12, therefore, mean something different from reading goals in grades K-3. **In grades K-3** the focus of reading instruction is on teaching students how to read; instruction targets this foundational goal. In **grades 4-12**, the focus is on making sure students have the reading skills and knowledge necessary to use reading as a tool to learn and understand content across the instructional areas; that is, students must be able to use reading to learn critical academic content. In grades 4-12, a fundamental school objective is to make sure students are on track to graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education, meaningful employment, and life-long learning. For students to graduate with these options available to them they need both foundational reading skills and the ability to read proficiently across the instructional areas. **Strong reading skills are indispensable for high school graduation and beyond; they play a central role in making sure students can meet the Oregon Diploma requirements.**

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[3] Kamil et al., 2008
[4] Torgesen et al., 2007

Content Knowledge and the Oregon Diploma

The Oregon Diploma increases requirements for students to graduate from high school, and strong reading skills help students meet these increased requirements. Students need to demonstrate proficiency in the **Essential Skill of Reading** to earn a diploma; proficiency can be demonstrated through meeting or exceeding on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature or through alternative assessments described at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=2042. Proficiency in the Essential Skill of Reading serves students well as they take the following standards-based courses required to graduate: four years of English Language Arts, three years of mathematics (Algebra I and above), three years of science, and three years of social sciences. **The link between strong reading skills and subject-area knowledge and growth is significant.**

Connecting to the Oregon Diploma: Essential Skills Definitions

The new Oregon Diploma requires that schools focus on the development of essential skills. These skills are essential for success in college, the workplace, and civic life and reading proficiency provides the foundation without which these essential skills are not possible to attain. Essential Skills enable students to learn and process important content. They cut across academic disciplines and are embedded in the content standards.

THE OREGON DIPLOMA
Moving Education Forward

Oregon's Nine Essential Skills are:

1. Read and comprehend a variety of text at different levels of difficulty.
2. Write clearly and accurately.
3. Listen actively and speak clearly and coherently.
4. Apply mathematics in a variety of settings.
5. Think critically and analytically across disciplines.
6. Use technology to learn, live, and work.
7. Demonstrate civic and community engagement.
8. Demonstrate global literacy.
9. Demonstrate personal management and teamwork skills.

Setting Reading Goals

In the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework, **two types of measurable goals** determine whether students are reading at grade level or are on track to read at grade level by the end of the year. First, the **summative reading goal** is an overarching, comprehensive goal that represents desired reading performance at key points in time. The "key point in time" acts as an important summative evaluation, and this typically occurs at the end of each academic year. Thus, reading at grade level represents a summative or overarching reading goal. **Reading at grade level or higher is the most important, measurable reading goal in K-12.**

Key Terms

Summative Reading Goal: An overarching, comprehensive goal that represents desired performance at key points in time.

Formative Reading Goals: Formative goals are used to determine whether students are on track for meeting the comprehensive goal of reading at grade level.

Second, **formative reading goals** are measurable goals that are used to determine **whether students are on track to be able to read at grade level or better** by demonstrating proficiency in the essential elements of reading, or important sub-skills of overall reading proficiency. Summative and formative reading goals are the complementary anchors of the School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2) and the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework. School teams use these goals to determine whether students are prepared to meet academic challenges successfully. In the following sections, summative and formative reading goals are explained in detail. Examples from state standards and Oregon schools are provided.

Characteristics of K-12 Reading Goals

Both summative and formative reading goals contain the following key characteristics:

- **First, reading goals must represent important priorities that the entire school staff** (teachers, administrators, and classified staff) **know, understand, and are committed to accomplishing**. In Oregon, this means linking reading goals to the Kindergarten through High School Reading Standards.[i] In **grades K-3**, reading goals target learning to read and consequently should measure how well students are learning phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. In **grades 4-6**, goals should target the continued development of these foundational reading skills, as well as the application of reading skills in different subjects, such as science, literature, mathematics, and social sciences.[ii iii iv]
- **Second, reading goals must be measurable.** What students need to do to reach or exceed a reading goal should be defined and known by teachers, administrators, and parents. Goal information should also include specifying **when** a goal should be attained.
- **Third, reading goals must guide reading instruction.** When students are not meeting formative or summative reading goals, it is critical that schools implement the necessary reading instruction and interventions to improve the opportunity students have to reach the goal.

Summative Reading Goals

The most important reading goal for every Oregon school should be to ensure that **ALL** students read at grade level or higher each academic year, no later than in grade 3, and that they progress at grade level or higher in reading across the instructional areas throughout their school career. Because the foundation for reading development occurs in grades K-3 and the OAKS in Reading/Literature is not administered prior to grade 3, progress monitoring/formative measures of reading in grades K-2 take on special significance. These measures in grades **K-2** indicate whether students are on track to read at grade level or higher in grade 3, and they may also be used as summative or outcome measures for specific essential elements of reading in grades K-2. In **grade 3**, this summative goal is measured directly by the OAKS in Reading/Literature.[v]

The summative reading goal in **grades 4-12** is for **ALL** students to be proficient readers of grade-level content. Proficient reading in grades 4-12 is defined as (a) efficient application of foundational grade-level reading skills and (b) application of grade-level strategies and skills necessary to read proficiently across the instructional areas. Student performance on the OAKS in Reading/Literature is used to determine whether students have met the summative goal and are able to read proficiently at grade level. Proficient grade-level reading means students are expected to have the reading skills necessary to succeed across the instructional areas, enabling them to graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary learning opportunities, meaningful employment, and life-long learning. Students take the OAKS in Reading/Literature each year in grades 3-8, and again in high school at grade 10. If students meet or exceed the state standard in reading and literature in grade 10, the chances are clearly in their favor that in grades 11 and 12 they will continue to develop reading skills across the instructional areas, thus ensuring they are prepared for high school graduation and beyond.

Grades 3-8 and high school student performance on the OAKS in Reading/Literature is summarized in one of five ways. For example, when students in grade 3 reach the highest level of reading proficiency, they **exceed** the state standard for reading. At the next highest level, students **meet** the standard for expectations in reading. When students read at either of these two levels they have met the state standards for reading at grade 3 and thus are determined to be reading at grade 3 or higher. Students who do not meet state expectations for reading are described as **nearly meeting, low,** or **very low**. Students reading in any of the bottom three levels are not yet meeting the reading standard at grade 3.[vi]

The following table shows the cutoff scores for the different achievement levels in Reading/Literature as adopted by the Oregon State Board of Education, Spring 2007.

2006-2007 Oregon Assessments Achievement Levels and Cut Scores					
Grade	Scale Score Ranges for Each Performance Level				
	Exceed the Standard	Meet the Standard	Nearly Meet the Standard	Low	Very Low
Reading/Literature					
Grade 3	218 & Above	204-217	199-203	189-198	Below 189
Grade 4	223 & Above	211-222	205-210	198-204	Below 198
Grade 5	230 & Above	218-229	209-217	202-208	Below 202

Grade 6	234 & Above	222-233	214-221	207-213	Below 207
Grade 7	239 & Above	227-238	219-226	211-218	Below 211
Grade 8	241 & Above	231-240	224-230	213-223	Below 213
Grade 10	248 & Above	236-247	231-235	217-230	Below 217

The table above shows the level of performance students need to be reading at grade level and to be able to read texts and other materials expected by their teachers. For example, a student who earns a score of 204 on the Grade 3 OAKS in Reading/Literature has met the state standard for reading and would be described as reading at grade level. However, this student is obviously at the very lowest end of the minimum expected for grade-level reading, and a student with a score of 217 in grade 3 (at the highest end of meeting the standard) would likely have an easier time meeting reading expectations in grade 4. Both students, though, should be able to meet the reading demands in grade 3 without extensive additional support, and if they make reasonable progress in grades 3-4, they should develop the reading skills necessary to meet the reading standard in grade 5. In other words, having grade-level reading skills means that a student should be able to meet the reading expectations in the classroom, continue to develop the reading skills necessary to meet reading expectations in subsequent grades, and meet or exceed the state grade-level reading standards assessed by the OAKS.

Using the **Longitudinal Student Growth Model**[vii] on the Oregon Department of Education website http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495 (bottom of web page) districts and schools are able to **estimate what the actual probabilities are that a student reading at a particular level of performance on the OAKS in one grade will "meet" on the assessment in a subsequent grade.** For example, the **probability curves** show what the chances are that a student with a certain OAKS reading score in grade 3 will meet the reading standard in grade 5. This model gives districts and schools information for setting specific goals and supporting students to reach grade-level reading goals. This predictive model is useful throughout grades 3 through high school, the timeframe for the OAKS reading administration.

In the high school grades, for example, over time this information will enable districts and schools to analyze and determine what the OAKS reading scores in grade 10 strongly predict regarding high school graduation and postsecondary education success. If that information is known, it will be possible to work in reverse and ask specific questions related to what performance is needed in grade 8, for example, to reach the grade 10 achievement score. From there, it can be asked what achievement score is needed in grade 5 to reach the grade-level goal at grade 8 or the grade-level goal at grade 10. In other words, **the probability curve charts will enable districts and schools to use much more precise estimates of reading performance to know what the likely impact will be in subsequent years**—and eventually how reading performance in high school is related to high school graduation and opportunities for students after high school.

Students with Disabilities

The framework makes references to **ALL** students. By **ALL** students, the intention is to include students with and without disabilities. For all students without disabilities, a public school experience that ends with a high school diploma should result in a successful transition to advanced learning, work, and citizenship. The majority of students with disabilities should have the same opportunities for postsecondary experiences as students without disabilities. For some students, particularly those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, graduating from high school with a standard diploma may or may not be a reasonable goal, depending on the nature of the disability. For these students, who may represent approximately 1% of the student population,[5] reading instruction and reading goals should have the same level of importance they do for students who are expected to meet grade-level reading goals consistent with their age. However, goals set for these students should be determined at the **individual student level**. In these cases, the student's individualized education plan (IEP) should include specific information about the reading instruction the student will receive, the reading goals the student will meet, and what the school will do to make sure the student receives the instruction necessary to meet important and challenging reading outcomes. The important point is that for these students, as well as for students who are expected to read at a grade level commensurate with their age, public school has a responsibility to support **ALL** students to develop reading skills that will help them in school and throughout their lives.

Other OAKS Assessments

Students also take the OAKS assessments in mathematics, science, and social sciences. The OAKS in Science is administered in grades 5, 8, and once in high school. The OAKS in Social Sciences is optional at grades 5, 8, and in high school. On state assessments in science, social sciences, and mathematics, the goal for all students is to meet or exceed the achievement standards. Two factors are important in thinking about the value of strong reading skills (reading at grade level or higher) in performing well on content-area assessments. **First**, **strong reading skills enable students to read and understand textbooks and other documents assigned in their classes.** Reading and understanding this material helps students acquire content knowledge, and this knowledge helps them meet or exceed achievement standards on the OAKS content-area assessments. **Second**, **strong reading skills help students take the OAKS content-area assessments.**

However, it is important to note that students can take math, science, and social sciences assessments with test accommodations that are designed to allow them to demonstrate their content knowledge without altering the content that is being assessed. Test accommodations can include a variety of supports; for example, reading items to students on mathematics' tests. With appropriate accommodations, even if students do not have the necessary reading skills to decode what the

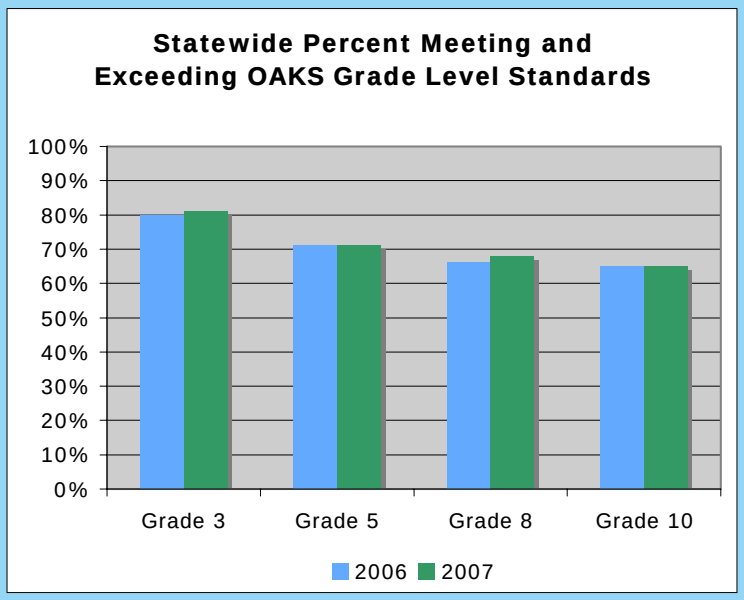
[5] IDEA, 2007

assessment questions are asking, test administration procedures can be adjusted in specific ways to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and earn a valid test score for state reporting and other purposes.[viii] http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=487

The Summative and Most Important Reading Goal

Students will read at or above grade level.

The graph below shows the percentage of grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 students meeting or exceeding grade-level standards in 2006 and 2007 on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature (using the most recently updated cut scores). The OAKS uses the terms *meeting* and *exceeding* grade-level standards to describe how well students read. For example, on the 2006 OAKS, 80% of grade 3 students read at a level that met or exceeded the state standard, meaning that 20% read below that level. In 2007, 81% of grade 3 students read at a level that met or exceeded the standard, and 19% read below that level.



Formative Reading Goals

Formative goals help determine whether students are on track to read at grade level or higher. Formative goals measure proficiency in the essential elements of reading and are important for two fundamental reasons.

- First, when students reach or exceed a formative goal, they have met an important reading objective that represents a **key "benchmark"** or indicator of grade-level reading.[6] For example, students who reach a phonemic awareness goal set at the end of kindergarten, or a phonics goal set at the middle of grade 1, have met an important reading objective on the path to overall grade-level reading proficiency.

[6] National Reading Panel, 2000

- Second, formative reading goals indicate whether students are **on track** to read at grade level or higher.[7] If students reach or exceed formative reading goals, their chances of reading at grade level or higher are much better than if they do not reach these formative goals. **If students do not reach formative reading goals, they are not likely to read at grade level or higher without intense interventions.**[8]

Formative goals can be established for individual essential elements of reading. Schools should set measurable formative goals for at least three of the five essential elements of reading: **phonemic awareness, phonics,** and **reading fluency**. Formative goals are set for these essential elements because performance can be measured directly, accurately, and efficiently, and levels of performance can be established that set the formative goal benchmarks.[9] Optional formative goals in reading comprehension and vocabulary can also be established by districts and schools. However, the knowledge base for establishing formative goals in reading comprehension and vocabulary—in part, because of the higher-order nature of these essential elements—is not as well established as the knowledge base for establishing formative goals on other essential elements.

- In **kindergarten**, formative goals should be set in **phonemic awareness** and **phonics**.
- In **grade 1**, formative goals should be set in **phonics** and **fluency**.
- In **grades 2-8**, and perhaps in grade 9, formative reading goals should be set in **fluency**.
- In **grades 2 through high school**, establishing **comprehension** goals for some students on maze and cloze reading comprehension assessments is important (see next section for a description of these measures).

On the essential elements of reading that can be efficiently measured, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, and reading fluency, multiple goals within a school year and goals that cut across years, should be set. The advantage of **setting multiple time-specific goals** is that more opportunities are provided for schools to gauge how well students are doing in relation to formative goals, and consequently schools have **more opportunities to adjust their instruction** to better meet the learning needs of their students during the year. For example, fluency goals could be established for the beginning, middle, and end of grade 2.[ix] Phonemic awareness goals could be set for the middle and end of kindergarten and the beginning of grade 1. In general, formative goals set at the end of each grade are particularly important because they permit schools to determine at key and consistent points in time if students are on track for successful reading.[10]

The following are examples of formative goals and how they might be worded to be clear, measurable benchmarks for performance[x]:

- **Phonemic awareness**: At the winter benchmark assessment, **kindergarten** students will be able to orally produce the individual segments presented in words at a rate of 18 correct segments per minute.

[7] Good, Simmons, & Kame'enui 2001; Baker et al., 2008
[8] Torgesen, 2002; 2003
[9] Fuchs & Deno, 1991; Good, et al., 2001; Good, Baker, & Payton, 2009.
[10] Fuchs, Fuchs, & Deno, 1985

- **Phonics**: At the spring benchmark assessment, **kindergarten** students will be able to read randomly presented CVC pseudo-words at a rate of 25 correctly-produced phonemic segments per minute.
- **Reading fluency**: In the fall of **grade 2**, students will be able to orally read grade-level text at a rate of 44 correctly-read words per minute.
- **Reading fluency**: At the spring screening assessment, **grade 6** students will be able to orally read grade-level text at the rate of 160 correctly-read words per minute.
- **Reading fluency**: In the spring of **grade 9**, students will be able to orally read grade-level text at the rate of 190 correctly-read words per minute.

Schools can use district and national norms to identify fluency targets for grades 6 and up. One resource is the Oral Reading Fluency Normative Data presented in the following table.[11] xi

Oral Reading Fluency Normative Data
Adapted from Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006)

Grade	Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
1	75		47	82	2.2
	50		23	53	1.9
	25		12	28	1.0
2	75	79	100	117	1.2
	50	51	72	89	1.2
	25	25	42	61	1.1
3	75	99	120	137	1.2
	50	71	92	107	1.1
	25	44	62	78	1.1
4	75	119	139	152	1.0
	50	94	112	123	0.9
	25	68	87	98	0.9
5	75	139	156	168	0.9
	50	110	127	139	0.9
	25	85	99	109	0.8
6	75	153	167	177	0.8
	50	127	140	150	0.7
	25	98	111	122	0.8
7	75	156	165	177	0.7
	50	128	136	150	0.7
	25	102	109	123	0.7
8	75	161	173	177	0.5
	50	133	146	151	0.6
	25	106	115	124	0.6

*WCPM = Words Correct Per Minute **Average words per week growth

[11] Table adapted from (Hasbrouck, & Tindal 2005). The information in the table is based on a study of oral reading fluency conducted by Hasbrouck and Tindal in 2005. The table lists oral reading fluency rates of students in grades 1 through 8 by the 75th, 50th, and 25th percentiles for fall, winter, and spring. Average weekly improvement, listed by percentile, is the average words per week growth a teacher can expect from a student. It is calculated by dividing the difference between the fall and spring scores by 32, the typical number of weeks between fall and spring assessment.

Formative Measures of Vocabulary and Comprehension

Efficient formative measures of vocabulary and reading comprehension are more challenging to establish than formative measures of fluency, phonics, and phonological awareness. Although it is more difficult to establish formative measures of vocabulary and reading comprehension, these two essential elements are critical areas of reading, and they become increasingly important as students move up grade levels. It is essential that schools provide explicit instruction in vocabulary and comprehension throughout grades K-12.

Given these challenges, schools will have to use other ways to determine whether vocabulary and comprehension instruction is effective and whether students are making satisfactory progress in these areas. For example, there is an emerging knowledge base on possible formative measures that can be used to measure vocabulary and reading comprehension essential elements more directly. **Maze** and **cloze** assessment procedures provide a direct index of vocabulary and comprehension; students are presented reading passages with a percentage of words removed and they have to supply the word (cloze) or choose the correct word from three or four options (maze). From these types of measures, formative goals might be established to track how well students are developing vocabulary and comprehension skills over time.

Another partial solution to measuring vocabulary and comprehension more efficiently is to use summative measures of overall reading proficiency to determine whether students are likely to be developing adequate vocabulary and comprehension skills and knowledge. These measures require students to use their vocabulary and comprehension knowledge throughout the assessment. For example, performance on the OAKS in Reading/Literature allows schools to gauge how well students are doing relative to the Oregon Reading Standards with respect to both reading comprehension skills and vocabulary knowledge. Also, on some comprehensive or summative measures of overall reading proficiency, individual subtest scores on vocabulary and comprehension are available. Performance on these subtests can be examined to get a direct estimate of vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension skills.

Summary

In summary, the most important reading goal in Oregon's K-12 Literacy Framework is the **summative goal**—**ALL students** read at grade level or higher each academic year, no later than in grade 3, and that they progress at grade level or higher in reading across the instructional areas throughout their school career. **Students able to read at grade level or higher are likely to accomplish key learning objectives in grades K-12.** They are more likely to learn successfully in their classes, and they are more likely to perform well on state assessments that test how well students understand the content of the state standards. **Formative goals** provide valuable information about whether students are on track to meet the summative goal. **When students have not met a formative reading goal, it is critical that schools use that information to improve reading instruction.** The guideline for improving reading instruction is to increase the intensity of instruction in systematic, research-based ways so that students have more and better opportunities to meet or exceed formative reading goals during each school year and summative goals at the end of each school year in grades 3-8 and grade 10. In the chapters that follow, a comprehensive assessment system for measuring student progress toward meeting reading goals and recommendations for providing high-quality reading instruction are described.

Links to Resources

[i] A Searchable Standards tool that allows users to easily locate the content standards they wish to view is at http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/standards/.

[ii] See http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html for 180-day Curriculum Maps to plan instruction based on reading goals. The maps provide teachers with information on how to prioritize and dedicate instruction to the essential elements of reading. The maps are organized by the essential elements of reading for each grade level and provide specific goals and outcomes for each grade level, K-3 (i.e., what to teach and when).

[iii] See Resources for Educational Achievement and Leadership (REAL) at http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/tlr/default.aspx for sample lessons, assessment items, content background information and other materials designed to promote standards-based teaching and learning.

[iv] Portland State University's Center for Student Success has published two guides to help educators understand and succeed with the changes to the Oregon standards that took effect in the 2005-2006 school year. The guides, which include the revised state reading standards, sample assessment questions, and ideas for classroom applications, can be ordered from http://www.cep.pdx.edu/titles/standards_guide/index.shtml.

[v]See the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) website at http://www.oaks.k12.or.us/ for online information about the assessment across grades and subtests.

[vi] See the Oregon Department of Education's Statewide Report Card website at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1821 to review Annual Statewide Report Cards.

[vii] The Longitudinal Student Growth model is available on the ODE website at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2495.

[viii] Information on the percent of students meeting state standards in content areas can be found at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1821.

[ix] For examples of formative goals for K-6, see the DIBELS Data System website (https://dibels.uoregon.edu/benchmark.php).

[x] For real-life examples of formative goals, see the literacy plan for Alameda Elementary at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_sustainability.html.

[xi] For the full technical report on Oral Reading Fluency Normative Data, see "Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Measurement (Tech. Rep. No. 33)" at http://www.brtprojects.org/tech_reports.php.

Assessment

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

A reliable and valid assessment system in reading for K-12 is linked explicitly to reading goals.

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools		★				
Districts						
State						

Characteristics of a Reading Assessment System:

- An assessment system relies on measures of reading that are reliable and valid for the purpose they are being used.
- Reading assessments and measures are linked explicitly to reading goals.
- An assessment system is used for four purposes: (a) to screen students for reading problems, (b) to systematically monitor progress over time, (c) to determine students' level of reading proficiency and whether they have met grade-level reading goals, and (d) to determine or diagnose potential sources of reading difficulty for students not making adequate progress despite the use of intense intervention.
- Data from reading assessments are used to make instructional decisions about groups of students and individual students.

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

Assessment in education is commonly defined as "the process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions…."[1] This definition highlights a key principle of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework. **Data are collected for the purpose of making specific educational decisions**. Two initial comments are important about assessments in the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework. First, the term "assessment" is used narrowly in the framework to refer to student reading assessments. Other assessments are critical in education, including assessments of student behavior, assessments of instructional materials, assessments of classroom instruction, and assessments of professional development quality. The focus in this chapter is on the assessment of student reading proficiency.

Second, the term "student reading assessments" is used narrowly in the framework to refer to assessments conducted in a **systematic and standardized** manner, a point that warrants clarification. Teachers make hundreds of decisions each day in response to student behavior. Many of these decisions occur within the flow of dynamic instructional interactions between teachers and students. When teachers pose academic questions, listen to responses, and pose new questions on the basis of those responses, they are engaging in an assessment process. They hear how students respond, conduct quick, real-time assessments of those responses, and make a decision about what to do next instructionally. These interactions include important student assessments, but in contrast to systematic, standardized assessments, these assessments can be described as unsystematic and informal in nature. This does not mean informal assessments are not important or lack purpose. In fact, they are extremely important and have great purpose. It does not mean they are haphazard. Teachers may have highly specific strategies for how they engage in these interactions. However, the assessment procedures that are part of these interactions are very different from the types of systematic and standardized assessment procedures that are the focus here. **The reading assessments referred to in this chapter and throughout the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework are standardized and validated assessments necessary for determining students' instructional needs.**

Alignment of K-12 Reading Goals and Assessment

A comprehensive assessment system is foundational to a successful K-12 school-wide reading system.[2] An assessment system for K-12 should be explicitly linked to **summative goals**—overall grade-level reading proficiency—as well as to **formative reading goals** related to phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary (see Goals chapter, 9-11). Student assessments should be administered from the time students enter kindergarten through their high school years. In Oregon, standardized state assessments of reading begin in grade 3 with the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature. This assessment is a major component of a comprehensive assessment system in grades 3 through high school. However, **schools also need a comprehensive assessment system before grade 3.**[3]

[1] Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001

[2] Consortium of Reading Excellence, 2008; Kamil et al., 2008; No Child Left Behind, 2002; National Reading Panel Report, 2000; NASDSE, 2006; Torgesen & Miller, 2009

[3] Gersten et al., 2009

Reading Assessments in K-2

The recommendation to administer reading assessments in **grades K-2** is based on research on the **prevention and early remediation of reading problems**. Reading problems can be prevented, and early problems remediated, through early identification. Early identification through assessment allows interventions to be implemented effectively as soon as possible. The following table summarizes three empirical findings that support the use of grade K-2 reading assessments.

Three Research-Based Reasons to Use Grade K-2 Reading Assessments
1. Patterns of reading development are established early and are stable over time unless interventions are implemented to increase student progress.[4]
2. Without intense interventions, struggling readers do not eventually "catch up" to their average performing peers—in fact, the gap between strong and weak readers increases over time.[5]
3. Reading interventions that begin in grade 3 and extend beyond are likely to be **less successful and less cost-effective** than interventions that begin in the earlier grades. The later interventions begin, the longer they take to work, the longer they need to be implemented each day, and the less likely they are to produce desired effects.[6]

Purposes of Assessment and the School Assessment Plan

Reading assessments should be administered for four specific purposes. These purposes answer four fundamental questions.

The later interventions begin, the longer they take to work, the longer they need to be implemented each day, and the less likely they are to produce desired effects.

1. **Is the student at risk for not meeting formative and summative grade-level reading goals?** Assessments **screen** students for reading problems, and the data help determine the level of reading risk students face.
2. **Is the student on track—that is, is the student meeting formative reading goals and thereby making enough progress to be able to meet summative reading goals?** Frequent reading assessments **monitor the progress** students are making incrementally in meeting formative reading goals that increase the likelihood they will meet overall summative reading goals.
3. **Is the student meeting grade-level summative reading goals? Summative or outcome assessments** determine whether or not students have met grade-level reading goals. The OAKS in Reading/Literature is a summative assessment for grades 3 through high school.

[4] Torgesen, 2000, 2001; Juel, 1988; Shaywitz, Escobar, Shaywitz, Fletcher, & Makuch, 1992; Good, et al., 2001
[5] Torgesen, 2000, 2001
[6] Torgesen, 2000, 2001; Stanovich, 1986; Adams, 1991; National Research Council, 1998; Good, Simmons & Kame'enui, 2001

4. **For students not making adequate reading progress toward meeting grade-level reading goals, despite intense intervention, what additional intervention approaches have the best chance of improving the rate of reading progress? Diagnostic assessments** provide detailed information about students' reading skills for the purpose of developing and implementing individualized interventions for students.

Assessments are needed to answer each of these four questions, and the information is used to make specific educational decisions.[7] Sometimes, an assessment measure a school uses for one purpose can also be used for additional purposes. In particular, the same assessment measure, administered at different points in time, can frequently be used to screen students for reading problems, monitor reading progress over time, and determine whether students have met important reading outcomes. In the following sections, we provide further information on each of the four assessment purposes.

Screening Assessments

The purpose of a screening assessment in reading is to identify those students at risk for reading difficulties and those students on track for successful reading outcomes. Screening data are used to make decisions about the level of instructional support students need. Students at high risk—that is, students well below grade-level reading expectations—should receive more instructional support than students who are on track for meeting grade-level reading expectations.

Being at risk for reading problems is influenced by a number of factors including the quality of a student's ongoing instruction. Even very strong readers in grade 3 will have reading problems in grade 8 if reading instruction stops, or if students stop reading in school or on their own. Thus, the term **"low risk"** is used for even very strong readers to underscore the fact they face some level of reading risk. At the other extreme, students who are well below grade-level expectations are described as being at **"high risk"** for reading problems. In the middle are students who are below grade level but are not well below grade level. These students are described as being at **"moderate risk"** for reading problems.

Schools should provide at least **three levels of instructional support** for students based on whether or not they are reading at grade level. If they are not reading at grade level, determining how far below grade level they are reading is essential information; identifying the level of risk these students face is key to providing them with appropriate and effective instruction so they may learn the skills needed to be grade-level readers.

1. Grade-level support for students reading at or above grade level **(low risk for reading problems)**—these students meet or exceed reading expectations
2. Moderate additional support for students reading somewhat below grade-level expectations **(moderate risk for reading problems)**—these students nearly meet reading expectations
3. Intense additional support for students reading well below grade-level expectations **(at high risk for reading problems)**—these students are well below reading expectations

In **grades K-2** and prior to when the OAKS is administered at the end of grade 3, the risk categories are based largely on **formative goals** set by the school (see Goals chapter, 9-11). To identify the level of instructional support students need, schools can also use **normative information** (information based on how large numbers of students have done in the past), **benchmark recommendations**

[7] No Child Left Behind, 2002; Consortium of Reading Excellence, 2008; Kamil et al., 2008

(recommendations based on what levels of performance students should meet to be on track for reading at grade-level), or **local norms** (information on "local" students in a state, district, or school in which performance is divided into (a) top, (b) near the top, (c) below the top, or (d) well below the top categories, or some other similar type of performance breakdown).i ii

At grades 3 through high school, students who meet or exceed achievement standards on the OAKS in Reading/Literature read at **grade level or higher**. Students who are one to two years below grade level read at somewhat **below grade level**. Those who are two or more years below grade level read at **well-below grade level**.

In terms of **screening** students for reading problems, the recommendation is that a screening assessment should be administered to all students in **grades K-8** at least three times per year (beginning, middle, and end of the school year).[8] In **grades 9-12** the recommendation is that a screening assessment should be administered at the beginning of the year in grade 9.[9] Regarding more frequent screening assessments in grade 9, and screening assessments in **grades 10-12**, the recommendation is that schools consider administering a screening assessment to some students, particularly to students who are not yet reading at grade-level.[10]

The first screening assessment of the school year should be administered as early as possible (within two weeks to one month of the start of school) so that the information can be used immediately. The need to collect screening data early in the school year, and the need to collect it frequently in most grades and with all students, means that screening assessments should be efficient to administer.[iii] Fortunately, there are screening measures available that are efficient to use and that provide strong information about the level of student reading risk. Screening assessments directly measure students' proficiency on the essential elements of reading.

In **grades K-3**, screening assessments should focus on the development of a number of different foundational skills necessary for skillful reading. In kindergarten, knowledge of the alphabet, assessed through letter-naming, is a valuable screening tool.[11] Also early in kindergarten, students' developing awareness of the phonemic structure of spoken words is a good predictor of reading and thus a strong screening measure.[12] Assessing both letter knowledge and phonological awareness skills early in kindergarten should be part of a screening system in reading. By the middle and end of kindergarten, schools should screen students for problems with alphabetic understanding (phonics). In grades 1-3 regular assessments of reading fluency should be used to screen students for problems with fluent reading and for likely problems with reading comprehension.

In **grades 4-9**, it is recommended that reading fluency assessments be administered three times per year, primarily for screening purposes.[iv] Particularly for students not reading at grade level, fluency assessments can help determine whether fluency problems are contributing to reading comprehension problems. There may also be students reading at grade level on the OAKS in Reading/Literature who are

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[8] Screening assessments are also called benchmark assessments because all students are assessed and performance is frequently compared to expected levels of performance, or benchmarks.

[9] In grade 9, schools can also examine grade 8 scores on the OAKS outcome measure to gain additional information about students who are at moderate or high risk for reading problems. Performance from the previous year on the OAKS outcome reading measure can be used as part of a screening measurement in other grades in middle school and high school. The reason it is especially important to examine grade 8 OAKS score as students transition to grade 9 is that the transition to high school can be particularly difficult for students in terms of academic achievement, behavior adjustments, and increasing risk of dropping out of school.

[10] Torgesen & Miller, 2009

[11] Adams, 1990

[12] Adams, 1990; O'Connor & Jenkins, 1999; Spector, 1992

not reaching recommended reading fluency levels. In these situations, schools might consider interventions to increase reading fluency. This could help students manage the increasing amount of material they are expected to read as they move from grade level to grade level (see Instruction chapter, 19).

In **grades K-12** and through high school, **maze and cloze reading assessment** procedures can be used to screen students for **comprehension** problems. Maze and cloze assessment procedures, where students are presented with reading passages with a percentage of words removed from the passage and students have to supply the word (cloze) or choose the correct word from three or four options (maze), provide a direct index of vocabulary and comprehension. From these types of measures, formative goals might be established to track how well students are developing vocabulary and comprehension skills over time. Maze and cloze assessments are particularly effective when they are used in conjunction with reading fluency assessments.

Generally, students who do well on reading fluency assessments are able to read with comprehension and students who are not fluent readers will have difficulty comprehending what they read. Some students, however, may read with sufficient fluency but have difficulty with comprehension. Although research indicates these students are relatively rare, a reading fluency screening assessment, combined with a reading comprehension assessment using maze or cloze procedures can help identify these students.

Immediately following each screening assessment, a designated staff person enters the data into a database and prints the screening reports. **Grade-level team meetings** in elementary schools and **department-level team meetings** in middle schools and high schools should occur after each school-wide screening assessment to analyze the screening reports and **determine instructional grouping and placement decisions** for each student (see Leadership chapter, 12-15, for a description of these teams and meetings).

> Given that effective instruction consists of responding to children's needs while building on their strengths, it necessarily depends on a sensitive and continual capacity for monitoring student progress.
> National Reading Council (1998)

Progress-Monitoring Assessments

Effective instruction consists of responding to students' needs while building on their strengths, and it benefits from a sensitive and continuous approach for monitoring student progress.[13] Progress-monitoring assessments should provide an estimate of student reading growth across time, typically within a school year.[14] Progress in reading, using formative goals to track progress (see Goals chapter, 9-11), should tell educators whether students are learning reading skills at an appropriate pace to reach end-of-year, grade-level reading goals. The reading progress of students who are not reading at grade level should be monitored frequently in between school-wide screening assessments. The reason for frequent

[13] National Reading Council (NRC), 1998

[14] Progress-monitoring measures are typically used to monitor students' reading growth within the school year. However, growth can also be measured across years. Note that the OAKS can be used as part of a reading assessment system for the use of systematically monitoring reading progress over time from grades 3 to 10. Because the OAKS in Reading/Literature from grades 3 to the final assessment in approximately grade 10 are constructed on a single scale, changes in student performance can be measured accurately over time.

progress-monitoring assessments is that students who are reading below grade-level expectations have to make more progress than would be normally expected if they are going to "catch up" to grade-level expectations. Consequently, schools need timely information on whether students are making enough progress to reach the outcomes in the timeframe for which outcome goals are set.

How often progress-monitoring assessments are administered should be based on the level of student risk. For students at low risk, there is no need to administer progress-monitoring assessments. Screening assessments administered three times per year will be sufficient to make sure students who are at low risk for reading problems continue to meet formative goals and grade-level reading expectations over time. For students who are at moderate risk for reading problems, progress monitoring once every two weeks is typically sufficient. If school resources are an issue, once per month will be acceptable. For students at high risk, schools should try to administer progress-monitoring assessments once per week. In some cases, if resources are an issue, once every two weeks is acceptable. The table below summarizes these recommendations.

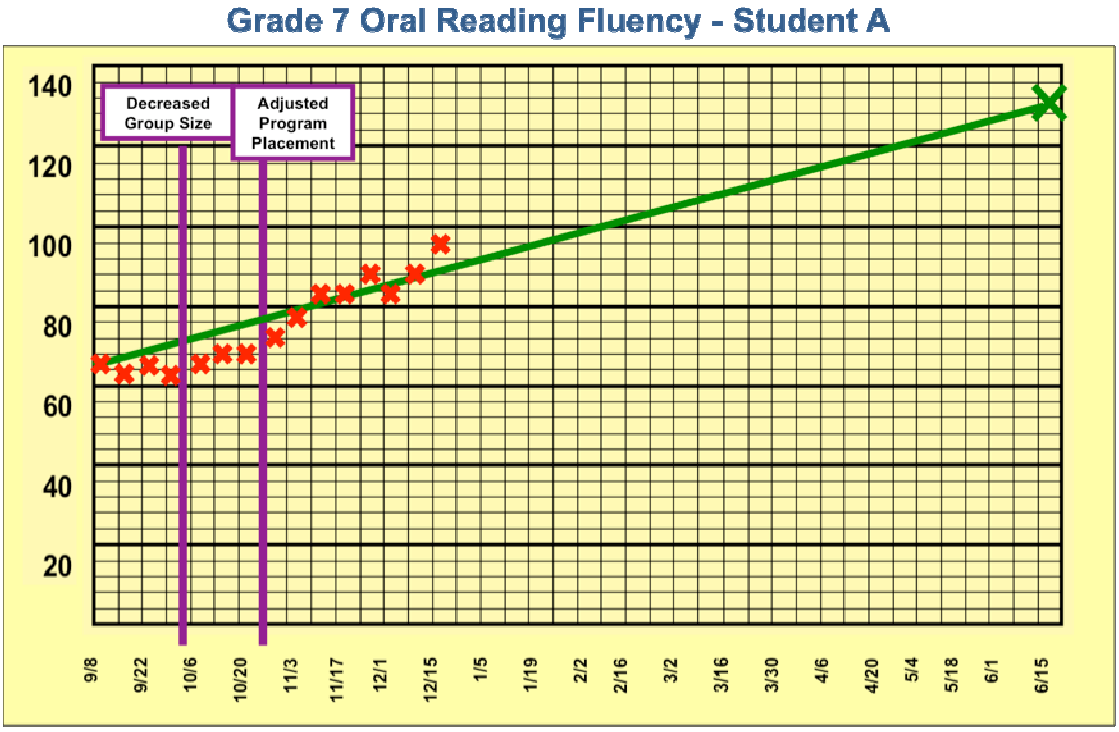
Risk Level	Student Skill Level	Frequency of Progress Monitoring Recommendation
Low Risk	Grade level or above; meets or exceeds expectations on the OAKS	Screening assessments only, three times per year
Moderate Risk	Somewhat below grade level; nearly meets or below expectations on the OAKS	Twice per month (or once per month, if funding is limited)
High risk	Well below grade level; very low performance on the OAKS	Once a week (or twice a month, if funding is limited)

Progress-monitoring assessments must be quick and efficient to administer and score because in many schools, a large number of students are reading below grade level and need to be assessed frequently. The important point is to minimize the amount of instructional time students lose to assessments and maximize the quality of the information a brief assessment can provide. Because progress-monitoring assessments are given frequently, different versions or forms of the same assessment need to be used. These "alternate" forms need to be equivalent in all aspects (e.g., how difficult they are) so that the student's growth across many monitoring assessments can be analyzed and interpreted. The analogy is using a scale that is calibrated the same way from one week to the next in order to accurately measure weight gain or loss over time. If the scale's calibration fluctuates, estimates of "real" weight gain or loss will be inaccurate.

Schools should analyze and interpret progress-monitoring data as soon as it is collected. The objective is to determine whether students are making sufficient progress to meet reading goals or whether instructional changes should be made to increase progress and put students on a trajectory for meeting reading goals. This decision is more complex than it might appear. To do this well, schools have to determine the rate of student progress and compare this to the rate of progress needed to reach the goal.

An effective way to help decide whether student progress is adequate is to use a **data decision rule**. In this method illustrated in the following graph, a line representing the student's expected rate of progress is drawn from a stable period of baseline performance, prior to intervention, to the point at which

the goal should be met. A line of expected progress is commonly referred to as an **Aim Line** (the green line). A student's progress is monitored frequently, and when a specific number of consecutive data points fall below the Aim Line, some type of change is made to the student's instruction to increase progress.[vi] In the following graph, the decision rule is that if three consecutive data points fall below the Aim Line, an instructional change is made. A good rule of thumb is that three to six consecutive data points that fall below the Aim Line necessitate an instructional change. The instructional change is noted with a purple vertical line. In the box at the top of the purple line a brief description of the change is noted.



Summative Outcomes Using Formative Measures: Grades K-2

Because the foundation for reading development occurs in grades K-3 and the OAKS in Reading/Literature is not administered prior to grade 3, progress monitoring/formative measures of reading in grades K-2 take on special significance. **These measures of reading in grades K-2 indicate whether students are on track to read at grade level in grade 3, and they may also be used as summative or outcome measures for specific essential elements of reading in grades K-2.** The essential elements of reading that can be measured effectively as outcomes are phonological awareness, alphabetic understanding (phonics), and fluency (see Goals chapter, 11, for an example of a range of scores that can be used as a guide for district). While comprehension is critically important, it is not as readily measured.

Generally speaking, the following formative outcomes can also be used as summative outcomes because they are important goals in school.

- By the end of **kindergarten** students should meet formative outcomes on measures of phonological awareness. Also by the end of kindergarten students should demonstrate an emerging degree of proficiency in word-level reading.
- By the middle of **grade 1**, students should meet formative outcomes measuring their ability to use a phonetic-based approach to reading words accurately and fluently.
- Throughout **grades 1-2** students should meet formative outcomes measuring their ability to read grade-level connected text accurately and fluently.
- In **grade 3** (and also in grades 4-12), outcomes associated with reading connected text accurately and fluently, as well as comprehension skills, are the most important formative outcomes schools should track closely.

Summative Assessments: Grades 3 through High School

Summative or outcome assessments are typically administered at the end of the school year to determine whether students have met important grade-level reading goals for that year. Summative measures are administered for two purposes. The most important purpose is to determine whether students are able to read a variety of grade-level materials with comprehension. A second purpose is to determine whether students have met key formative goals that are important benchmarks of successful overall grade-level reading. Summative assessments provide valuable information regarding whether students are on track for grade-level reading.

> The ultimate purpose of any evaluation process that takes place in schools should be to improve student learning.
>
> Howell & Nolet (2000)

Grade-level reading outcomes

Comprehensive measures of reading proficiency help determine whether students are able to meet grade-level reading expectations—a

summative reading goal (see Goals chapter, 6-9). The OAKS in Reading/Literature administered in grades 3-8 and in high school is a summative assessment used to determine a student's overall level of reading proficiency. If a student is reading at grade level or higher in grade 3, the implicit message to parents, students, and educators is that the student has the foundational reading skills necessary to be able to read grade-level texts in grade 4. And with ongoing reading instruction, the student should be able to read more rigorous grade-level texts and other materials each successive year in school. This student will likely achieve well academically in middle school and high school.

Other OAKS Summative Assessments

The frequent administration of the OAKS in Reading/Literature means that each year from grades 3-8 schools have summative information on whether students are able to read at grade level. Students also take the OAKS at grade 10 and are given multiple opportunities to re-take the assessment in grades 10 through 12 if they do not meet. The OAKS in Reading/Literature also provides information on students' reading levels using Lexile scores.[vii] The OAKS assessments in science, social sciences, and mathematics can provide additional information on students' reading skills. **Students need both reading skills and content knowledge to meet state standards on content-area assessments**. When students meet grade-level reading goals, and do well on content-area assessments, multiple sources of information indicate that students are developing strong reading skills generally, as well as the reading skills needed for understanding written material in specific content areas.

Standardized Diagnostic Assessments

In some cases, even after making a number of instructional changes (based on a lack of student progress) to increase the rate of reading progress of a particular student, reading progress will remain low. Students continue to fall further behind grade-level expectations, and as time goes on, it becomes less likely students will catch up. Continued lack of progress despite multiple instructional changes increases the urgency of designing and implementing an instructional plan that will improve the student's reading progress. In this case, the use of a commercially available standardized diagnostic reading assessment may provide information the school can use to better understand the cause of the reading problem and the precise instructional needs of the student.

> When teachers' classroom assessments become an integral part of the instructional process and a central ingredient in their efforts to help students learn, the benefits of assessment for both students and teachers will be boundless.
>
> Guskey (2003)
>
> - Fielding, L., Kerr, N., & Rosier, P.

There are **two fundamental and related reasons for administering a formal, standardized diagnostic assessment**. The first is to better understand the underlying cause of poor reading progress and the second is to better understand the student's instructional needs. Lack of student progress may be influenced by the presence of a disability. An important purpose of a formal diagnostic assessment is to help determine whether a student has a disability. **A hallmark of formal diagnostic measures is technical adequacy, which is a critical feature of assessments used to determine the presence of a disability.** If a determination is made that a student has a disability and the disability is contributing to

the student's lack of reading progress, specialized education may be necessary to provide the additional resources to develop and implement individualized student interventions to increase reading progress.

Another important and related purpose of a formal diagnostic assessment is to determine the precise areas where a student needs support. This information is used to develop and implement instruction that is aligned as closely as possible with student need. Sometimes this instruction is developed in the context of special education (if the student has a disability) and sometimes it is developed in the context of general education. An important point is that formal diagnostic measures are intended for use in very specific situations. **There are a number of reasons formal diagnostic reading assessments should not be used with all students**, and only with those students who demonstrate poor reading progress even when instructional interventions have been implemented under strong implementation conditions.

First, if students are close to reading at grade level, or making sufficient progress to be reading at grade level by the goal date, it is not necessary to diagnose why students need support. Second, diagnostic measures need to be administered one-on-one with students. They are lengthy and expensive to administer and thus a poor use of school resources when used widely with students. Third, the results of formal diagnostic assessments are for the purpose of providing highly intense instructional interventions for students precisely because repeated attempts to change reading instruction to increase progress have not been successful. Intense interventions of this magnitude are expensive to implement, not feasible for use on a large scale, and unnecessary if students are making sufficient reading progress. **The administration of formal diagnostic reading assessments means that very intense instructional interventions are needed to increase the reading progress of specific students.**

Comprehensive School Assessment Plan

Each school needs to identify the assessment measures that will be used to answer important educational questions about screening, progress-monitoring, evaluating student reading outcomes, and diagnosing students' instructional needs.[15] The following table displays four key purposes of reading assessments. For each purpose, the table identifies the key features of assessment, which students are assessed, and the primary questions that are addressed for each purpose. Often, the same assessment tool may be used for different purposes. For example, an indicator of early reading skill might be used for screening and progress monitoring in the early grades. Or, the OAKS in Reading/Literature administered in grade 5 might be used as an outcome measure in grade 5 and as part of a screening assessment for the beginning of grade 6. The School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2) should document which assessments schools will use to address these four purposes.

[15] Torgesen & Miller, 2009

Purposes and Features of Reading Assessments			
Assessment Purpose	**Educational Question**	**Key Features**	**Who is Assessed?**
Screening	Is the student at risk for reading problems?	Brief Predictive of reading outcomes	All students
Progress Monitoring	Is the student making enough reading progress to reach summative reading goals?	Brief Alternate forms Sensitive to small changes over time	Students not meeting reading expectations—not reading at grade level or not reaching key reading goals
Summative Evaluation	Is the student reading at grade level and meeting other reading goals?	Comprehensive measure of overall reading proficiency	All students
Diagnosing Instructional Needs	What precise instructional needs does a student have that if identified will improve his/her rate of progress toward important reading goals?	Provides in-depth instructional profile	Students who are not making adequate progress despite the use of intense intervention

Informal Curriculum-Embedded Assessments for Instructional Purposes

Curriculum-embedded assessments are frequently included in core and intervention reading programs. A drawback of most curriculum-embedded assessments is that reliability and validity information is unknown or weak. Thus, interpreting student performance should be done cautiously. The benefit of curriculum-embedded assessments is that the data can provide useful information regarding the degree to which students appear to be learning what has been explicitly taught. Teachers can use this information to determine whether their instruction seems to be meeting students' needs for re-teaching and for planning future instruction. Three of the most useful curriculum-embedded assessments are

- Core program survey assessments
- Core program theme skills tests / intervention program mastery tests
- Placement tests.

Core program survey assessments

The purpose of core program survey assessments is to sample a broad range of skills on a given essential element of reading (e.g., phonics, comprehension). Information from these assessments is used to design small group instruction using the core program or material contained in supplemental or intervention programs. Schools can use core program survey assessments to develop instructional profiles that include student strengths and weaknesses in relation to the essential elements of reading.

Core program theme skills tests / Intervention program mastery tests

At the end of each theme or unit in the core program, students are typically assessed on the skills they were taught in that section of the program and in previous sections. Teachers and school teams can analyze this information to decide whether any of the content should be reviewed instructionally or re-taught to some students. Some intervention programs contain mastery tests, which require students to reach a specified performance standard before advancing in the program. Information from mastery tests can be used to determine whether groups of students are prepared to continue in the program or need to repeat previous lessons. Often, a program provides specific remedies based on student performance on the mastery tests. Information from these tests may also be used to help place students appropriately within the intervention program or accelerate their progress. For example, teachers can administer mastery tests, starting at the beginning of the program, and continue testing until a student does not meet the criteria for passing. The last mastery test passed indicates the lesson where the student can enter the program.

Placement tests

Many intervention programs have placement tests to assess student strengths and weaknesses relevant to the skills taught in the program. This information can be used to place students appropriately within the program. Most placement tests provide a rough indicator of where to place students in the program. Mastery tests can provide more precise placement information.

Collecting Reliable and Valid Data

Student assessments used for all four purposes—screening, progress monitoring, outcomes, and diagnosis—must be reliable and valid for the purpose being used. A **reliable** reading assessment means the same, or very similar, data would be obtained if the student were (a) tested two or more times in a brief period of time, (b) tested in two or more settings, (c) tested on different versions of the same test, and (d) tested by different test examiners. If an assessment is not reliable—and the reliability of a test should be documented scientifically—the data gained from the test should be interpreted cautiously and the information should not be used to make important decisions.

Key Term

Reliability: The assessment results in similar scores when used in different contexts.

If an assessment is not reliable, then it cannot be a valid measure of performance. A **valid** reading assessment measures what it is intended or designed to measure. Using measures that are valid for a specific purpose or purposes is the most important aspect of an assessment system. In reading, measures used for assessment purposes must have documented validity for the purpose being used. If an assessment does not have documentation of validity for one or more of the four major purposes, it should not be used.

Key Term

Validity: The assessment measures what it is intended or designed to measure.

Information on the reliability and validity of assessment measures can usually be found in the assessment manual. Other sources of information that can be used to evaluate the technical adequacy of an assessment include comprehensive reviews of assessment measures and scientific studies.[viii]

Student assessment data should be collected by individuals who have been appropriately trained in the test being administered and who have passed periodic calibration checks. For example, district-based or school-based teams are typically responsible for conducting screening assessments. Teachers are frequently part of these data collection teams. To avoid questions about data accuracy, teachers should not collect screening and summative data on students in their own classrooms.

Six Strategies for Ensuring the Quality of Data Collection

1. Provide high-quality professional development on the administration and scoring of reading assessments.
2. Provide brief "refresher" trainings for teachers and staff who conduct reading assessments.
3. Have an assessment expert "shadow score" alongside individuals collecting assessment data. The expert can provide feedback to the tester on the standardized administration and scoring procedures and efficient and effective administration.
4. Conduct a retrospective check of scoring accuracy. After all testing is completed, choose a random sample of the tests (approximately 20%) and check scoring according to the guidelines. If scoring errors are identified in more than 10% of the booklets, re-check all of the booklets.
5. Conduct a retrospective check of the data entry of a random sample of scores. If errors in data entry were made in more than 10% of the scores, re-check all data entries.
6. Retest a random sample of students (i.e., approximately 10%) and look for significant score discrepancies.

Data Used to Guide Instructional Decision-Making

Assessment data collected in relation to reading goals can be used to make decisions at two different levels. First, data can be used to make decisions at the **individual student level**. For example, screening data are used to determine whether a student is at risk for reading problems. Progress-monitoring data are used to determine whether a student is making adequate progress toward overall reading proficiency and formative reading goals. Summative data are used to determine whether a student attained a level of reading proficiency for meeting grade-level reading expectations.

At a second level, student reading data can be used to make decisions about **the school's "system" of reading instruction** provided within and across grade levels. Ideally, making instructional decisions about individual students is done in the context of an overall strong system of school-wide reading instruction. This basic idea is straightforward. When a few students are experiencing difficulty, the school can focus squarely on ways to change reading instruction to meet the needs of specific individual students. However, when many students are experiencing difficulty, it is important for the school to consider ways the overall system of reading instruction may be contributing to poor reading progress and should be changed to increase reading performance**. Considering the *system* of reading instruction and the needs of individual students simultaneously increases decision-making efficiency and the effective use of limited resources.**

When many students are experiencing difficulty, it is efficient for the school to view the problem at a "systems" level and allocate resources to address the underlying systems-level challenges. When underlying systems-level problems are addressed on a case-by-case basis with individual students, the larger focus necessary to address systems-level structure and infrastructure issues is missing. This does not imply that a systems-level focus ignores individual students. The specific instructional needs of individual students must always be addressed. However, in the context of systems-level difficulties, the needs of individual students should be addressed, but at the same time the underlying *system* of reading instruction should be addressed. **A careful analysis of student reading data will allow schools to understand the extent to which the specific problem an individual student is experiencing is occurring in the context of an underlying strong system of reading instruction or in a system that is in need of overall improvement.**

Decision-Making for Individual Students

Targeting the need of an individual student works in the following way. The **first decision** is to identify whether a particular student is reading at a level of proficiency to meet grade-level expectations or has met important formative goals. This decision is based on screening data and, if the student is below these expectations, the reading team at the school decides on the level of instructional support the student needs to reach grade-level reading outcomes and attain important formative goals. The instructional support plan is implemented, the student's progress is monitored, and the team uses data decision rules to determine whether student progress is sufficient. When student progress is sufficient, generally the team maintains the level of instructional support that enabled the student to make adequate progress and the team continues to monitor the progress of the student.

If the student's progress is not adequate, the **sequence of decision-making is as follows**. A student may not be making adequate progress for three reasons. First, the level of support the school believes is being provided to the student is not occurring. For example, if a grade 8 student is supposed to receive homework support each night in the form of several guiding questions to help the student focus on comprehension, and that is not occurring, then the instructional support intended for the student is not being provided. Second, the quality of the instructional support is not equal to what the staff believes the student needs to be successful. For example, the guiding questions used with the student are at a level of abstraction that may be too difficult. The team concludes the student needs more concrete guiding questions. Third, the instructional support plan is being implemented as intended, and with expected quality, yet the student is still not making sufficient progress. In this case the team decides to make a

change in the student's plan to increase the intensity of the support. For example, the team decides that the student should highlight several paragraphs in the text that are relevant to each of the guiding questions and read and discuss the questions with a partner for ten minutes at the start of each class. The team implements this plan with the classroom teacher, and the student's progress is monitored. **Once again data decision rules are used to make a decision about the adequacy of student progress.**

The important point is that all three levels need to be considered when a student is not making sufficient progress. Frequently, lack of student progress is conceptualized as a problem with the student, and not enough attention is directed toward investigating whether the instructional plan specified is being used, and if the plan is being used, whether it is being implemented with the quality necessary for the student to make sufficient progress.

When student progress is not adequate, and schools have determined that the instructional support is being implemented as intended, **the school needs to consider ways to increase the intensity of the support provided to the student in an effort to increase progress**. Implementation features that can be adjusted include: (a) time for instruction, (b) program efficacy (content of instruction, programs, and materials), (c) program implementation, (d) grouping for instruction, and (e) coordination of instruction. The table below includes implementation features that can be adjusted to increase the intensity of instruction. See the following "Alterable Variables Chart."

Implementation Elements	**Alterable Variables Chart** **Specific Adjustments** **Less intense → More intense**				
Time for Instruction	Increase student attendance	Provide instruction daily	Increase opportunities to respond	Vary schedule of easy/hard tasks/skills	Add another instructional period (double dose)
Program Efficacy	Preteach components of core program	Use extensions of the core program	Supplement core with appropriate materials	Replace current core program	Implement specially designed program
Program Implementation	Provide model lesson delivery	Monitor implementation frequently	Provide coaching and ongoing support to teacher	Provide additional professional development	Vary program/ lesson schedule
Grouping for Instruction	Check group placement	Reduce group size	Increase teacher-led instruction	Provide individual instruction	Change instructor
Coordination of Instruction	Clarify instructional priorities	Establish concurrent reading periods	Provide complementary reading instruction across periods	Establish communication across instructors	Meet frequently to examine progress

Decision-Making for Groups of Students and Systems-Level Decisions

When many students a) are not able to read grade-level texts and materials, b) are not meeting formative reading goals, or c) are not making adequate progress toward meeting grade-level summative reading goals, the school should carefully examine the system of reading instruction being provided to students. Schools can use student reading data to address systems-level issues in a number of important ways.

The major question is: "Is the system of reading instruction and support effective for a high percentage of students?" At the broadest level, the entire school's system of reading instruction can be examined. At this school-wide level, the school examines student reading data—an integrated analysis including screening data, progress-monitoring data, and summative data—and the school might conclude, for example, that the overall reading system is

- Highly effective
- Generally effective
- In need of serious attention.

This examination of data serves as a starting point for examining the effectiveness of the *system* of reading instruction being provided at the school. From this starting point, the school can examine many other levels within the system to conduct a more fine-grained examination of the effectiveness of the system of reading instruction at the school. For example, the school can examine their system of reading instruction

- At each grade level
- At each level of instructional support—support for students at grade level, for students somewhat below grade level, and for students well below grade level
- For specific groups of students—for example, English learners, students who are highly mobile, or students with a specific learning disability.

For example, a middle school may determine that it is highly effective helping students remain at grade level when they begin the year reading at grade level. However, the same middle school may determine that their system of instruction and support for students who begin the year reading well below grade level is not working as well as it should if these students are going to reach reading goals by the end of the year. An organizing decision-making flow chart called the **"GATE Map: Going from ALL To Each"** illustrates a decision-making process that uses data to make decisions about groups of students and individuals.[ix]

When a school staff determines that the overall system needs attention, or that important levels within the system need attention (e.g., specific grades, support for groups of students at specific levels of reading risk), they must begin by examining the implementation of instruction being provided. At this point, the school examines two dimensions of the system.[16] The school addresses (a) the structure of elements in the system, and (b) issues related to quality of implementation.[17] Grade-level teams can use a worksheet called the **"Elements of a Healthy Grade-Level System Checklist"** to identify areas of the support system that may need to be adjusted.[x]

[16] The dimensions were also addressed when the focus was at the individual student level.
[17] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Gersten, Chard, Baker, 2000

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Schools that implement the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework will be implementing a framework that is completely in line with a Response to Intervention (RTI) model of service delivery.[18] RTI integrates instruction, assessment, and intervention in a way that allows schools to match the level of intensity and instructional support to student needs in essential academic areas, such as reading.[xi] RTI is also a way for schools to determine whether students *have* a specific learning disability. Frequently, the primary purpose a school has for implementing an RTI model of service delivery is to identify students with learning disabilities. However, RTI should be conceptualized at a much deeper level than this. In its deepest conceptualization, **RTI is a comprehensive system of instruction that is designed to match student services with student need**.[19] In this way, it is completely consistent with the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework which is designed to meet the needs of ALL students.

The major features that need to be in place in an **RTI framework** can be found throughout the **Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework**. Important highlights are

- Using scientifically-based programs and practices in the general education classrooms
- Developing a multi-tiered support system that incorporates prevention and early intervention services
- Implementing a reliable and valid comprehensive assessment system
- Using student data for making a range of instructional decisions, including student responsiveness to instruction and intervention.

When a school implements the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework, they will be implementing the basic features of an RTI system.

RTI is also a legal way for a school to identify whether a student has a specific learning disability. The basic idea is simple in conceptualization, extremely difficult in execution. **In an RTI framework, a learning disability can be diagnosed when a student has failed to respond "to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures**."[20] [xii] This means that increasingly intense instructional interventions have been implemented with the student in an effort to increase academic progress. Insufficient progress on the part of the student, despite the use of scientifically defensible interventions implemented as intended and with quality, defines a learning disability. **The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework includes all of the components necessary for diagnosing the presence of a learning disability in this manner.**

Summary

In summary, a comprehensive assessment system for grades K-12 should be linked explicitly to formative and summative reading goals to determine overall reading proficiency. An assessment system should be used for four purposes: (a) screening, (b) monitoring progress over time, (c) evaluating overall reading outcomes, and (d) diagnosing potential causes of reading difficulty and instruction need. Data from reading assessments should be used to make instructional decisions about groups of students and individual students. Major features that need to be in place in a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework are integral to the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

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[18] Gersten et al., 2009
[19] Bastsche et al., 2005
[20] Public Law 108-446 Subpart 614(6)(b)

Links to Resources

[i] For examples of formative goals for K-6, see the DIBELS Data System website at https://dibels.uoregon.edu/benchmark.php.

[ii] For the full technical report on Oral Reading Fluency Normative Data, see "Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Measurement (Tech. Rep. No. 33)" at http://www.brtprojects.org/tech_reports.php.

[iii] For a module on strategies for team approaches to collecting screening data, see "Approaches and Considerations of Collecting Schoolwide Early Literacy and Reading Performance Data" (Harn, 2000) http://dibels.uoregon.edu/logistics.php

[iv] For an example of a spreadsheet used to record information to make screening decisions at the secondary level (middle and high school), see an example from the Bethel School District on the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework website. (**Will be posted when available**)

[v] For more information on progress monitoring, including a technical review of progress-monitoring tools, go to the National Center on Response to Intervention at http://www.rti4success.org/chart/progressMonitoring/progressmonitoringtoolschart.htm.

[vi] Other types of decision rules and resources for progress monitoring are available at the National Center for Student Progress Monitoring at http://www.studentprogress.org/ and the Oregon RTI Initiative at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=315.

[vii] Oregon students receive Lexile measures automatically when they take the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) for Reading/Literature. For information on how Lexile measures are used in Oregon, see http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=1638.

[viii] Information on selecting reliable and valid measures can be found at the Florida Center for Reading Research at http://www.fcrr.org/forAdministrators.htm and the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring at http://www.studentprogress.org/.

[ix] For an example of a decision-making framework that includes both systems-level and individual-level decision making, please see the "Going from All to Each" (GATE) Map on the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework website: http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/toolbox.html#rti

[x] The "Elements of a Healthy Grade-Level System Checklist" can be downloaded at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/toolbox.html#swrm

[xi] To learn more about Oregon's RTI Initiative, see the Oregon Department of Education's RTI web site at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=315. If your school is interested in receiving professional development to implement RTI district wide, please visit http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1389.

[xii] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Information on the IDEA can be found at http://idea.ed.gov/.

Instruction

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

Schools teach reading, and
Schools teach reading across instructional areas

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools			★			
Districts						
State						

Six Organizing Principles of High-Quality Reading Instruction:

- Sufficient time for reading instruction is scheduled, and the allocated time is used effectively.
- Data is used to form fluid instructional groupings.
- Instruction is focused on the essential elements of reading.
- Research-based strategies, programs, and materials are adopted and used schoolwide with a high level of fidelity.
- Instruction is differentiated based on student need.
- Effective teacher delivery features are incorporated into daily reading instruction.

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

The ability to read proficiently is “a must” for school success and learning throughout life. Over the past 20 years, there has been a growing understanding that reading instruction – teaching all students how to read – is a critical school responsibility, particularly in the early stages of reading development. And as the knowledge on reading development deepens, it becomes increasingly apparent that reading instruction in the classroom must play a central role in education throughout grades K-12, not just in the first few years of school.[1]

The Instruction chapter of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework addresses the critical role schools play in teaching all students to be grade-level readers or above in grades K-3 and the equally critical role schools play in teaching all students to maintain and advance grade-level reading skills in grades 4-12. Reading well is a prerequisite for students to do well in school, to demonstrate proficiency in the **Essential Skill of Reading**, and to earn an **Oregon Diploma**.

High-quality reading instruction in grades K-12 involves the integration of six major organizing principles: (1) making sufficient time for reading instruction and using that time effectively, (2) using data to form fluid instructional groupings, (3) focusing instruction on the essential elements of reading, (4) using research-based strategies, programs, and materials to target the essential elements of reading, (5) differentiating instruction based on student need, and (6) providing effective teacher delivery. Each of the six organizing principles will be described in detail in the sections that follow.

Organizing Principle 1: Sufficient Time Is Allocated and Used Effectively for Reading Instruction

The first organizing principle of high-quality reading instruction is that sufficient time is allocated and used effectively. For all students to meet important reading goals, it is critical to provide enough time during the school day for explicit reading instruction. To that end, **allocating time for reading** instruction in a school’s master schedule is a top priority, and once time has been allocated, **protecting that time from interruption** becomes a top priority.[i] In elementary, it is important that assemblies, fire drills, class parties, class pictures, or other special events are routinely scheduled outside of that time in order to maximize reading instruction. In secondary, it is important that instruction time in every instructional area be protected not only to provide sufficient time for students to master the course content and skills, but also because the teaching of reading specific to the instructional area occurs in all middle school and high school classes. The purpose of daily reading instruction in elementary and in secondary is to increase all students’ reading skills over time, moving them to grade-level proficiency or beyond. The purpose of timely reading interventions in grades K-12 is to accelerate reading development to enable students to close the gap between current reading performance and grade-level expectations as quickly as possible. Gradually improving or perfecting any skill over time requires consistent, effective instruction and daily practice. To that end, daily, sufficient, and protected time for reading is scheduled so that all students improve as readers every year.

Throughout **grades K-3**, all students benefit from receiving at least 90 minutes of daily reading instruction.[2] The goal is for all students to be grade-level readers or above. This 90-minute block is

[1] Kamil et al., 2008; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Torgesen, Houston Miller, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007
[2] Haager, Klingner, & Vaughn, 2007
[2] Haager, Klingner, & Vaughn, 2007

dedicated to providing instruction on the five essential elements of beginning reading: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. For grades K-3 students who have not met grade-level reading goals, more than 90 minutes of daily reading instruction needs to be provided. The amount of instruction time provided beyond the 90 minutes is based on what students need to become grade-level readers. Students who are well below reading goals need more reading instruction than students who are close to meeting reading goals or who are meeting or exceeding reading goals.

ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENT FOCUS: Allocated Reading Instruction

When allocating time for reading instruction, it is important to schedule more than 90 minutes per day for students who are English learners (ELs) (Gersten et al., 2007). With English learners, additional daily reading instruction needs to focus on vocabulary development and comprehension. This additional instruction can be integrated with the instruction ELs receive during the time of day allocated to English Language Development.

In **grades 4-5**, a 90-minute reading block is recommended for all students. With the goal of all students being grade-level readers or above, students receive daily, focused reading instruction on the essential elements of reading with an emphasis on advanced phonics skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In grades 4-5 students begin working regularly with texts in social sciences, science, math, and other instructional areas. Because reading across the instructional areas presents new challenges for upper elementary students, it is critical that teachers begin strong content-specific strategy instruction on text structure in each instructional area while also providing vocabulary and comprehension instruction specific to each instructional area. For grades 4-5 students who have not met grade-level reading goals, more than 90 minutes of daily reading instruction needs to be provided. The amount of daily reading instruction beyond 90 minutes is determined based on what students need to become grade-level readers. Students who are well below reading goals need more reading instruction than students who are close to meeting reading goals or who are meeting or exceeding reading goals.

In **grades 6-8**, a 40-60 minute class designated specifically for reading instruction is recommended for all students. Students are assigned to a reading class based on reading proficiency data; class assignments remain fluid based on progress-monitoring data. In addition to the reading class, students receive reading instruction across all instructional areas on content-specific advanced word study, comprehension, and vocabulary. The goal is to ensure that all students are grade-level readers or above. Note that in some cases, a review of school data may indicate that a reading class for all middle school students may not be justified as the reading scores for most students meet or exceed expectations. In this case, a school may decide to provide a reading intervention class specifically for those students who are reading well below grade level. This intervention class may be provided in place of an elective course. If resources are limited and a separate reading class for all students is not feasible, another option is for middle schools to make the language arts period longer than other classes to provide extra time to focus on reading instruction for all students. Students who are reading well below grade level could participate in both the extended language arts period as well as an additional reading intervention class. See the resource list at the end of the chapter for a link to a video of how one Oregon middle school structured their reading program.[ii] For students with the most intensive reading needs (e.g., students who are in the very low category on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in Reading/Literature), it is critical for schools to make available intensive interventions provided by qualified specialists.

In **grades 9-12**, the recommendation is for two to four hours of literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas daily.[3] The Reading Next Panel, in their report to Carnegie Corporation of New York, stated that, "although some of this time should be spent with a language arts teacher, instruction in science, history, and other subject areas qualifies as fulfilling the requirements of this element if the instruction is text-centered and informed by instructional principles designed to convey content and also to practice and improve literacy skills" (p. 28).[4] To that end, high school teachers provide increasingly more rigorous vocabulary and comprehension instruction and practice to students each year of high school across the instructional areas, preparing them to exit grade 12 reading at grade level or above.

As in grades K-3, the principle for **grades 4-12** is to provide more reading instruction and more intense reading instruction for students based on need.[5] In addition to the separate reading period and literacy-connected learning for students in grades 4-8 and the literacy-connected learning for high school students, students with moderate to severe reading difficulties need additional time for reading instruction. Finding this time would ideally involve scheduling instruction during an extended school day or extended school year. However, when that is not possible, in **grades 9-12**, time might be taken from home room, study hall, study skills, or an elective class for additional explicit small group reading instruction matched to student need. See the resource list at the end of the chapter for a document that shows the possible reading intervention plans a school might consider for grades 6-8 and includes some of the pros and cons associated with each.[iii] For students with the most intensive reading needs (e.g., students who are in the very low category on the OAKS in Reading/Literature), it is critical for schools to make available intensive interventions provided by qualified specialists.

In order to realize desired outcomes, interventions must be implemented with a high level of instructional quality that includes appropriate group size and sufficient time based on student need.[6] Intensive interventions for some secondary students begin by focusing on building foundational skills such as phonological awareness, decoding, and other word analysis skills. Other students may require interventions that focus on building fluency, increasing vocabulary knowledge, and using comprehension strategies.[7] The purpose of intervention is to accelerate reading development so that students can close the gap between current performance and grade-level expectations. For secondary students reading well below grade level, small group intensive instruction is most likely a last opportunity to close the gap with their peers and become grade-level readers.

The minimum recommended times for daily reading instruction for all students in grades K-12 are provided in the following table.

[3] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006
[4] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006
[5] Kamil et al., 2008; National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices, 2005
[6] Kamil et al., 2008
[7] Kamil et al., 2008

Recommended Time Allocations for Reading Instruction for ALL Students		
Grade Level	Amount of Instruction	Per
K–3	• 90 minute reading block	Day
4–5	• 90 minute reading block and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas	Day
6–8	• 40-60 minute reading class for all students (grouped based on skill level) and separate from English language arts • 2-4 hours of literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas	Day
9–12	• 2-4 hours of literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas	Day

As noted above, for students who are not yet reading at grade level, the number of minutes of daily or weekly reading instruction needs to be increased above these minimum amounts. The amount of **extra time is based on how far students are below grade level**. At this point, difficult decisions need to be made regarding what other content students will miss in order for them to participate in additional reading interventions designed to move them to grade-level proficiency.

Organizing Principle 2: Data Is Used to Form Fluid Instructional Groups

In **grades K-3**, schools need to use time allocated for reading instruction to provide both whole class (also referred to as whole group or large group) and **small group instruction for every student** on a daily basis. Small group instruction is the most effective way to provide students with intense reading instruction that focuses on their specific learning needs.[8]

Student reading skill is used in creating the composition of reading groups, particularly during small group instruction.[9] If all students in the group are at approximately the same instructional level, teachers can target a narrower range of skills, which intensifies the instruction. That is why homogeneous group instruction based on reading proficiency data is an important consideration throughout grades K-12.

To make small group instruction effective for all students, it is critical for reading teams at each school to review student data regularly and use this information in revising the composition of small and large groups to ensure fluidity. The ultimate value of small group instruction for any instructional purpose is

8 Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, and Moody, 1999; Torgesen, Fall 2004; Gersten et al., 2009
[9] Slavin, 1987; Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, & Moody, 2000

based on evidence that students are benefiting.[10] Decisions about benefit and movement to different instructional groups need to be based on student reading data.

As a result of the data-based planning and group assignments described above, the composition of student groups for reading instruction is fluid and revised regularly based on student reading data. Small group instruction

- Enables teachers to address specific skill gaps and/or next-step challenges for every student
- Enables teachers to work closely with every student
- Increases instructional interactions between teachers and students
- Gives students multiple opportunities to practice reading activities
- Enables teachers to correct student errors immediately.

Small group instruction is an excellent format for **English learners**. A major benefit is that small group formats provide English learners with more opportunities to practice academic and oral language in the presence of an expert teacher.[11]

In **grades K-3**, the size of the groups and the amount of time students spend in whole class and small group instruction depends on student performance data and school resources. The goal is to provide instruction that will move ALL students to grade-level proficiency or higher. Students who are well below grade level need more time in small group instruction than students who are somewhat below, at, or above grade level. Students who have not met reading goals need at least 30 minutes per day in small group instruction. Students who are meeting reading goals need the opportunity to work in small group formats each day throughout grades K-3. For those exceeding reading goals, small group instruction is one of the best ways for schools to provide the accelerated instruction higher performing students need.[iv] [12]

General guidelines for the number of students to include in small group instruction are outlined in the following table. For students in **grades K-3** who are well below grade level, small group instruction is best if group size does not exceed five students; optimal group size is no more than three students.[13] For students who are performing somewhat below grade level, group size should not exceed eight. For students at or above grade level, small group size should not exceed twelve. (An exception to the above recommendations would be some supplemental programs that can be delivered effectively with a group size of 18-20.) Note that in most cases the appropriate group size for maximum benefit from small group instruction will be recommended by the reading program that is being implemented.

[10] Fuchs et al., 2008

11 Gersten et al., 2007

12 O'Conner 2007; Fletcher, Denton, Fuchs, & Vaughn, 2005

13 Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001

Recommendations for Small Group Sizes in Grades K-3	
Student Skill Level	**Number of Students Per Group**
Well Below Grade Level	3 - 5
Somewhat Below Grade Level	≤ 8
Grade Level or Above	≤ 12

EL STUDENT FOCUS: Small Groups

There are exceptions to the value of homogeneously grouping students for reading instruction. An important exception is with English learners when the instructional focus is specifically on vocabulary and reading comprehension. For these instructional focus areas, it is valuable for English learners (and English only students also) if students with differing levels of English proficiency are taught in the same group. In this case, more proficient students will have the opportunity to serve as stronger language models for less proficient English learners. Because instruction during these specific times should be highly rich in student language, it is best if small groups of students with different levels of English language proficiency are convened. The recommended size of these groups should range from 3 - 6 students (Gersten et al., 2007). If adequate time is devoted to this instruction, each English learner will have multiple opportunities to actively engage in high-quality instructional interactions with the teacher and peers focusing on vocabulary and comprehension.

Reading instruction in **grades 4-8** is provided in two fundamental ways. **First**, it is recommended that ALL students in grades 4-8 be taught reading as a separate class from English language arts; the composition of the class is homogenous but fluid based on reading proficiency data, and the contents of the class is aligned to the Oregon Reading Standards http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/newspaper/Newspaper_Section.aspx?subjectcd=ELA. These reading classes are designed to help students continue to develop foundational reading skills; they support students by providing instruction followed by practice on those specific essential elements of reading that will accelerate their growth as readers. In grades 4-8 reading classes, students are explicitly taught strategies and skills that are common to both informational and literary text and that will help them read at grade level or above. These separate reading classes in tandem with strong content-specific instructional support (described in the next paragraph) will increase students' ability to access increasingly more difficult text each year in grades 4-8.

Second, in grades 4-8, in addition to providing reading instruction in a separate class, reading strategies and skills are taught across all instructional areas. Teachers devote a portion of the instructional time to teaching students the reading strategies necessary to access and comprehend subject-specific texts and other materials. In **grades 4-5**, during literature, social sciences, science, mathematics, and health, teachers support and extend the foundational skills and comprehension

strategies students learn in their reading classes. In **grades 6-8**, using subject-specific texts across the instructional areas, teachers support and expand on the strategies and skills students learn in reading classes. In **grades 6-12**, where in most cases students attend separate classes for each subject, a subject-specific approach to teaching and supporting reading across all instructional areas is essential.[14]

In **grades 9-12**, teaching and supporting subject-specific reading across the instructional areas is critical as high school teachers are the sole providers of reading instruction for most high school students. Students receive reading instruction exclusively in the courses they are taking unless they are reading below grade level. As in elementary and middle school, it is important for students in high school who are reading below grade level or significantly below grade level to receive reading instruction through a separate reading class. [15]

The composition of student groups for reading instruction should be fluid and revised regularly based on student reading progress.

Teaching reading across the instructional areas makes sense, inasmuch as it helps students read content more easily and learn content more deeply. In grades 4-12, the use of small groups for reading instruction is conceptualized somewhat differently than it is in grades K-3. In grades 4-5, grouping approaches may look similar to grades K-3 although typical group sizes may be larger. As students move into grades 6-8 and grades 9-12 settings, the size of the reading groups will be determined largely by student need and the number of students appropriate for the type of instruction being delivered.

The following general guidelines will help districts and schools determine **reading class size** for **grades 4-8**. For students somewhat below grade level, but who have relatively strong foundational reading skills (e.g., **nearly meets** proficiency on the OAKS in Reading/Literature), class sizes of approximately **15-20 students** enable teachers to provide an appropriate degree of instruction and feedback. For students who are somewhat below grade level and are struggling with the development of foundational reading skills (e.g., have not mastered phonics or are well below proficiency standards on reading fluency targets and **low** on the OAKS in Reading/Literature), class sizes of **8-15 students** enable teachers to provide the level of intense instruction and feedback these students require. For students with significant reading difficulties who are struggling with the development of foundational reading skills and are reading two or more years below grade level (e.g., **very low** on the OAKS in Reading/Literature), reading class sizes of **6-8 students** are appropriate. These students require a great deal of intense and explicit instruction from highly trained teachers.[16] The composition of student groups for reading instruction is fluid and revised regularly based on student reading progress. The following table summarizes recommendations for reading class sizes in grades 6-8.

[14] Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; Metzler, 2002; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006
[15] Kamil et al., 2008
[16] Kamil et al., 2008

Recommendations for Reading Class Sizes in Grades 6-8		
Student Skill Level	**OAKS Proficiency**	**Number of Students per Group**
Well Below Grade Level (2 or More Years Below)	Very Low	6 - 8
Somewhat Below Grade Level (Lacking Foundational Reading Skills)	Low	8 - 15
Somewhat Below Grade Level (Have Nearly Acquired Foundational Reading Skills)	Nearly Meets	15 - 20

In **grades 9-12**, when a separate reading class is no longer provided to all students, schools need to provide **reading intervention** to students performing well below grade level utilizing group sizes similar to those listed in the preceding table. High-quality interventions for struggling adolescent readers require instruction in smaller groups, increased time for learning, or both. [17] [18]

Generally, the more intense the needs of students, the more important it is for teachers to have extensive professional development and demonstrated skill in working with them. Teachers assigned to work with small groups of lower performing students use their skills to provide frequent instructional interactions, multiple opportunities for student responses, and immediate corrections for students' skill-based errors. Even in large reading classes, however, teachers who are effective at providing explicit instruction and multiple practice opportunities for students can carry over some of the advantages of small group instruction to the large group.

Other Instructional Formats to Increase Reading Opportunities K-12

In addition to the use of fluid instructional grouping, other formats can be used to increase the opportunities students have to develop reading proficiency. An excellent instructional approach includes students working with each other. In **grades K-12**, students can be taught to work with their peers in ways that provide serious and challenging learning opportunities.[19] With practice, teachers can manage these instructional formats so that transition times—from students working together to whole-class/teacher-led instruction—are minimal.

Small groups and partner formats can increase the opportunities students have to process key learning objectives and practice using reading skills.

Using this approach, reading teachers and teachers across the instructional areas regularly have **students work with each other in small groups or with a partner**. These activities are structured so that teachers are able to provide more feedback and supervision to the groups that need it most. Small groups and partner formats increase the opportunities students have to

[17] Kamil et al., 2008
[18] Biancarosa, C. & Snow (2006)
[19] Gersten et al., 2007; Klingner & Vaughn, 1999; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Burish, 2000

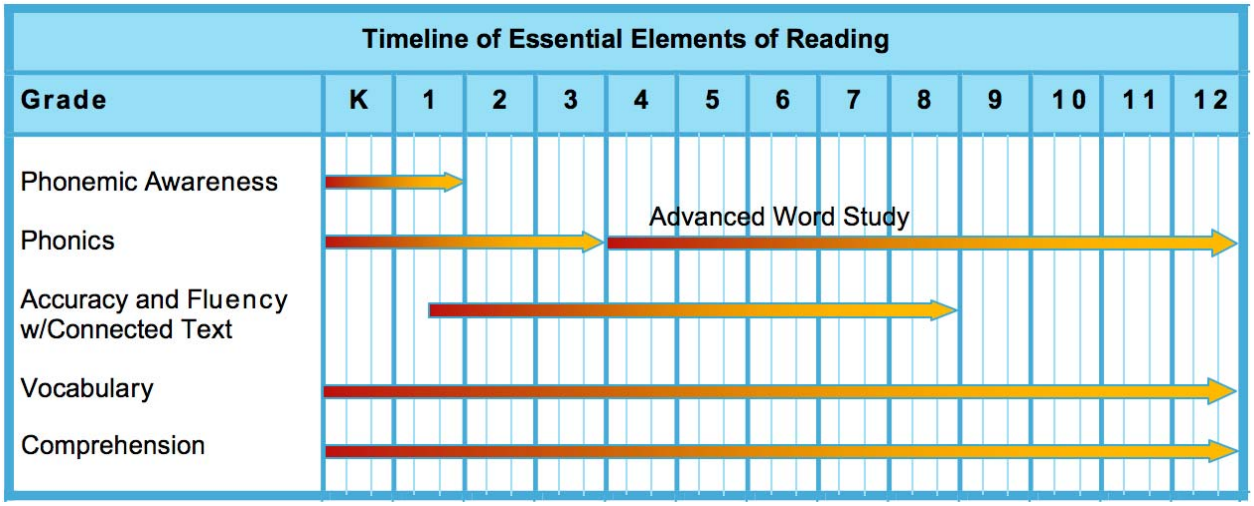
process key learning objectives and practice using reading skills.[20] Students learn to provide feedback to each other on many important reading tasks, including

- Reading words accurately
- Providing summaries of content that has been read
- Reading with expression and fluency
- Practicing key vocabulary[21]
- Practicing and producing academic language in the context of grade-level reading content (especially for ELs).[22]

Small peer groups can provide practice for students on any of the essential elements of reading. For example, students can learn to engage in rich text-based discussions that increase reading comprehension.[23] Or students who need to develop phonological awareness and phonics skills (in grades K-3 or in upper elementary or secondary) can work with each other to practice and reinforce these skills. In all cases, it is critical that extensive teacher-led preparation and instruction be provided to students so that when students are working with each other they follow highly-specified procedures that are centered on important learning objectives.[24]

Organizing Principle 3: Instruction Is Focused on the Essential Elements of Reading

The third organizing principle of high-quality reading instruction is focusing instruction on the essential elements of reading. The following figure provides a preview of the essential elements for reading instruction across the grade levels. The section immediately below the figure explains the essential elements for grades K-3; the next section after that explains the essential elements for grades 4-12.



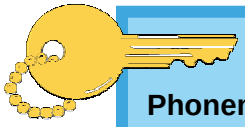
[20] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006
[21] Gersten et al., 2007; Kamil et al., 2008
[22] Francis et al., 2006.
[23] Klingner & Vaughn, 1996; Kamil, 2004
[24] Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, & Simmons, 1997; Gersten et al., 2007; Kamil et al., 2008

A Preview of Five Essential Elements of Reading Instruction for Grades K-3

Reading instruction in the early grades focuses on **the five essential elements** research has identified: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.[25] [26] [27] v These five essential elements are aligned to Grades K-3 Oregon Reading Standards http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/newspaper/Newspaper_Section.aspx?subjectcd=ELA. Students with knowledge and skills in these essential elements will be able to read at proficient or advanced levels on the OAKS in Reading/Literature in grade 3.

In general, **phonological awareness** instruction is heavily emphasized in kindergarten and the first part of grade 1. **Phonics** instruction begins in kindergarten and grade 1, with teaching children sound symbol relationships and how to decode many simple words. Phonics instruction progresses in grades 2 and 3 to include letter and vowel combinations and more difficult word types. (Students in grades 4 and above focus on advanced word study.) **Fluency** instruction receives greater instructional attention as students develop proficiency in phonics. Fluency instruction begins in grade 1 and is heavily emphasized in grades 2 and 3. (For some students, fluency should continue to be a major instructional focus through grade 8 and above.) **Vocabulary** instruction is strongly emphasized throughout grades K-12. In the early grades, much of the content of vocabulary instruction is from books and other curriculum materials teachers read to students. As students begin to read on their own and read increasingly complex texts across the instructional areas, they encounter words that are not a part of their oral vocabulary, and their vocabulary expands more rapidly. **Comprehension** instruction shifts from a listening comprehension focus in grades K-1 to a mostly reading comprehension focus beginning in grade 1 and continuing on through grade 12. Because comprehension is the key to school success and learning throughout life, there is a heavy emphasis on comprehension instruction throughout grades K-12.[28]

> The best predictor of reading difficulty in kindergarten or first grade is the inability to segment words and syllables into constituent sound units (phonemic awareness).
>
> Lyon (1995)



Key Term

Phoneme: An individual unit of sound. When placed together, phonemes create words.

In the sections that follow, each essential element for beginning reading instruction is defined and described.

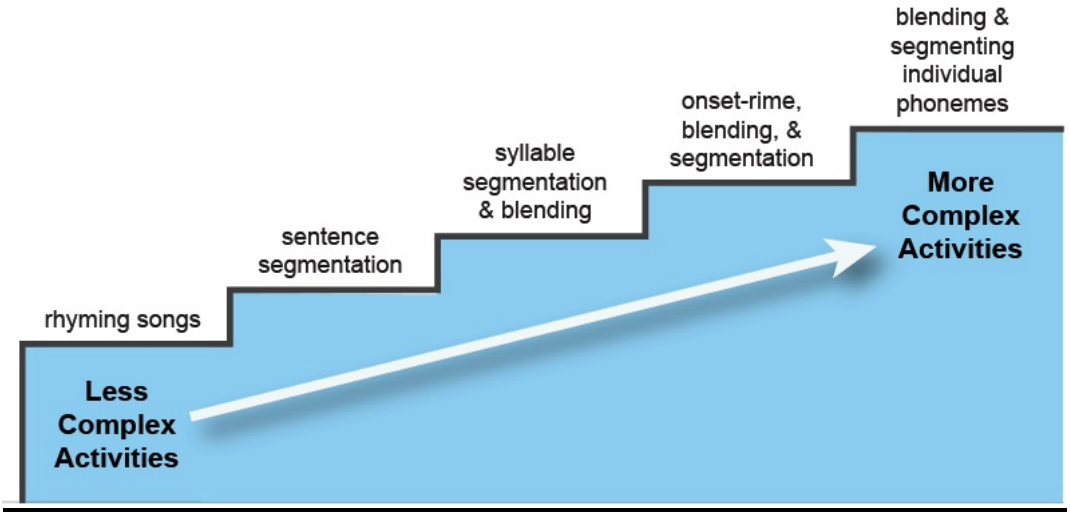
Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness can be defined as one's sensitivity to, or awareness of, the sound structure of words.[29] It is heavily emphasized in kindergarten and the first part of grade 1. Phonological awareness is an **oral language skill** that sets the stage for understanding the association between sounds and print,

[25] National Reading Panel, 2000
[26] National Reading Panel, 2000
[27] Kamil et al., 2008
[28] Coyne, Kame'enui, & Carnine, 2007.
[29] Torgesen and Bryant, 1994

which is the central emphasis of phonics instruction.[30] Phonological awareness can be thought of as a hierarchy of skills that develops over time. Examples of early phonological awareness tasks include identifying and making oral rhymes (e.g., the *cat* on the *mat*) and identifying syllables in spoken words (e.g., clapping the parts in names: *Jo-anne*). More sophisticated phonological awareness skills include identifying onsets and rimes in spoken words (e.g., the first part of *pot* is */p/, p-ot*) and identifying individual phonemes (sounds) in spoken words (e.g., the sounds in *hot* are *h-o-t*). When students are able to hear, identify, and manipulate **individual sounds** in spoken words, they have **phonemic awareness**.[31] Phonemic awareness is the most sophisticated skill in the hierarchy of phonological awareness skills—and **it is the skill that best predicts later reading achievement**.[32] The research base is clear that phonemic awareness can be taught and learned, and when it is, the beneficial impact on early reading achievement is measurable. Instruction that focuses on phoneme blending and segmentation best prepares children for reading. In phoneme blending, children first listen to a sequence of separately spoken phonemes, then they combine the phonemes to form a word (e.g., "What word is */r/ /a/ /t/*?"). In phoneme segmentation, children break a word into its individual sounds (e.g., "Say the sounds in *glad*.").[33]

Hierarchy of Phonological Awareness Skills



[30] Adams, 1990; Shaywitz, 2003
[31] NRP, 2001
[32] Torgesen & Burgess, 1998
[33] Chard & Dickson, 1999

Phonics

> Only a reader with skilled decoding processes can be expected to have skilled comprehension processes.
>
> Perfetti (1984)

Phonics instruction focuses on teaching students the associations between sounds and print. Phonics instruction begins in kindergarten and grade 1 and progresses in grades 2 and 3. In English, 44 phonemes represent the sounds of the language, and children need to know what letters and letter combinations represent each of these phonemes in order to be able to read. **Associating sound to print (decoding)** is essential for learning to read, and most children will need to be taught these sound associations directly. Effective reading instruction teaches students these letter-sound combinations through the isolation of individual letter sounds (i.e., synthetic phonics instruction) as well as in the context of reading connected text.[34] While some children develop adequate phonics skills without a great deal of explicit classroom instruction, other children need even more explicit instruction than what is offered in the classroom in order to learn the associations between sound and print. Strong phonics instruction is highly systematic and incorporates enough practice so that students soon learn to read familiar words with **automaticity** (i.e., applying letter-sound knowledge immediately). Automaticity is essential to reading because meaning is easily lost if every word has to be sounded out before it is read. When children begin reading words with automaticity, they progress rapidly as readers. When they come to an unfamiliar word, they have the tools to read the word phonetically by "sounding it out"; phonetically reading *unfamiliar words* ("sounding out") is the most powerful strategy good readers of all ages use to read words they don't recognize.[35] One focus of phonics instruction, then, is to teach children the associations between sounds and print so they develop **automaticity with familiar words,** and a second focus of phonics instruction is to teach children the skill of regularly and effectively **"sounding out" unfamiliar words** so they are able to access thousands of words on their own.

> *Phonetically reading unfamiliar words ("sounding out") is the most powerful strategy good readers use to read unknown words.*

Fluency

In essence, fluent reading is **reading text accurately and with sufficient pace so that deep comprehension is possible**.[36] [37] If one reads for **comprehension**, then reading fluently is essential. Fluency instruction begins in grade 1 and is heavily emphasized in grades 2 and 3. Some students develop adequate fluency skills without a great deal of explicit instruction. Other students need considerable instruction to learn to read fluently.

Students work on fluency development by reading connected text that includes words they are able to read accurately. This allows students to build on the knowledge they have of phonological awareness and phonics. A consistent problem with some fluency instruction is that the words students are trying to read fluently are not words they are able to decode accurately.[38] When students have problems with decoding

[34] National Reading Panel, 2000
[35] Ehri et al., 2001; Adams, 1998
[36] Pikulski & Chard, 2005
[37] Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mahes, & Hodge, 1995
[38] One of the most common problems in fluency instruction is that students are reading passages that contain words they are not able to read accurately. In these cases, phonics instruction needs to be the focus of the lesson. If fluency instruction is the goal, then the difficulty of the materials needs to be adjusted so that students are able to read the words accurately.

text accurately, fluency instruction is inappropriate because it may encourage them to guess at reading words they do not know. In order to build fluency, students need to practice orally reading and rereading text that is at their independent reading level; that is, text they can read at about 95% accuracy.[39]

Fluent reading also addresses appropriate inflection and expression. Effective fluency instruction includes varied models of fluent reading, with critical features such as inflection and expression conspicuously identified, so that students can emulate these features and receive direct and immediate feedback from teachers on their effort.

> A robust approach to vocabulary involves directly explaining the meanings of words along with thought provoking, playful, and interactive follow-up.
>
> Beck, McKeown, & Kucan (2002)

Grade 1 students improve fluency—and at the same time expand and improve vocabulary and comprehension—when they begin reading hundreds of words on their own independently, typically during the last half of first grade. Making sure all children are on track to being independent readers as soon as possible after they enter school is a major objective of the framework. Once a student begins to read independently, fluency increases and vocabulary and comprehension expand. **Encouraging, supporting, and expecting all students, once they are able to read, to build fluency through reading regularly in and out of school, will result in more grade-level readers and above in grades 1-3 as well as system-wide.** Grade-level readers and above are able to benefit the most from school.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary instruction, teaching the meanings of words, should begin in earnest in the beginning of kindergarten. **Vocabulary knowledge is a key determinant of reading comprehension**. If students do not know the meanings of words they are expected to read, they will have little chance of comprehending the texts they are reading. As students progress through the grade levels and learn to read more difficult texts, they begin learning the meanings of new words that are not part of their oral vocabulary.[40]

While children learn most of their vocabulary at first indirectly by engaging in conversations with adults and through listening to books that are read to them, learning vocabulary through reading on their own soon becomes the most efficient strategy for increasing vocabulary (see independent reading references in previous section on fluency). **In fact, by grade 3, the number one determinant of vocabulary growth is the amount of time a student spends reading independently**.[41] Struggling readers simply do not engage in the amount of free reading necessary to promote large or even sufficient gains in vocabulary knowledge. That is why it is critical for schools to catch young children up quickly to grade-level reading targets so they, too, can become independent readers as early as possible, efficiently building vocabulary and comprehension on their own.

However, explicit instruction in word meanings can add to students' ability to learn a given set of words. Explicit instruction is particularly important for students who are not strong or regular readers. In

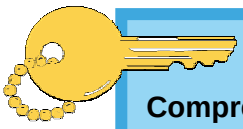
[39] Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001
[40] Oral vocabulary refers to words that students use in speaking or recognize in listening.
[41] Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987

school settings, students can be explicitly taught a relatively deep understanding of about **300 words each year**. This can account for between 6% and 30% of a student's vocabulary growth.[42] It is reasonable to teach thoroughly about eight to ten words per week.[43] [44] Explicit vocabulary instruction provides instruction in word meanings as well as strategies that promote independent vocabulary acquisition skills. Explicit instruction in word meanings and explicit instruction in strategies for learning the meanings of new vocabulary are complementary approaches, not conflicting approaches.[45] Research clearly indicates both approaches enhance students' vocabulary acquisition.[46]

Comprehension

For students to be successful in school, they must be able to read grade-level text with deep comprehension. Students will not be able to read with deep comprehension if they struggle with phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, or vocabulary words they do not know and are encountering in text.[47] [48] If students have these skills and knowledge, the likelihood they will be able to read grade-level text with deep comprehension is very good.

Comprehension instruction shifts from a mostly listening comprehension focus in grades K-1 to a reading comprehension focus beginning in grade 1 and continuing on through grade 12. Comprehension is emphasized strongly in grades 2, 3, and above.



Key Term

Comprehension Strategy: Routines and procedures that students learn to employ in order to make meaning from text. These strategies should be taught explicitly.

To increase the chances students will read with deep comprehension, it is critical that teachers **explain and model** comprehension strategies and skills directly to students at all grade levels.[49] Comprehension strategies are routines and procedures that readers use to help them make sense of texts. Even students who are struggling with phonics or fluency skills can benefit from learning comprehension routines. Examples of these strategies include **summarizing texts, asking and answering questions, paraphrasing, and finding the main idea**.[50] The table that follows lists the seven types of text comprehension strategies which appear to have a solid scientific basis. When these strategies are taught explicitly to students, the benefit in terms of overall reading proficiency can be powerful.[51]

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[42] Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986

[43] NRP, 2001

[44] For some students, especially ELs, this will require a great deal of instruction. For these students, even very common words may be unknown, and if not addressed instructionally, comprehension will be extremely limited.

[45] Kamil et al., 2008

[46] Baumann, Edwards, Boland, Olejnik, & Kame'enui, 2003; Bos & Anders, 1990; Jenkins, Matlock, & Slocum, 1989

[47] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006

[48] Willingham, 2006/2007

[49] NICHY, 2007; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Torgesen, Houston Miller, & Rissman 2007

[50] Kamil et al., 2008

[51] National Reading Panel, 2000

[62] The National Reading Panel identified 7 reading comprehension strategies that are supported by empirical research. There is evidence that when these strategies are taught explicitly, reading comprehension improves. However, Willingham (2006/7) makes the excellent case that many good readers do not require explicit instruction to learn how to comprehend text. Although explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies should not harm students who already read with deep comprehension, this type of instruction is not as critical for students with strong comprehension skills.

Scientifically-Based Comprehension Strategies Identified by the Report of the National Reading Panel
Comprehension Monitoring: Teaching students to be aware of their understanding of the material
Cooperative Learning: Teaching students to work as a group to implement reading strategies
Use of Graphic and Semantic Organizers: Teaching students to make graphic representations of the text to improve comprehension
Question Answering: Teaching students to answer questions and receive immediate feedback
Question Generation: Teaching students to ask themselves questions as they read the text
Story Structure: Teaching students to use story structure to help them recall story content
Summarization: Teaching students to integrate ideas from the text

Explicit instruction is the best delivery system for teaching students comprehension strategies.[52] Explicit comprehension instruction involves a series of steps: **teacher modeling** and explanations of the specific strategies students are learning, **guided practice and feedback** on the use of the strategies, and finally **independent practice** in the application of taught strategies.[53] In addition, explicit instruction involves providing a sufficient amount of support, or scaffolding, to students as they learn **how** to use the strategies on their own and **when** to use them.[54]

In explicitly teaching comprehension strategies to students, it is better to provide multiple-strategy instructional lessons (e.g., make connections between new text information and prior knowledge, make predictions about the content of the text, and draw inferences)[55] than single-strategy lessons.[56] This finding is consistent with the National Reading Panel, which also found benefits from teaching students to use more than one strategy to improve their reading comprehension skills.[57]

The Five Essential Elements of Reading Instruction for Grades 4-12

Adolescent reading instruction is becoming an increasingly popular topic and a body of research-based practices is emerging. The following table provides a list of resources for administrators and teachers on the topic of adolescent literacy. The list is not comprehensive, but offers school personnel a solid starting point for building knowledge in this area.

[52] Duffy et al., 1987; Fuchs et al., 1997; Klingner et al., 1998; Schumaker & Deshler, 1992; Torgesen et al., 2007; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006

[53] Brown, Campione, & Day, 1981; Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991; Kame'enui, Simmons, Chard, & Dickson, 1997; Pearson & Dole, 1987; Pressley, Snyder, & Cariglia-Bull, 1987; Duke & Pearson, 2002

[54] Brown et al., 1981; Palincsar and Brown, 1984; Pearson and Gallagher, 1983

[55] Hansen & Pearson, 1983; Trabasso & Bouchard, 2002

[56] Kamil et al., 2008

[57] NRP, 2000a

Resources on Adolescent Literacy

Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: A Guidance Document from the Center on Instruction

2007, Florida Center for Reading Research

Doing What Works: Research-based Education Practices Online

US Department of Education, http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T_ID=23

Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Practice Brief

2008, Center on Instruction

Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices

2008, Institute of Education Sciences

Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas: Getting to the Core of Middle and High School Improvement

2007, Alliance for Excellent Education

Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy

2006, Alliance for Excellent Education

Reading to Achieve: A Governor's Guide to Adolescent Literacy

2005, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices

Time to Act: An Agenda for Advancing Adolescent Literacy for College and Career Success

2010, Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy.

The Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide: Helping School Districts Transform into Systems that Produce Life-Changing Results for All Children

2007, Stupski Foundation

What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy

2007, National Institute for Literacy

The Center on Instruction, in their practice brief entitled "Effective Instruction for Adolescent Readers," defines adolescent reading as occurring between grades 4-12 and as separate from beginning reading.[58] They note that the essential elements of reading instruction for older readers differ slightly from those of beginning readers. **The Center on Instruction organizes the essential elements of reading for older readers into five general areas: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation.** The following table compares the essential elements of beginning reading instruction with those for adolescents. In the sections that follow, each element of reading instruction at the secondary level is addressed.

[58] Boardman, et al., 2008

Essential Elements of Reading Elementary Level vs. Secondary Level		
Element	**Elementary**	**Secondary**
Phonemic Awareness	✓	
Word Study	✓	✓ (Advanced)
Fluency	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓	✓
Comprehension	✓	✓
Motivation		✓

*Adapted from Center on Instruction Professional Development Module on Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers

Word Study

Word study is defined as instruction that focuses on reading at the word level. Advanced word study focuses on teaching students to utilize **word analysis and word recognition strategies to decode longer, multisyllabic words**. For example, older students are taught to break difficult words apart into the root word, prefixes, and suffixes, and utilize the smaller parts to assist them in decoding the word. From grade 5 on, average readers encounter approximately 10,000 words each year that they have not seen in print before.[59] Most of these new words contain two or more syllables.[60] Ending phonics instruction in the primary grades may result in students who are proficient at reading monosyllabic words, but who lack strategies for decoding longer words. Recommended instructional practices for advanced word study in grades 4-12, as identified by the Center on Instruction, include teaching students to

- Identify and break words into syllable types
- Read multisyllabic words by blending the parts together
- Recognize irregular words that do not follow predictable patterns
- Understand the meanings of common prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, and roots—instruction should include ways in which words relate to each other (e.g., trans: transfer, translate, transform, transition)
- Break words into word parts and combine word parts to create words based on their roots, bases, or other features
- Use structural analysis to decode unknown words. (p. 7)[61]

While word study instruction occurs in reading classes and as part of reading interventions, **it is essential that advanced word study instruction occur across the instructional areas.** Specifically, teachers in all classes focus on teaching the base words, prefixes, suffixes, and compound words that are

[59] Nagy and Anderson, 1984
[60] Cunningham, 1988
[61] Boardman et al., 2008

important for the new vocabulary being introduced.[62] While some instructional focus may be on how to spell these words, the main instructional focus is on how changing word parts signals changes in word meaning.

Fluency

Fluency instruction begins in grade 1 and is heavily emphasized in grades 2 and 3 with a continued emphasis through **grade 5**. However, for some students, fluency should continue to be a major instructional focus through **grade 8 and above**. As noted in the fluency section for grades K-3, "In essence, fluent reading is reading text accurately and with sufficient pace so that deep comprehension is possible." Because **fluent reading is associated with reading comprehension**, fluency is especially important to adolescent readers as they encounter large amounts of text across the instructional areas.

While there is less research on the role of fluency instruction for older students, the Center on Instruction recommends the use of **two instructional practices**. First is the use of repeated reading of the same passage to increase students' sight vocabulary. When utilizing the **repeated reading technique**, selecting passages with a controlled number of target words in otherwise readable text may be especially useful versus selecting overly difficult text with a disproportionate amount of unfamiliar vocabulary. It is important for teachers to select passages for repeated readings that have been previously taught and practiced or to select text at students' independent reading levels.

The second recommended practice for improving fluency is the use of **non-repetitive wide reading** which, when supported by the teacher, can also be a productive way of exposing students to new target words, content, and types of text. With non-repetitive wide reading, teachers select high interest passages at students' independent or instructional reading levels. Students then practice fluency using these successive passages from a novel or textbook. To increase passage difficulty, teachers select texts with new vocabulary and content. The end goal is for adolescent readers to decode words accurately and automatically, read at an appropriate rate, utilize appropriate phrasing and expression, and combine multiple tasks while reading, which includes actively processing and understanding the text.[63]

While formal fluency instruction as described above can best be accomplished through reading classes and reading intervention periods, there are important ways for all teachers to support this element. The National Institute for Literacy, noting that it is important for struggling readers to witness fluent reading on a regular basis, suggests that teachers model fluent reading for students by reading aloud from classroom texts regularly. It is also important for students to have the opportunity to read aloud, although sensitive implementation is important. Choral reading is a good strategy that provides struggling readers with practice reading the text aloud as a group rather than reading aloud on their own. Teachers might select specific passages for choral reading, such as poems, segments of literary works, or critical content that they want students to remember.[64] Teachers may also be effective at providing opportunities that work well for partner reading in class, pairing more fluent readers with less fluent readers and selecting different passages for them to read aloud to one another.[65]

[62] National Institute for Literacy, 2007
[63] Boardman et al., 2008
[64] National Institute for Literacy, 2007
[65] National Institute for Literacy, 2007

Vocabulary

Older readers encounter an abundance of new vocabulary words in the increasingly difficult text they are expected to read. In **grades 4-8**, they receive vocabulary instruction in reading, English language arts, science, social sciences, math and other classes across the instructional areas.[66] In **grades 9-12**, it is also critical that students receive vocabulary instruction in every class. To expand their vocabulary and their ability to access increasingly difficult text, students need to be taught the **meanings** of new words as well as be given **strategies** for determining the meaning of unknown words. The Center on Instruction identifies three types of vocabulary instruction appropriate for older readers:

- Teaching the meaning of specific words
- Teaching word-learning strategies
- Teaching word meaning and word-learning strategies specific to the instructional areas.[67]

> When children have access to words important to the gist of a story or to the meaning of text, the children's understanding is enhanced
>
> (Henry, 2005)

The sections that follow discuss selection of target vocabulary words and then describe each type of vocabulary instruction.

Selecting Words

Secondary teachers begin by selecting words that are important and useful for students within and across the respective instructional areas. The following table provides one method for categorizing words into types or "**tiers**" useful for selecting target vocabulary.

Three-Tiered Approach to Vocabulary (Beck and McKeown, 1985)

Tier 1 Words

Words most students at a particular grade level will know

- basic words (e.g., pour, shake, flow)

Tier 2 Words

- words having utility across many dimensions or instructional areas
- academic words found in many curriculum areas (e.g., observe, record, investigate)

Tier 3 Words

- highly specific content words lacking generalization
- content words
- low-frequency words needed to understand the concept (e.g., translucent, transparent, viscous)

Secondary teachers need to balance instruction of the important content-specific words (Tier 3) with instruction on the high utility words that go across instructional areas (Tier 2).

[66] Kamil et al., 2008
[67] Boardman et al., 2008

The National Institute for Literacy provides another framework for selecting vocabulary words to preteach. This group also makes the distinction between specialized academic words and non-specialized academic words used when discussing subject-specific information. The Institute suggests that teachers consider the following points when selecting vocabulary to preteach:

- Importance of the word for understanding the text
- Students' prior knowledge of the word and the concept to which it relates
- The existence of multiple meanings of the words (e.g., meter in poetry, mathematics, and science)
- Opportunities for grouping words together to enhance understanding a concept (p. 16).[68]

Teaching Words and Strategies

Teaching the meaning of specific words. Once target vocabulary words have been selected, teachers provide a variety of experiences around each new word. This may begin with providing a **student-friendly definition**, and lead to reading the **word in text**, discussing **examples and non-examples** of the word, creating **semantic maps**, etc. It is important to teach **multiple meanings** of the words, providing multiple exposures to the target words to demonstrate the different ways words are used. Effective instruction actively engages students in vocabulary learning (e.g., linking new words to words that students already know through games and discussion) and is flexible in order to ensure students understand and can complete the task at hand.[69] This instruction works particularly well with Tier 2 words (i.e., non-specialized academic words).

Teaching word-learning strategies. In addition to directly teaching the meaning of specific words, secondary teachers teach students to identify the meaning of a new word by using their existing knowledge of words and **word parts**. This instruction, paired with guided practice in using word parts (morphemes) and **contextual cues**, aids students in deriving word meanings. To increase this type of word learning, it is essential that secondary teachers provide opportunities for students to engage in wide reading of texts.[70]

Teaching word-meaning and word-learning strategies specific to the instructional areas. When focusing on the meanings of words in a specific subject area, instruction needs to include both **direct teaching** of word meanings and instruction on **word-learning strategies**.[71] **Grades 4-12** teachers use subject-specific materials to select target vocabulary words, focusing on Tier 3 words (i.e., specialized academic words) that will have high utility in each instructional area. Based on the particular context, teachers determine the goal for depth of word understanding, and then explicitly teach the vocabulary words **prior to reading**, selecting from strategies such as the following: providing a simple definition, generating examples and non-examples, utilizing semantic maps, using key words or word parts, and/or using computer technology.[72]

[68] National Institute for Literacy, 2007
[69] Boardman et al., 2008
[70] Boardman et al., 2008
[71] Boardman et al., 2008
[72] Boardman et al., 2008

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a critical component of reading instruction in **grades 4-12**. The expectations for students to learn from text increase significantly in the upper grades. Students must know how to apply comprehension strategies across instructional areas.[73] As in grades K-3, explicit comprehension instruction is the best delivery system for teaching older students comprehension strategies.[74] The research highlight below describes the components of explicit comprehension strategy instruction.

Research Highlight:

Adolescent Literacy Recommended Practice

Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction (Kamil, 2008). Strong evidence supports teacher modeling and explaining of specific comprehension strategies. This instruction includes active participation of students. In addition, teachers must instruct students on how and why they would use strategies such as summarizing, asking and answering questions, paraphrasing, and finding the main idea. This explicit instruction ensures that students are able to use and apply the strategy independently and with a variety of text types.

As also noted in the research highlight, an essential dimension of effective instruction in comprehension strategies is the **active participation of students** in the comprehension process. In fact, many researchers believe that it is not the particular strategies taught that make the difference in student comprehension, but rather active student engagement in the comprehension process.[75] For passive readers, strategy instruction may be a catalyst for them to become actively engaged in processing the meaning of text. Struggling adolescent readers are frequently students whose "eyes sometimes glaze over the words on the page because they are not actively processing the meaning of what they are reading."[76] Instruction in applying comprehension strategies may help these students become more active readers.

Strong readers may not require explicit instruction to read with deep comprehension, but there is no evidence that providing explicit comprehension instruction for these students is harmful, and there is some evidence that the development of comprehension strategies and skills will occur more quickly with these students when explicit instruction is provided. For these students, teachers can differentiate by providing them with more complex texts and assignments in order to accelerate application of advanced reading comprehension strategies.

Explicit strategy instruction includes the following key steps:[77]

1. Select texts carefully when first beginning to teach a strategy. For example, teaching the main idea is sometimes difficult with narrative texts because many narrative texts do not have clear main ideas.

[73] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006
[74] Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Kamil, 2008; Torgesen et al., 2007
[75] Gersten et al., 2001; Pressley et al., 1987
[76] Kamil et al., 2008
[77] Kamil et al., 2008

2. Teach students how to apply the strategies they are learning to different texts. This encourages flexible and appropriate strategy use.[78]
3. Ensure that the text is appropriate for the reading level of students. Texts that are difficult to read make strategy use problematic because students are struggling with the text itself. Texts that are too easy make strategy use unnecessary.
4. Begin explicit comprehension strategy instruction by telling students what strategies they are going to learn and why it is important to learn them.[79]
5. Model how to use the strategies by reading and thinking aloud with a text.[80] Provide guided practice with feedback so that students have opportunities to practice using the strategies. When students are able to demonstrate strategy use with guided support, teachers then provide independent practice using the strategies.
6. Make sure students understand that the goal of strategy use is to comprehend the text and that the strategies can be used flexibly by readers. Focusing too much on the process of learning comprehension strategies can minimize the importance of students' understanding of the text itself.[81] **The goal should always be comprehending texts – not using strategies.** [82] Different readers can achieve proficient comprehension by using different strategies. The true purpose of strategy instruction is effective, independent reading.

> ...all teachers can assume responsibility for helping students comprehend texts that are used in their classrooms. The goal of text comprehension instruction is to help students become active, purposeful, and independent readers of science, history, literacy and mathematics texts.
>
> (The National Institute for Literacy, 2007, p. 20)

Many comprehension strategies are general and can be used across the instructional areas. The National Institute for Literacy, in their report titled, "What Content-Area Teachers Should Know about Adolescent Literacy," identified the following general strategies that can be adapted for use with most types of text:

Generate Questions. Teachers read aloud passages from subject-area texts, stopping to model the kinds of questions successful readers ask, repeat this modeling several times, and guide students in generating their own questions.

Answer Questions. Using subject-area texts, teachers can model how to construct answers from: explicit information ("right there" responses), implicit information found in several places in the text ("pulling it together" responses), a synthesis of information in the text and the reader's own prior knowledge ("text and me" responses), and answers when the student does not have to read the text for the answer, but the text will inform the answer ("on my own" responses).

Monitor Comprehension. Teachers read aloud selected text passages stopping at various points to "think aloud" about what may or may not be understood and modeling aloud problem-solving strategies.

---

[78] Duffy, 2002; Paris et al., 1983; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995
[79] Brown et al., 1981; Duke & Pearson, 2002
[80] Bereiter & Bird, 1985; Duke & Pearson, 2002
[81] Pearson & Dole, 1987
[82] Kamil, et al., 2008

***Summarize Text*.** Teachers explicitly teach the four components to the summarizing strategy: identify and formulate main ideas, connect the main ideas, identify and delete redundancies, and restate the main idea and connections using different words and phrasings.

Use Text Structure. Teachers examine the content, language, and structure of text with which students may have difficulty and identify specific strategies such as using graphic and semantic organizers or using words that function as transition or signal words for a particular text structure.

***Use Graphic and Semantic Organizers*.** Teachers provide instruction on how to use graphic and semantic organizers that will help them see the relationships among concepts, ideas, and facts in a text.[83]

The following table organizes comprehension strategies that can be used across instructional areas before reading, during reading, and after reading.

[83] National Institute for Literacy, 2007

Comprehension Strategies to Support Text-Based Learning	
Before Reading	**Previewing** • Encourage students to observe text organization and text features • Help students to anticipate new content **Activating Prior Knowledge** • Prepare students to engage actively in new learning • Help students remember relevant knowledge **Understanding Relationships** • Strengthen students' abilities to categorize and classify (For example, use anticipation guides and generate questions.)
During Reading	**Increasing Thinking and Memory Skills** • Build cognition and metacognition • Help students learn how to remember new information • Help students develop and see relationships among ideas (For example, use graphic and semantic organizers, interspersed questions, paired reviews and/or reciprocal teaching.)
After Reading	**Answering Comprehension Questions** • Focus on the essence of the question • Help students answer the question accurately and succinctly
	Summarizing • Increase factual recall and conceptual understanding of content information (For example, use multiple choice questions, think-pair-share for answering written questions)

From: ACCESS Toolkit, 2008 (research-based comprehension strategies)

Following is an example of a before-reading activity designed to reinforce the understanding of relationships; a second example is specific to health. See the resource list at the end of the chapter for more discipline-specific examples.[vi]

NAME DATE

Anticipation Guide

DIRECTIONS Read each statement carefully and place a check mark in front of those statements with which you agree or believe to be true. Be prepared to defend your thinking when we discuss the statements.

_____ 1. _____

_____ 2. _____

_____ 3. _____

_____ 4. _____

_____ 5. _____

_____ 6. _____

From Susan Davis Lenski, Mary Ann Wham, Jerry L. Johns, and Micki M. Caskey. *Reading and Learning Strategies: Middle Grades through High School* (3rd ed.). Copyright © 2007 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 800-247-3458, Ext. 4. May be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes only.

E HEALTH EXAMPLE

Anticipation Guide

DIRECTIONS Read each statement carefully and place a check mark in front of those statements with which you agree or believe to be true. Be prepared to defend your thinking when we discuss the statements.

_____ 1. A sudden change in mood can be caused by drug abuse.

_____ 2. Damage can occur to the heart muscle with cocaine use, but no heart attacks will be caused.

_____ 3. Good relationships with parents, friends, and authorities increase with drug usage.

_____ 4. Bronchitis and hypothermia occur in cocaine users.

_____ 5. Illegal behaviors such as stealing may increase with cocaine or illegal drug use.

From Susan Davis Lenski, Mary Ann Wham, Jerry L. Johns, and Micki M. Caskey. *Reading and Learning Strategies: Middle Grades through High School* (3rd ed.). Copyright © 2007 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 800-247-3458, Ext. 4. May be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes only.

Motivation

Research Highlight:
Adolescent Literacy Recommended Practice

Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning (Kamil, 2008). There is a small base of experimental and quasi-experimental research that supports the consideration of motivation when teaching adolescent literacy.[84] This includes selecting materials that students can relate to their own lives. A similar level of motivation can be achieved when students can choose their own reading material from a teacher designed pre-selected group of texts. Teachers should also strive to build the confidence of students. Some strategies for doing this include viewing mistakes as growth opportunities and providing feedback to students about comprehension strategies and how strategies can be modified to fit various tasks.

Motivating students to read is an essential issue to address with adolescent readers. Lack of motivation to read and lack of engagement in reading can hinder comprehension and limit access to new vocabulary and content.[85] Successful readers are motivated to interact with text, are strategic in how they read text, have better comprehension when engaged with the text, are interested in reading to learn more about particular topics, and as a result, read more.[86] Researchers have identified four instructional practices that can increase student motivation:

- Provide goals for reading (i.e., provide a question or purpose for reading)
- Support student autonomy (i.e., give students opportunities to choose text)
- Use interesting text
- Increase opportunities for students to collaborate during reading.[87]

Organizing Principle 4: Research-Based Strategies, Programs, and Materials are Adopted and Used Schoolwide with a High Level of Fidelity

With the goal of all students reading at grade level or above, schools use strategies, programs, and materials that focus on the essential elements of reading. The strategies, programs, and materials are constructed in a manner aligned to the best research evidence available on design of instruction. When possible, strategies, programs, and materials should be supported by evidence from experimental research that clearly demonstrates their effectiveness; that is, a program has actual scientific evidence of effectiveness that has been demonstrated through a well-designed study that clearly describes how the research was conducted. The term **"evidence-based"** is used here to describe these types of strategies, programs, and materials. In the absence of an evidence-base, then strategies, programs, and materials are used that have been designed based on components that scientific research has verified as effective. While the exact program itself may not have been evaluated, it is based on components and techniques

[84] Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Biancorosa & Snow, 2006; RAND, 2002
[85] Morgan & Fuchs, 2007
[86] Boardman et al., 2008
[87] Guthrie & Humenick, 2004

proven effective in other research studies. The term **"research-based"** is used here to describe these types of strategies, programs, and materials.

Each school needs an integrated set of strategies, programs, and materials that are selected and used to meet the needs of the full range of students in the building. In **grades K-5/6**, this includes a core reading program, supplemental programs and materials, and intervention programs that are specifically designed for students who are well below desired reading goals.[88] In **grades 6-8** and **grades 9-12**, reading textbooks, subject-area texts, and other materials may be used effectively with students reading at grade level or somewhat below. Supplemental programs may also be implemented with students reading somewhat below grade level. For students well below grade level, however, intervention programs that focus on foundational aspects of reading development need to be used. For all students **grades 4-12**, strategies to promote access to subject-specific texts should be used across the instructional areas. In the sections below, the use of core, supplemental, and intervention programs across the grade levels is discussed.

Key Terms

Research-Based vs. Evidence-Based

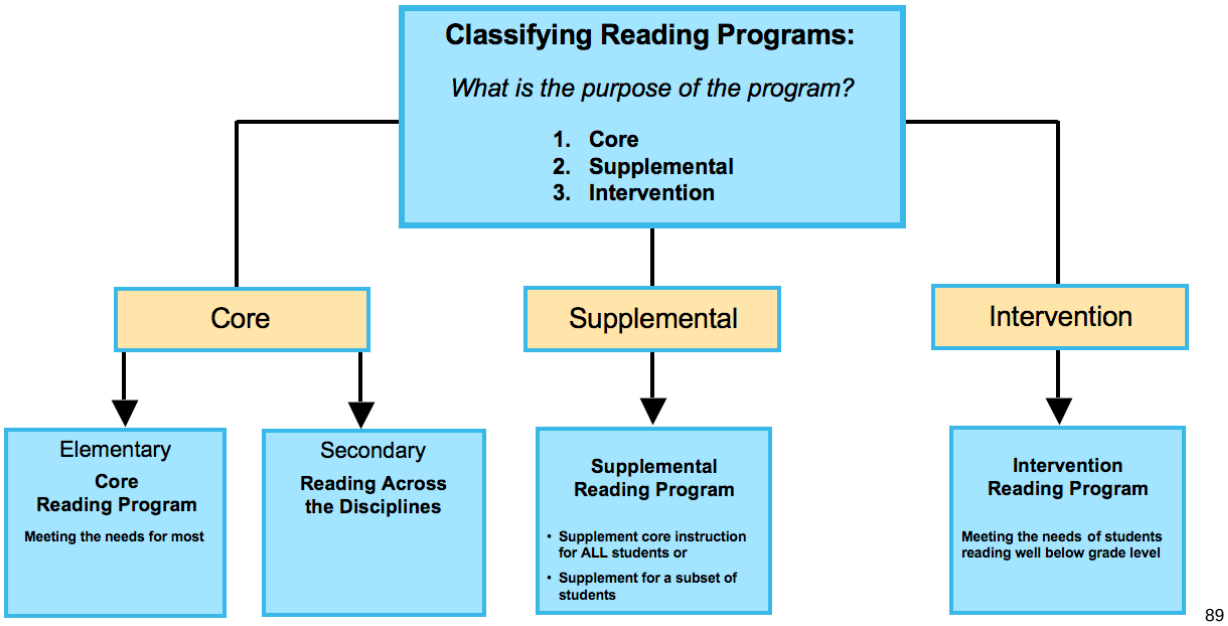
The term **"research-based**" indicates that the specific program/approach is based on scientific research. It includes components that scientific research has verified as effective, but it may or may not have evidence of actual use in practice.

"Evidence-based" indicates that a scientific study has determined that the specific program/approach is effective when implemented, that is, a program has actual scientific evidence of its effectiveness that has been demonstrated through a well-designed study that clearly describes how the research was conducted.

The term "core" has different meanings at elementary and secondary. In **grades K-5/6**, a core program is a basal reading program that can be purchased for use as the basis of reading instruction. Similar types of programs can be used in **grades 6-8** as part of the curriculum for reading classes.

The term "core" means something entirely different for **grades 9-12**, however. In high school, teachers do not implement a core reading program. Instead, reading instruction is diffused across the instructional areas. **"Core instruction"** refers to the reading instruction that all teachers provide in every course. Subject-area texts are analogous to core reading programs in earlier grades. Reading instruction is not a separate subject, but rather becomes discipline-specific.

[88] District and school leaders purchasing a variety of programs will need to study how programs will align. Often the scope and sequence of intervention programs and core curriculums are not aligned; at the least, special planning time will be needed by teachers to make the necessary adjustments so as not to confuse struggling learners who are receiving instruction in several programs.



[89]

Core Reading Program: Elementary

In **grades K-5/6**, schools select and implement a research-based core reading program. In general, the core program is used with (a) students who are meeting or exceeding reading goals or (b) with students who are close to meeting reading goals. Note that students who are performing well-below grade level can benefit from participating in parts of the core program as well. The core program should comprehensively address all five essential elements of beginning reading, provide explicit and systematic instruction, and be sequenced in a way so that if it is taught by teachers with fidelity, students will develop the necessary skills to meet reading goals and expectations. In other words, the major benefit of using a core reading program is that if used correctly, students have the greatest opportunity to learn the knowledge and skills they need to meet state reading standards in **grades K-5/6**, which means they would read at grade level soon after they enter school or in grade 3 at the latest and continue reading at grade level throughout elementary school and beyond.

Additional benefits to students, teachers, and schools accrue from the use of a common core reading program. A good core program is **sequenced** carefully within and between grades so as students move through the grades, the content knowledge addressed builds on previous knowledge. A common core program makes **planning easier** for teachers. It provides a basis for **effective staff communication** about goals and objectives, instruction, and student performance. A coach benefits by needing to know deeply one core program rather than several. For schools and districts, selection of a common core program makes providing **professional development more efficient and cost effective**. For districts with high mobility, a common core program provides **consistency in instruction from school to school**.

[89] Adapted from Vaughn, Hughes, Moody, & Elbaum, 2001

Benefits of Selecting a Common Core Reading Program in the Elementary Grades	
Audience	**Benefit**
Students	A core program provides instructional continuity from grade level to grade level (i.e., vertical alignment of scope and sequence for the five essential elements).
Teachers	A common core program makes planning and pacing of the instructional program easier and provides a basis for effective staff communication about reading instruction, student data, and reading goals.
Coaches	A coach benefits by needing to know deeply one core program rather than several.
Schools / Districts	A common core program makes professional development cost effective and efficient.
District	For districts with high mobility, a common core program provides consistency in instruction and language from school to school.

Teachers need extensive professional development to use a core program effectively and with **fidelity**. To that end, it is important to differentiate professional development based on teacher need. **Professional development provided by publishers is insufficient** for effective implementation of the program to occur. Additional and on-going professional development is critical, particularly during year one with follow-up provided during year two, if the core program is to be used effectively and with fidelity. See the Professional Development chapter, 3-4, for a discussion on preparing teachers to implement reading programs.

Defining Fidelity to the Program

Fidelity of implementation is an important and commonly misunderstood concept. Many educators mistakenly assume that "fidelity" means that ALL aspects of the program are implemented precisely as written by the publisher. There are two major problems associated with this interpretation. **First**, most core programs contain more material than can be taught in the time schools allocate for reading instruction (90 minutes). **Second**, some aspects of the core program lesson(s) may not provide sufficient information about what teachers actually need to do instructionally to provide systematic and explicit instruction. In this case, the goal is for teachers to instruct in a way that actually provides more explicit instruction than is indicated in the core program. The most important aspect regarding fidelity to the core program is that school-based teams decide (a) what aspects of the core program are most important in teaching the five essential elements, and (b) when and how specific aspects of the core should be extended or enhanced to make instruction in these five essential elements more systematic and explicit, based on student need.

As noted above, elementary schools select core programs that are constructed in a manner that is aligned with the best research evidence available. If a core program is not supported by experimental research (i.e., an evidence-based program), a school will need to evaluate the quality of how a core program is constructed (i.e., determine if the program is research-based). There are multiple dimensions on which the construction of core programs should be evaluated.[vii] It would be a major challenge to schools to adequately evaluate the design of a core reading program because of the time and preparation it takes to do this well. However, schools can be critical consumers of information provided by other larger entities that have conducted comprehensive reviews of core reading programs. Schools can carefully analyze these reviews, examine the instruments and methods used in conducting the reviews, and arrange to ask questions and otherwise seek additional information about the review process before deciding to purchase a core program.[viii]

Design Features of Strong Core Programs

- Provide explicit and systematic instruction
- Provide ample practice on high-priority skills
- Include systematic and cumulative review of high priority skills
- Demonstrate and build relationships between fundamental skills leading to higher order skills.

From the "Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" (Simmons and Kame'enui, 2005)

Core Reading Program: Middle School

Literature anthologies are commonly used as the core curriculum in heterogeneous middle school English language arts classes. In the homogenously-grouped **middle school reading classes**, **informational text materials** from across the instructional areas are a main focus along with the core **anthology for English language arts**. It is possible that for some students a different literature anthology, or the support materials associated with an anthology, may be utilized for instruction. It is important to note that curriculum should be matched to student need. For example, students with intensive reading needs would not be placed in an anthology of grade-level reading material. Instead, these students would be placed in an intervention program designed specifically for struggling adolescent readers. The intervention program would supplant the core curriculum.

Supplemental Programs and Materials: Elementary

Supplemental programs generally provide **deeper instruction and additional practice on a particular essential element** or subset of essential elements. For example, a supplemental program may focus on phonological awareness and phonics for students in kindergarten and grade 1 or a supplemental fluency program may be used with students in grades 4-5. Deeper instruction means that the instruction for a particular concept or skill is more extensive than it would normally be presented in the core program. For example, more guidance is given to teachers in how to make instruction more explicit and systematic. Teachers have more extensive opportunities to model a skill or task. Students have more opportunities to practice applying what they have learned in the lesson under the careful guidance of the teacher and also independently. **Learning objectives are divided into more discrete subsets of an essential element(s)** so that when students struggle it is clear what the source of difficulty is and how to address it.

There are **two reasons** elementary schools may consider the use of supplemental programs. **First,** when schools examine analyses of core reading programs they may find that the design for teaching all five essential elements of reading is not of equal quality. Some essential elements may be strongly designed throughout the grades and others less so. **To address shortcomings in how a particular element in a core program is designed,** a school may “supplement” the core program with a supplemental program. To address phonics shortcomings in a core program, for example, schools may consider the use of a phonics supplement. The supplemental phonics program would be used with **ALL** students who receive instruction from the core reading program as an addition or supplement to the core program, not as a substitution for the phonics instruction from the core. The same rationale holds for other essential elements of reading.

A **second** reason elementary schools may consider the use of supplemental programs is **to address the needs of a subset of students** for whom the instruction provided in the core program, though designed well, is not sufficient to meet their specific needs. For some students, particularly students who are close to meeting grade-level reading expectations but are still below desired goals, there may be gaps in their knowledge and skill in relation to one or more of the essential elements. For example, for students not meeting formative phonics goals, schools may need to consider the use of a supplemental phonics program to provide additional instructional support. Another example is a student who has sound phonics skills but is not making adequate progress in reading fluency. A supplemental program targeting fluency instruction might be beneficial in providing more instruction and practice for the student in this area. The core program may address fluency instruction in a way that meets the needs of the majority of

students, but for a small number of students additional fluency instruction may be necessary. Again, this supplemental instruction would be provided as an **addition to the core program** and would not be a substitution for content included in the core.

Benefits of Using a Supplemental Program
✓ Address shortcomings in how a particular element in a core program is designed by providing supplemental instruction to **all students**.
✓ Address the needs of **a subset of students** for whom the instruction provided in the core programs, though designed well, is not sufficient to meet the needs of specific students.

Supplemental Programs and Materials: Middle School and High School

In **grades 6-12**, reading teachers and specialists can utilize assessment data to determine specific areas of need for students who are not reading at grade level and provide supplemental instruction (see the definition of supplemental materials in the opening portion of the previous section) in these areas. Some students, for example, may need explicit instruction on strategies to decode multisyllabic words. The school can then select a supplemental advanced phonics program to implement with these students daily or several times a week. Other students may need to focus on building reading fluency. In this case, schools can select and implement a supplemental fluency program. **Fluency programs** that include informational text as part of the daily instruction may be especially beneficial for these older students who are required to read subject-specific texts. There are different ways to schedule supplemental instruction in the upper grades. In grades 6-8, where the recommended practice is to include a reading class for all students, schools can include the supplemental program as part of the reading instruction provided during reading class to those groups of students who need it. A common method to implement a supplemental program in grades 9-12 is to utilize homeroom, study hall, or elective periods to implement the supplemental programs. In addition to utilizing supplemental programs to improve reading skills, it is critical that secondary teachers provide within each instructional area opportunities for advanced word study, fluency building activities with subject-area texts, explicit vocabulary instruction, and direct comprehension strategy instruction.

While **grades 6-12** teachers do not implement supplemental reading programs in their courses, their role in helping all students to access required text or other text specific to a subject area is significant. **Text in the instructional areas is typically above many students' reading level**.[90] As a result, it was common in the past to have students read very little text, the rationale being that if students learned the content–even if they could not read the content to understand it deeply—instructional expectations were met. It is important, however, that all students, including those who are struggling readers, be given opportunities to read texts across the instructional areas. In the effort to help all students become grade-level readers or higher, **teachers can select text at students' instructional levels** to supplement the course text. To help students access informational text, teachers can (a) summarize and explicitly teach the content from text in their respective courses, (b) provide scaffolds to students for reading the selected

[90] Armbruster, 1984; Armbruster & Anderson, 1988

course text, and (c) provide additional text at the students' reading level. Teachers will find it helpful to use **Lexile measures** to assist with identifying appropriate text for the range of learners in their classrooms.[ix] http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1638 The **Oregon School Library Information System** (**OSLIS**) http://www.oslis.org/ provides research databases of articles, many of them Lexiled (every Oregon district has an access code for OSLIS databases). Teachers find Lexiles useful as a way to locate informational text at students' independent and instructional reading levels. This approach to selecting text will pay large dividends for students as they are expected to practice reading in every class, improving their reading skills over time. Students who understand the importance of daily practice to hone skills in sports, music, and other areas will understand how daily practice "plays" out in reading as well!

To select the most effective supplemental programs for both elementary and secondary levels, schools identify those programs supported by experimental research (i.e., evidence-based programs). In the absence of experimental research, schools evaluate the alignment of supplemental programs to scientifically-based reading research. A website for accessing a tool to evaluate supplemental programs is provided at the end of the chapter along with links to websites that include completed reviews of programs.[x]

Intervention Programs: Elementary

Intervention programs are intense reading programs designed to address **the needs of students who are well below grade-level goals**. Whereas core reading programs in the early grades typically focus on many aspects of literacy instruction including areas such as writing, spelling, and oral communication, intervention reading programs focus more narrowly on the essential elements of reading. To select the most effective intervention programs, schools should identify those programs supported by experimental research (i.e., evidence-based programs). In the absence of experimental research, schools can evaluate the alignment of intervention programs to scientifically-based reading research.[xi]

Intervention programs can be comprehensive, but in some cases intervention programs focus on fewer than all five essential elements. Some intervention programs specialize on only one element of reading. For example, a subset of students may be reading or decoding with a high level of accuracy, but their rate of oral reading continues to be slow. In this example, the students would benefit from an intervention program that focuses on fluency building and not phonics.

Many core reading programs now include intervention materials. One benefit of utilizing intervention programs that are designed to go with a core reading program is the consistency in the scope and sequence between the core and intervention for items such as the order of introduction of sounds, high frequency words, and word types. This consistency is often reflected in common themes as well. Just as with stand-alone interventions, however, schools need to review the core-embedded intervention program to determine if the program is aligned to scientifically-based reading research. In some cases, the core-embedded intervention programs may not be intensive enough to meet the needs of the students. Characteristics of intensive intervention programs are discussed below.

One characteristic of an intensive intervention reading program is that instruction is usually **more explicit and systematic**. A second characteristic is that an emphasis is placed on the concept of **mastery learning**; that is, there are clear criteria for what students must do to demonstrate they have learned instructional content before teachers move to the next lesson in the sequence. The idea behind mastery

learning is that students can only progress through the sequence of learning objectives when they are able to demonstrate competence on the key objectives of the instructional content.

A third important characteristic of an intervention reading program is that student **progress on formative reading goals is carefully monitored**. The ultimate objective is that students will make sufficient progress in the intervention program to **exit the program** and receive their instruction in the core program or in a grade-level reading class. Normally this requires a specific plan for the amount of instructional material teachers will need to cover each day so the students will eventually catch up to the instruction being provided in the core program or grade-level class. The concept of mastery learning is critical in this pacing plan because adequate pacing ensures that teachers cover instructional content and that students master the key objectives.

It is helpful for teachers to set goals for **lesson pacing** and then provide regular, planned updates on the lesson progress of their instructional groups.[xii] These updates can be scheduled in conjunction with upcoming grade-level or department-level meetings. Teachers indicate how many lessons each group has completed to date (e.g., the blue group in first grade has completed Lesson 55 of Intervention Program X as of October 31st). These updates include the most recent information on student performance on in-program mastery tests as well as a summary of the students' overall progress toward formative reading goals. Teachers work in grade-level or department-level teams to review the lesson progress updates to determine which groups are on pace for timely completion of the program, which groups are not on pace, and which groups do not have all students at mastery. The team identifies ways to improve lesson pacing (e.g., sharpen teacher presentation skills) or address lack of mastery (e.g., provide additional opportunities for group responses prior to individual responses). The team also identifies if there are students who need to be regrouped based on their performance at these regular updates.

Teams select and implement intervention programs based on the students' grade and level of need. For example, kindergarten students who are identified as being at risk for reading difficulty upon entering school in the fall require intensive intervention. Teams select a research-based intervention program that teaches phonemic awareness and beginning phonics skills. These kindergarten students may participate in the regular core reading instruction and receive an additional explicit, systematic intervention program outside of the reading block (e.g., in an extended day program). Grade 5 students who are reading at the grade 2-level will require an intervention program that teaches initial decoding skills and allows for acceleration through the lessons so students can learn the content in a shorter amount of time. For these struggling readers, teams may consider supplanting core reading instruction with the intervention program during the regular reading block AND providing additional instructional time outside of the reading block to complete lessons in the intervention program. This additional instruction time may also be used to reteach or provide extra practice on skills that were difficult during the initial presentation of lessons earlier in the day.

Intervention Programs: Middle School and High School

Common Characteristics of Struggling Readers in Middle and High School Grades

Stupski Foundation Report: The Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide

- Are less fluent readers - many have some multisyllabic needs and their sight word vocabularies are thousands of words smaller than the grade-level reader
- Are less familiar with the meaning of words
- Have less conceptual and content knowledge
- Have fewer and less-developed strategies to enhance comprehension or repair it when it breaks down
- Do not enjoy reading nor choose to read for pleasure

In middle school and high school, interventions differentiated enough to close the gap for intensive struggling readers are also necessary.[91] Intense interventions (see the definition of intervention materials in the opening portion of the previous section) on word study and fluency building are provided to those students who lack foundational reading skills. These interventions are provided by reading specialists or teachers who have undergone thorough professional development to help them understand the program or approach they will use.[92] Professional development also deepens teachers' understanding of adolescent struggling readers. Placement of secondary students in interventions begins with **initial screening data** to identify those students who need extra help and is followed up by a deeper **assessment with diagnostic tests** to provide a profile of literacy strengths and weaknesses.[93xiii] Additional information regarding intensive interventions for older struggling readers is provided in the section on differentiated instruction that follows.

Research Highlight:

Adolescent Literacy Recommended Practice

Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists (Kamil, 2008). Strong scientific evidence supports this recommendation to provide intensive support for those middle and secondary students struggling with basic literacy skills. Students in this situation need their growth to be accelerated so they may catch up to their peers. This process begins with teacher observation and initial screening to see which students are in need of this instruction and then a diagnostic assessment to determine their literacy skill weaknesses and strengths. Based on the assessment results, an intensive and explicit instructional plan should be developed and delivered by a skilled teacher.

[91] McPeak, 2007
[92] Torgesen et al., 2007
[93] Kamil et al., 2008

Teachers in middle school and high school are not responsible for carrying out intensive interventions for struggling readers. However, it is a priority through professional development for **teachers to learn to use strategies designed to make subject-area texts more accessible to all students**, **including those who struggle with literacy**.[94] It is critical for teachers to activate prior knowledge, set a purpose for the reading, preteach key vocabulary, preview text structure, and utilize other consistent teaching processes with expository text that support effective reading. In doing so, teachers use tools that will help struggling readers better understand and remember the content. For instance, **graphic organizers** and **guided discussions** can help students understand and master the curriculum content.[xiv] If schoolwide coordination is achieved through common planning periods and informal opportunities for teachers to collaborate and communicate across the instructional areas, teachers can more easily provide mutually reinforcing reading opportunities to better prepare students to meet identified standards in all areas. Ideally, teachers work with literacy specialists and other teachers to provide coherent and consistent instruction that enables students to succeed in reading across the instructional areas.

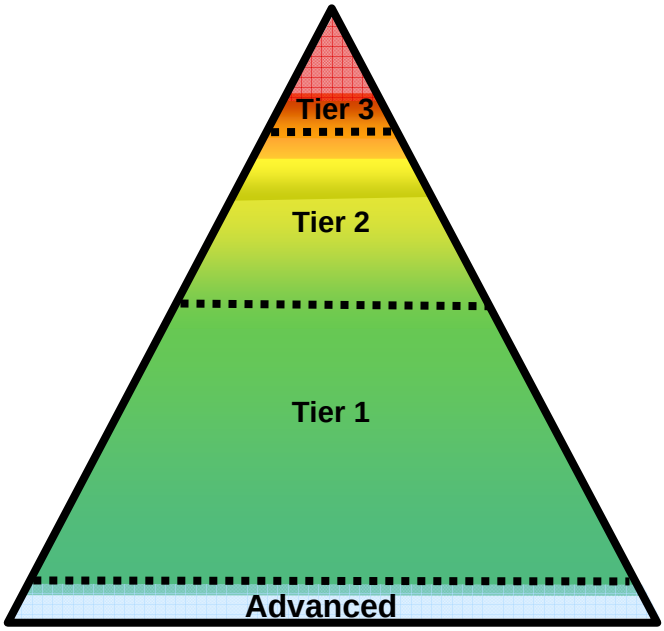
Organizing Principle 5: Instruction Is Differentiated Based on Student Need

The third major organizing principle of high-quality reading instruction is differentiating instruction based on student need. Differentiated instruction is the key instructional concept that drives the nature of instruction for below grade-level readers and above grade-level readers. In order for **ALL** students to be able to meet yearly reading goals, instruction needs to be differentiated based on student need. This concept articulates how each teacher, with support described in this section, is able to make sure that all students in his or her classroom receive the instruction they need to make adequate reading progress and to become grade-level readers or above. For **students who are on track** for successful reading achievement, core reading instruction can be provided that (a) meets state standards, (b) allows students to meet or exceed standards on the OAKS in Reading/Literature and (c) allows students to read texts and other material across the instructional areas with comprehension.

For **students who are not on track**—those students who are not meeting formative reading goals and are not meeting on the OAKS in Reading/Literature—reading instruction should be **differentiated** from standard core instruction so that students can make progress toward reading at grade level. The way instruction is differentiated—as well as the intensity of the instruction—is based on student need.

[94] Torgesen et al., 2007

Instructional Tiers of Support



Tier 3 – Students who are reading significantly below grade level and are at high risk for long-term reading difficulties.

Tier 2 – Students who are reading slightly below grade level and are at moderate risk for long-term reading difficulties**.**

Tier 1 – Students who are reading at grade level and are low risk for long-term reading difficulties.

Advanced – Students who are reading above grade level.

The first step in organizing how to differentiate instruction is to **group students** based on level and type of need. Increasingly, students are grouped into instructional tier categories. These **instructional tiers** are based on how far below or above students are relative to grade-level reading goals. The precise number of tiers may vary among schools, but most schools use three or four instructional tiers at each grade.

In a 4-tiered system, the term "**Advanced**" describes students who are reading above grade level. Advanced students typically are quite efficient at learning the core content and require enhanced activities to continue to accelerate progress. **Tier 1** describes those students who are reading at grade level and are considered to be at **low risk** for long-term reading difficulties. **Tiers 2** and **3** describe students who are not meeting grade-level reading goals.

Tier 2 students are described as being **at moderate risk** for long-term reading difficulties. Generally, instruction for Tier 2 students in **grades K-8** is differentiated in ways that allow them to be successful in the school's core reading program or in the grade-level reading class. This may involve enhancing the core program, or providing reading class instruction that provides more explicit teacher language, more teacher modeling, and more practice opportunities on critical reading skills.[xv] [xvi] In some cases, a supplemental program is necessary to establish foundational reading skills for Tier 2 students. A supplemental program may be implemented as part of a reading class curriculum in **grades 6-8**. In **grades 9-12**, schools may schedule a supplemental reading program during study skills, homeroom, or elective periods for Tier 2 students who would benefit.

For **Tier 2** students in **grades K-5** settings, **additional reading instruction outside of the 90-minute block** is often needed for students to make the progress necessary to reach grade-level reading goals. Teachers implement a supplemental program during the additional reading time. Tier 2 students in

grades 4-12 require teacher support to access the content across the curriculum. To help students access information, teachers can (a) **summarize and explicitly teach** the content from text in their respective courses, (b) **provide scaffolds** to students for reading the selected course text, and (c) **provide additional text** at the students' level. It is critical for this instruction to be provided within the context of the class. See sections on supplemental and intervention programs for more information on how classroom teachers can support students in their classrooms who are receiving supplemental and intervention instruction for reading improvement.

Tier 3 students are **at high risk for long-term reading difficulties** and need the most intense reading instruction possible. Typically, the core instruction alone is not appropriate. Tier 3 students require reading instruction that is as explicit as possible and **focuses exclusively on the essential elements of reading.**

In **grades K-5**, depending on student need, schools may include Tier 3 students in some or all of the core instruction and provide additional intensive instruction using the intervention materials that were designed to complement the core program or a separate intervention program. In many cases, a separate, stand-alone intervention program is selected and supplants the core program for Tier 3 students. Instruction is differentiated through the effective implementation of the intervention program.

For Tier 3 students in **grades 6-8** and **grades 9-12**, schools need to provide intensive and individualized interventions delivered by trained specialists.[95] The cause of reading difficulties may differ from student to student. Schools adjust the focus and intensity of the interventions provided based on student need. Intensive interventions may, for example, focus on phonemic awareness and initial decoding for some students and teach more advanced word analysis along with fluency-building for other students. Another group of students may require assistance in increasing vocabulary knowledge and implementing comprehension strategies. This targeted support is most effective when provided in regular, small-group sessions provided over an extended period of time.[96] **Tier 3 adolescents continue to participate in regular subject-area classes while receiving an intensive reading intervention**. Teachers need to pay particular attention to providing the instructional support necessary for these students to actively participate in the classes and to learn the content. See the resource list at the end of this chapter for a link to a description of a 4-tier middle school delivery model and accompanying questions for discussion.[xvii]

In grades K-5, when an intervention reading program is used with Tier 3 students and a different core program, or reading class, is provided for Tier 1 and Tier 2 students, an important goal for Tier 3 students is to eventually receive their reading instruction in the same core program or reading class as other students. That is **the purpose of intensive interventions: to accelerate students' reading development to bring them up to grade-level performance**. For this challenging transition to occur, Tier 3 students have to make accelerated reading progress over an extended period of time.[97]

In order to accelerate reading progress for Tier 3 students, reading interventions need to be scheduled as follows: in **grades K-5,** additional reading instruction outside of the 90-minute block and literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas; in **grades 6-8,** additional reading instruction

[95] Kamil et al., 2008
[96] Boardman et al., 2008
[97] Some schools use an intervention reading program (i.e., the most explicit and systematic possible) with all of the K-5 students. In this case the intervention reading program used with Tier 3 students is the same program as the core reading program used with Tier 1 and 2 students. Students are placed in small groups for reading instruction and are in many cases grouped by instructional level across classrooms. Different groups begin the program at different lessons and work through the lessons at varying paces.

outside of the separate reading class and in addition to literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas; and in **grades 9-12**, a separate reading intervention period in addition to literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas**.** Teachers set lesson-pacing goals and monitor lesson completion and mastery carefully over the course of the school year. This data, in conjunction with the use of progress-monitoring measures, can assist teachers in making instructional decisions that will accelerate student progress over an extended period of time with the goal of helping all students to become grade-level readers.

Considering four tiers is a useful way for schools to think about differentiating instruction for students in each grade level based on need. In reality, however, it is possible and desirable for there to be substantial and **subtle differences in instruction for students within each tier**. For example, fluency development may be an important instructional focus for some students in Tier 2. For other Tier 2 students a major focus of differentiated instruction may be phonics. Vocabulary instruction may be a major emphasis with English learners in Tier 2. It is important to remember that instructional tiers address levels of reading risk and do not automatically define how instruction will be differentiated for students.

Developing an Instructional Support Plan

How instruction is differentiated for students is communicated formally through clear plans of instruction that teachers, parents, and administrators can understand and review. [xviii] An **Instructional Support Plan (ISP)** describes the instruction the grade-level team commits to provide students in each tier. In essence, the ISP serves as a **blueprint** in **grades K-8** (and can be adapted for grades 9-12) for the reading instruction for each tier in each grade level in the school.

Grade-level teams group students within each tier based on instructional needs; they design an ISP specific for each subgroup within the Tier (e.g., high-emerging/low-emerging or phonics group or fluency group). The ISP includes important details regarding daily reading instruction in the five essential elements of reading. It describes who will provide the instruction, what program materials will be used, how long reading instruction will last, when during the day the instruction will occur, what the group size will be, and how reading progress will be monitored.[xix xx] The ISP should highlight, in particular, those variables that can be adjusted or altered to increase student reading progress. For example, in elementary schools a team may decide to focus on increasing the amount of reading instruction provided each day or decreasing the size of the reading group during small group instruction to increase reading progress for a group of struggling students. [xxi]

Teams map out an instructional plan for subgroups of students in each tier of instructional support. All teachers in a grade level commit to working off the same plan. A grade-level ISP targets what needs to be done so that each student can meet grade-level reading goals. If the data indicate that a subgroup of students in a particular instructional tier are not making adequate progress, the grade-level team adjusts the ISP in some meaningful way to increase the likelihood students will make greater progress in the future. The original instruction and the changes made are reflected clearly in the ISP. See the following template for a grade-level ISP.

Template for Grade-Level Instructional Support Plan

Tier ____Students / Subgroup _____

Grade:_____ School: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Please document your current grade-level plan for Tier __students /Subgroup _____

Program (Specify name and publication year, e.g., Houghton Mifflin, 2008)	Core / Supplemental/ Intervention (fill in one)	Minutes per day	Days per week	Instruction delivered by: (Classroom Teacher, EA, Title I, Peer, Independent Activity, etc.)	Whole Group or Small Group	Assessment Tools/ Schedule

The concept of developing an ISP can be adapted for **grades 9-12** to define reading instruction provided across the instructional areas. **Subject-specific support maps** describe the instruction that will be provided to students in each tier by subject. **Department-level teams** determine what support, for example, will be provided to Tier 2 students in the subject of biology. The map includes details such as a list of strategies that will be used to assist Tier 2 students in accessing the content, the additional texts that will be included on the topics covered, and the amount of instructional time that will be devoted to the essential elements of reading, such as advanced word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategy instruction.

Organizing Principle 6: Effective Teacher Delivery Features Are Incorporated into Daily Reading Instruction

The final organizing principle of high-quality reading instruction is effective teacher delivery. How teachers deliver instruction is one of the most critical aspects of effective reading instruction.[98] Whereas the essential elements of reading instruction can be clearly defined and program materials scrutinized to determine their alignment with the essential elements, these variables remain inert until teachers use them with students in the classroom. How teachers deliver reading instruction through the use of strong programs and materials plays a major role in whether students are **actively** or **passively engaged** in learning. Students who are reading below grade level, and are passively engaged during reading instruction, are unlikely to make the progress necessary to reach grade-level reading goals. Teachers who deliver reading instruction effectively make potentially difficult material accessible to all students, from advanced learners to students who are struggling. The effective delivery of instruction is what most people think of when they think of an effective teacher.

Although the delivery of effective reading instruction is a hard concept to describe precisely, there are identifiable features that should be emphasized. Teachers can learn to incorporate these delivery features into their daily instruction which may be especially beneficial for those students who are not meeting important reading goals.[99] The following sections describe nine features of the effective delivery of reading instruction. These features are independent of the specific programs and materials used to help organize reading instruction.[xxii xxiii] High-quality programs and materials will make it much easier for teachers to deliver instruction effectively, but the use of strong programs, in the absence of strong instructional delivery, is unlikely to result in students receiving the instruction they need to reach important reading goals.

When these delivery features converge with strong programs that focus on the elements of reading, schools increase the probability that students will learn to read at grade level or above.

These nine features target critical instructional interactions between teachers and students and address how teachers model instructional tasks, provide explicit instruction, engage students in meaningful interactions with language, provide students multiple opportunities to practice instructional tasks, provide corrective feedback, encourage student effort, engage students during teacher-led instruction, engage students during independent work, and facilitate student success.

The **nine features of effective teacher delivery are applicable grades K-12;** they are essential for initial reading instruction in kindergarten and continue to be essential through elementary, middle, and high school as teachers instruct students on how to access content from texts. When these delivery features converge with strong programs that focus on the essential elements of reading, schools increase the probability that students will learn to read at grade level or above. If the delivery of instruction is problematic, students are less likely to meet reading goals.

[98] Moats, 1999; Lyon & Chabra, 2004
[99] Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, Tarver, 2004

Effective Teacher Delivery Checklist
✓ Teacher models instructional tasks
✓ Teacher provides explicit instruction
✓ Teacher engages students in meaningful interactions with language
✓ Teacher provides multiple opportunities for students to practice instructional tasks
✓ Teacher provides corrective feedback after student responses
✓ Teacher encourages student effort
✓ Teacher engages students during teacher-led instruction
✓ Teacher engages students during independent work
✓ Teacher facilitates student success

Feature 1: Teacher Modeling

Teachers provide clear and vivid examples (e.g., **think alouds**) of the knowledge they want students to develop. Models of whole concepts, such as using context in surrounding text to determine word meanings, and isolated tasks, such as reading *cvc* (e.g., cat) words written on the white board, are provided so that students understand exactly how to complete tasks. Strong **teacher modeling** (a) clearly isolates the critical aspects of what students should do, (b) is visually engaging, and (c) avoids the use of language that is extraneous to the learning task. In an instructional sequence, effective modeling is followed by **guided student practice** under high levels of teacher support before students **practice the skill on their own**. Examples of modeling in the upper grades include a social sciences teacher modeling how to evaluate the historical context of primary source materials, a science teacher modeling how to form hypotheses while reading subject-area textbooks, a mathematics teacher modeling the use of slow precise reading of word problems, or a literature teacher modeling how to interpret symbolism in a passage or a short story.

Feature 1: Modeling Checklist
✓ Teacher clearly isolates the critical aspects of the task
✓ Teacher visually engages the students when appropriate
✓ Teacher uses language that is central to the learning task

Feature 2: Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction begins by setting the purpose for learning. The teacher identifies for students what the **learning objective** is, explains **why it is important,** and then proceeds to teach students that objective through modeling and other explicit and systematic approaches. During explicit instruction, the critical details that define the concept being learned are identified and thoroughly addressed. During the early stages of learning, explicit instruction limits the range of interpretations students might reach through the use of highly specific **examples and non-examples**. Examples of concepts are carefully selected. The number of examples and the range of examples illustrating the dimensions of a target concept (as well as closely related concepts) are carefully planned beforehand as part of the delivery of instruction. In explicit instruction, current learning objectives are overtly **connected to previously learned material**. The language that teachers use during explicit instruction is **clear** and **concise** and **avoids ambiguity**.

Feature 2: Explicit Instruction Checklist
✓ Teacher sets a purpose for learning
✓ Teacher identifies critical details that define the concept being learned
✓ Teacher uses highly specific examples
✓ Teacher connects new concepts to previously learned material

In **explicit instruction**, explaining and modeling include **defining** each of the strategies for students and **showing** them how to use those strategies when reading a text. **Guided practice** involves the teacher and students working together to **apply the strategies** to texts they are reading. This may involve extensive interaction between the teacher and students when students are applying the strategies to see how well they understand the particular text they are reading. Or, it may involve having students practice applying the strategies to various texts in small groups. **Independent practice** occurs once the teacher is sure that students can use the strategies on their own. At that point, students independently practice applying the strategies to a new text.[100]

Feature 3: Meaningful Interactions with Language

The effective delivery of reading instruction requires that teachers provide students with many **opportunities to hear and use language in meaningful ways**. In **grades K-3**, language-rich activities occur when teachers read books and other materials to students. Similarly, language-rich activities occur across the curriculum in **grades 4-12** when teachers read aloud passages from books and other texts featuring complex language and text structures that challenge students' comprehension skills. Visuals, such as semantic maps and other organizers, are an excellent means of promoting meaningful language discussions about the text that is read aloud. Visual materials provide concrete representations of objects and actions. Students are able to use these visuals as prompts or scaffolds as they learn to engage in

[100] Kamil et al., 2008

extended academic language activities such as discussions about the text, oral or written responses to the text, or simulations or dramatic skits using the text.

Additionally, reading aloud to students in **kindergarten through high school** provides teachers the opportunity to engage them in contextual vocabulary study necessary for comprehension of more difficult text than they can read on their own. Students develop more sophisticated vocabulary and comprehension skills over time as teachers read texts across the instructional areas that are above students' reading levels.

Strategies to build language and language structures such as these are aligned to the **Kindergarten through High School** Oregon Reading Standards http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/newspaper/Newspaper_Section.aspx?subjectcd=ELA.

Feature 3: Language Rich Activities: Grades K-3 and Beyond
✓ Teacher reads books aloud to students o Reading text to students assists with comprehension building. o Books should be above students' independent reading level to access rich vocabulary.
✓ Teacher uses visual prompts to scaffold and model language use o Semantic maps and other graphic organizers are effective visual tools. o Visual tools can be used to extend academic language activities.

Through language activities carefully supported by the teacher, **students integrate new learning with previously learned content**, as well as reflect on their life experiences outside of formal school settings. It is critical that teachers establish instructional routines to ensure that these language interactions are academic in nature. In providing language models for students, teachers clearly identify the distinctive features of new concepts and describe the relations among concepts. Teachers elaborate on student responses to model appropriate language. Students can practice the same language activities with their peers or with the teacher. The **intentional redundancy** that can be built into language rich interactions is important in learning concepts deeply.[101]

[101] Carlo, Snow, et al., Reading Research Quarterly, 2004

Research Highlight:

Adolescent Literacy Recommended Practice

Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation (Kamil, 2008). High-quality discussion of text meaning is an important facet of effective literacy instruction supported by a moderate level of scientific evidence. It is important that students have a deeper understanding of the author's meaning and perhaps challenge those conclusions through rich discussions facilitated by the teacher. This extended discussion is guided by the teacher through prepared follow-up questions and discussion protocols.

There is reasonable evidence that teachers can directly increase the reading comprehension of adolescents by providing regular opportunities for students to engage in high-quality discussions of the meaning and interpretation of texts.[102] This is true in all classes, and discussions can occur in whole-classroom or small-group formats. Examples include **literature circles** with novels and/or utilizing a **reciprocal reading process** with expository texts. Effective discussions typically involve sustained interactions that **explore a topic in depth** rather than quick question and answer exchanges between teachers and students.[103]

Reciprocal Teaching

Excerpt from "What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy" by the National Institute for Literacy (Appendix D)

Reciprocal Teaching is a "strategy package" that students can use when reading science, social sciences, English language arts, mathematics, or any other subject-area texts. With **reciprocal** teaching, students learn to use the following four interrelated strategies:

- **Questioning:** Generating questions about the text
- **Clarifying:** Clearing up confusion about words, phrases, or concepts by using the text as much as possible
- **Summarizing:** Describing the "gist" of what has been read and discussed
- **Predicting:** Suggesting what might be learned from the next part of the text or what will happen next

[102] Kamil et al., 2008; Biancorosa & Snow, 2006; Torgesen et al., 2007
[103] Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamorran, 2003; Reznitskaya et al., 2001

Feature 3: 4-12 Language Rich Activities
✓ Teacher facilitates high-quality classroom discussions o Students actively participate in the discussions. o Student interactions include in-depth explorations of topics. o Discussions are over sustained periods of time.
✓ Teacher designs discussions to promote comprehension of complex text o Students build a deeper understanding of the author's meaning. o Students critically analyze and challenge the author's conclusion. o Students use personal experiences to extend opinions related to the text.

Research evidence suggests that classroom discussions that promote reading comprehension do not occur frequently. In one large middle and high school study, only 1.7 minutes out of 60 minutes of reading instruction was devoted to this type of exchange. In classrooms where these types of discussions did occur, there was greater literacy growth than in classrooms where these discussions were infrequent, supporting the value these discussions can have when they focus on improving reading comprehension. [104]

When discussions are designed to promote comprehension of complex text, they need to focus on building a deeper understanding of the author's meaning and critically analyzing and challenging the author's conclusions through reasoning and knowledge and through the application of personal experiences. Frequently described as "authentic" because real questions open to multiple points of view are asked, **students should have multiple opportunities for sustained exchanges with the teacher and other students**. Students then learn how **to listen** to the points of view and reasoned arguments of others participating in the discussion; **to present and defend** their own interpretations and points of view; and **to use text content**, background knowledge, and reasoning **to support** their interpretations and conclusions.[105] It is important for secondary teachers to include various types of text in these discussions. For example, texts could include reports, graphs, charts, data tables, diagrams, internet text, video text, maps, posters, pictograms, news articles, scientific summaries, etc.

Defining High-Quality Discussions

Because leading classroom discussions is challenging, teachers can structure classroom discussions to increase students' reading comprehension through the use of a research-based *discussion protocol* that will improve discussion implementation (Kamil et al. 2008). In one study by Reznitskaya et al. (2001), teachers were taught to follow five guidelines: (a) ask questions that require students to explain their positions, (b) model reasoning processes by thinking out loud, (c) propose counter arguments or positions, (d) recognize good reasoning when it occurs, and (e) summarize the flow and main ideas of a discussion as it draws to a close.

[104] Applebee et al., 2003
[105] Kamil et al., 2008

Feature 4: Multiple Opportunities for Practice

Effective teachers provide multiple opportunities for students to practice each new skill. For more complicated cognitive routines, teachers need to provide opportunities for **practice after each step** in an instructional sequence. Eliciting group responses is an efficient way to provide students with multiple opportunities for practice. **Group responses** are particularly powerful for more rote tasks associated with skill development (e.g., "Everybody, what's the sound for this letter?). Group responses can be achieved through written and gestural responses as well. For example, a teacher might ask a group to show her what "gape" looks like or to show thumbs up if she gives an example of something that might make one gape.

Group responses do not work in all situations (e.g., if a teacher is leading an authentic conversation aimed at deep comprehension), but they can be utilized during instruction when there is only one acceptable response (e.g., "What word means able to be justified?" justifiable). Group responses provide opportunities for **all** students to practice **all** skills versus the teacher selecting individual students to respond. For oral group responses to be most effective, teachers must require unison responding. If students are not required to answer in unison, higher performing students typically respond first and are echoed by lower performing students. Some students quickly learn how to mimic responses milliseconds after other students and tune out the content of the teacher request. In essence, these students are learning to NOT pay attention to the teacher and teacher requests, and they are learning how to respond in ways that give the impression they understand content when they do not.

Feature 4: Multiple Opportunities for Practice Checklist
✓ Teacher provides opportunities for practice after each step in an instructional sequence
✓ Teacher elicits unison group responses
✓ Teacher follows group responses with individual turns

In effective delivery sequences, group responses are followed by a much briefer period of time for **individual responses**. With individual response turns, teachers can check the mastery of specific students. This is an excellent time to determine how well low-performing students are doing and whether they really have learned the material from the lesson.

Feature 5: Providing Corrective Feedback

Correction procedures are essential to ensure **student mastery** of strategies and content. If errors go unnoticed or are not addressed directly, students are likely to make the same errors again and again. Moreover, in early reading if students have not mastered the preskills, they cannot be successful when moving on to more complicated tasks. That is why it is critical for teachers to provide **immediate corrections**. In most cases, a correction begins with a teacher model of the correct response. When modeling, the teacher should limit corrective feedback to the task at hand. The teacher models the answer, requires the students to repeat the answer, then goes back to the beginning of the particular task to ensure that students are firm on the entire part or exercise. If a student makes a word reading error

when reading connecting text, for example, the teacher states the word correctly, asks the student to repeat the word, then asks the student to reread the sentence correctly. Providing a delayed test for students is a good method of ensuring mastery.[106] In the word reading example, this may involve the teacher writing the difficult word on the white board and returning to it after the students have completed the story/passage. Building in this type of extra practice of difficult tasks in the lesson can help ensure mastery by all students before moving on.

An important principle of providing corrective feedback is that teachers also need to provide **affirmations for correct responses** by students. They can reinforce and praise students for the quality of their answers. In general, feedback on responses should go beyond confirming that the student's response was correct or incorrect. Feedback should be specific, and when possible, enthusiastic. When providing feedback to adolescents, it is important to "be real" or they may not accept the feedback. If teachers are too effusive, the praise may be discounted. Effective strategies to use with adolescents may include asking them why their answer was a good one or what they did to read so well. The teacher can assist adolescents to begin to speak to their own strengths.

Teachers should provide affirmations for correct responses by students.

Feature 5: Corrective Feedback Checklist
✓ Teacher provides immediate corrections
✓ Teacher begins by modeling the correct response and requires student to repeat the answer
✓ Teacher "firms" each part of the task
✓ Teacher provides a delayed test on the difficult items
✓ Teacher provides affirmations for correct student responses

Feature 6: Encouraging Student Effort

Effective teachers give feedback to students before, during, and after task completion. They provide specific feedback about student accuracy and effort. The majority of feedback students receive should be positive. **The ideal ratio of positive to negative feedback by the teacher is thought to be at least 3 to 1.**[xxiv] A grade 2 teacher might praise students, for example, for reading an entire line of words correctly in a phonics warm up. A high school teacher might say, "Excellent summary of that section of text. You captured the main ideas." Teachers need to demonstrate to students that they value student success in reading. They can do this by posting exemplary student work and by having regular celebrations to let students know that their hard work and good effort is important and appreciated.

[106] Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004

Specific Praise Encourages Student Effort	
Specific Praise Example	**Non-Specific Praise Example**
The teacher could say, “Great job reading every word in that row correctly the first time. I know you’ll read those words correctly when you see them in our story today.”	The teacher says, “Great job reading. Keep up the good work.”
The teacher could say, “Excellent summary of that section of text. You captured the main ideas.”	The teacher says, “Nice work” or “Good job.”

Feature 6: Encouraging Student Effort Checklist
✓ Teacher provides feedback before, during, and after task
✓ Teacher provides specific feedback regarding accuracy and effort
✓ Teacher provides a 3 to 1 ratio of positive to negative feedback
✓ Teacher posts exemplary student work/has regular celebrations to honor good work

Feature 7: Engaging Students During Teacher-led Instruction

Student engagement during lesson presentation is critical for student success.[107] One of the most important aspects of effective teacher-led instruction in grades K-12 is gaining the attention of students before instruction begins. **Once they have students’ attention, effective teachers pace lessons quickly to maintain attention.** Appropriate pacing both within and between tasks is necessary. For tasks such as phonemic blending and segmentation, letter-sound practice, and word reading, teachers should elicit about 10-12 responses per minute. For more complex tasks in a reading lesson, such as vocabulary instruction and comprehension strategy instruction, teachers will need to stay within time limits as outlined by either the program or the length of the class period. Transitions between tasks need to be quick, whether in grade 2 or grade 10, and follow specific procedures that teachers establish early in the school year so class time is not wasted.

In addition to providing appropriate pacing, teachers can increase engagement by eliciting student responses throughout the lesson. This may be accomplished through requiring **group responses** whenever possible (see *Feature 4:* Multiple opportunities for practice). Assigning partners for **Think Pair Share** or other supported discussion activities is another way to increase student responses throughout the lesson. When presenting a comprehension question, for example, the teacher can ask the students to

[107] Greenwood, et al., 1992; Snow, 2002; Torgesen et al., 2007; Rosenshine, 1978; NASBE, 2006

whisper the answer to their partner first and then call on an individual student to answer for the group (e.g., "Everybody, what is the prefix of biology? Tell your partner what that means."). The idea is to create as many **opportunities for the students to actually do something** (e.g., respond as group, respond to partner, write response on a whiteboard, etc.) versus sitting passively and listening.

Feature 7: Engaging Students During Teacher-led Instruction Checklist
✓ Teacher gains attention of students before beginning instruction
✓ Teacher uses appropriate pacing within and between tasks
✓ Teacher elicits student responses throughout the lesson
✓ Teacher employs other active engagement techniques such as Think Pair Share, etc.

Feature 8: Engaging Students during Independent Work

In **grades K-5**, in order to provide small group instruction, teachers often have to rotate through teaching several instructional groups in the reading block while the remaining students work independently. Given the frequency and potential for regular independent work time, it is critical that teachers develop meaningful activities for the students to complete.[108] **Independent work activities** need to be **aligned with lesson content**. If the students are working on reading words with the short "a" vowel sound in the reading lesson, for example, the independent work should also focus on this skill. It is critical that teachers **model the task** and **check for understanding** before beginning the independent work time to ensure that students are capable of completing the tasks independently.

In **grades K-12**, for independent work time to run smoothly, students need to be taught all **independent work routines** and expectations early in the school year. Examples, depending on grade level, include the following: where to keep their independent work, what to do if they have a question, how to select a center activity, what materials to bring to class, what to do when they complete the work and so on. Monitoring student independent work to make sure it is completed with a high level of accuracy is necessary for effective instruction; if work is not completed with accuracy, teachers need to provide additional instruction on the particular skill in a whole group or small group setting.

[108] Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004

Feature 8: Engaging Students During Independent Work Checklist
✓ Teacher develops meaningful activities for students to complete, aligned with lesson content
✓ Teacher ensures students are capable of completing the independent work tasks
✓ Teacher instructs and provides practice on independent work routines
✓ Teacher monitors independent work and provides feedback

Students Should be Taught Effective Independent Work Routines	
Grades K-3	**Grades 4 - 12**
Where to keep student work	What materials to bring to class
What to do if they have a question	What to do if they have a question
How to choose a center activity	How to choose appropriate independent work
What to do when work is completed	What to do when work is completed

Feature 9: Facilitating Student Success

Ultimately, teachers must ensure that students are successful at completing lesson activities at a high level of performance. To do so, **the teacher must elicit a high percentage of accurate responses from the group and a high percentage of accurate responses from individuals**. Some examples of methods teachers can use to check for understanding include random calling on students using popsicle sticks, quick matching of cards, or other manipulatives, such as clickers or 3-1 exit cards. To gain more exact information on student success rate, a coach or colleague can assist the teacher by collecting data on student responses to the various tasks outlined in the lesson. For mastery-based programs (i.e., supplemental or intervention programs), 70% of students' initial responses should be correct on new material. Overall, 90% of students' responses should be correct on both new and familiar material.[109] If students are not meeting these criteria for lesson success, the coach can work with the teacher to adjust instruction. This may involve, for example, working with the teacher on implementing complete correction procedures, going back to "**firm" the exercise**, and providing **delayed tests**. It is critical that teachers hold the same standard of accuracy for high performers and lower performers in the group; however, teachers may need to provide regular additional instruction and practice for lower performers to ensure that their success rate is on par.

It is critical that teachers hold the same standard of accuracy for high performers and lower performers in the group.

[109] NIFDI

Feature 9: Facilitating Student Success Checklist
✓ Teacher elicits a high percentage of accurate responses from the group and individuals
✓ Teacher adjusts instruction when student responses are not accurate
✓ Teacher provides additional practice for lower performers to increase success rate

Summary

In summary, high-quality reading instruction in Oregon's K-12 Literacy Framework **with the goal of all students reading at grade level or above** involves the integration of six organizing principles: (1) sufficient time for reading instruction is scheduled, and the allocated time is used effectively; (2) data is used to form fluid instructional groupings; (3) instruction is focused on the essential elements of reading; (4) research-based strategies, programs, and materials are adopted and used schoolwide with a high level of fidelity; (5) instruction is differentiated based on student need; and (6) effective teacher delivery features are incorporated into daily reading instruction.

- First, it is essential that schools allocate **sufficient time** for reading instruction, and that they **use scheduled reading time effectively**. In grades K-5, the recommendation is for students to receive at least 90 minutes of daily reading instruction; students in grades 4-5 also receive literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas. Students in grades 6-8 benefit from a daily 40-60 minute reading class, separate from English language arts, and daily literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas. For grades 9-12, the recommendation is 2-4 hours of daily literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas.
- Second, schools utilize both **whole class and small group instruction** to effectively provide students with reading instruction that meets their specific instructional needs. In grades K-12, additional instructional time should be allocated for students who are not meeting important reading goals for their grade level.
- Third, teachers target the **essential elements of reading**—phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation—as appropriate to students' skill levels and needs, during reading classes and during literacy-connected learning across the instructional areas.
- Fourth, schools adopt **research-based strategies, programs, and materials** for use schoolwide. Schools utilize core, supplemental, and intervention programs that are constructed to align with the best research evidence available on design of instruction with the goal of supporting all students to be grade-level readers or above. To that end, teachers provide explicit instruction and practice in the reading strategies and skills students need to read proficiently across the instructional areas.
- Fifth, to meet yearly goals, it is critical to **differentiate instruction** for students based on what instruction they need to meet or exceed target reading goals. For the best outcomes, students are grouped into instructional tiers based on skill levels—advanced, low risk, moderate risk, and high

risk—and provided the instruction they need. How instruction is differentiated for subgroups of students within each Tier is communicated formally through grade-level instructional plans.

- Sixth, nine general features of **effective instructional delivery** provide guidance to teachers for honing delivery skills. When these delivery features converge with strong programs that focus on the essential elements of reading, schools increase the probability that students will meet or exceed grade-level reading goals.

Links to Resources

[i] For samples of school schedules showing how reading time is scheduled go to http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/beacon_schools.html

[ii] To view a video of how one middle school structured their reading program, go to http://www.bethelschools.us/schools/cascade/ and click on "Teaching Reading (video)" in the menu on the right.

[iii] Possible types of interventions secondary schools might consider can be found at http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/elarts/reading/literacy/reading-interventions.pdf

[iv] To view samples of 90-minute reading blocks and reading blocks greater than 90 minutes, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/. Also see Statewide Outreach Session on the 90-Minute Reading Block.

[v] See Big Ideas in Beginning Reading website (http://reading.uoregon.edu/)

[vi] For more discipline-specific examples of comprehension strategies, see Reading and Learning Strategies: Middle Grades through High School (3rd ed.) by Susan Davis Lenski, Mary Ann Wham, Jerry L. Johns, and Mick M. Caskey. Copyright 2007 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

[vii] To examine a guide for evaluating a core reading program go to http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review.html

[viii] Links to reviews of core reading programs:

Oregon: http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review_core.html
Florida: http://fcrr.org/FCRRReports/CReports.aspx?rep=core
Washington: http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/InstructionalMaterialsReviewReading.aspx

[ix] Lexile information can be found at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1638

[x] See the Consumer's Guide to Evaluating Supplemental and Intervention Programs and the additional items for Analysis of K-3 reading intervention programs http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review.html

The Oregon Reading First Center and Florida Center for Reading Research websites also include completed reviews for schools to examine:

Oregon: http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review_si.html
Florida: http://www.fcrr.org/FCRRReports/CReportsCS.aspx?rep=supp

[xi] See the Consumer's Guide to Evaluating Supplemental and Intervention Programs and the additional items for Analysis of K-3 reading intervention programs http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review.html

The Oregon Reading First Center and Florida Center for Reading Research websites also include completed reviews for schools to examine:

Oregon: http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_curr_review_si.html
Florida: http://www.fcrr.org/FCRRReports/CReportsCS.aspx?rep=supp

[xii] A web-based lesson progress program is now available through Oregon Reading First at http://orflpr.uoregon.edu

[xiii] For an example of a spreadsheet used to record information to make screening decisions at the secondary level (middle and high school), see an example from the Bethel School District on the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework website. (**Will be posted when available**)

[xiv] Graphic organizer resources can be found at http://www.scoe.org/cgi-bin/texis/webinator/search?pr=scoe&prox=page&rorder=500&rprox=500&rdfreq=500&rwfreq=500&rlead=500&sufs=0&order=r&rdepth=0&query=graphic+organizers&submit.x=16&submit.y=9&submit=Submit

[xv] See IBR II materials at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/pd_ibrs.html

[xvi] Program-Specific Enhancement materials are available on the Oregon Reading First Center website http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_enhancements.html

[xvii] Bethel Middle Grades Delivery Model PowerPoint http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/elarts/reading/literacy/reading-instruction---alterable-variables-(bethel-sd).ppt

[xviii] Grade level instructional support plans can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html (includes templates for instructional focus group plans and steps for planning instructional groups)

[xix] Grade level instructional support plans can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html (includes templates for instructional focus group plans and steps for planning instructional groups)

[xx] Using Core, Supplemental, and Intervention Reading Programs to Meet the Needs of All Learners (PowerPoint) http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/elarts/reading/literacy/COSA-June-07-Present.ppt

[xxi] A chart that list the alterable variables for increasing the intensity of instruction can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html (includes both versions of alterable variables chart)

[xxii] A module on the Nine General Features of Instruction is available at (http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/).

[xxiii] The Five-Minute Observation Form (Phase 2) provides schools with an observation tool that focuses on the nine general features of effective teacher delivery. A word document of the Five Minute Observation Form (Phase 2) is available at (http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/).

[xxiv] The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports website (www.pbis.org) is a resource for best practices in effective behavioral systems for the school building as well as the classroom.

Leadership

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

School leadership prioritizes attainment of reading goals for all students

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools				★		
Districts						
State						

Functions of School Leadership:

- School administrators and leadership teams work together to create a coherent plan for reading instruction.
- School administrators and leadership teams focus on ALL students meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals.
- School administrators and leadership teams are knowledgeable about reading standards, assessments, and instructional programs and materials.
- Leadership structures exist at multiple levels—principal, mentor coach, grade-level teams, department-level teams, and the School Leadership Team—to maintain the focus on all students reading at grade level or above and to establish mechanisms to support students' reading progress.

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

Research demonstrates that effective school leadership is positively associated with student learning, second only in magnitude to quality curriculum and instruction.[1] The influence of leadership on student performance is particularly important in schools that serve students at risk for learning difficulties or dropping out of school.[2] In this chapter, principles of effective leadership—necessary to support effective reading instruction for **ALL** students—are addressed. It is important to note here that leadership at the school level is most effective when supported by state and district-level leadership as described in the State and District sections of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

Leadership Creates a Coherent Plan for Reading

It is critical that the principal, reading coach, and the School Leadership Team work together to create a coherent plan for reading.[3] Ongoing communication and consistency within and between each of these levels of distributive leadership is critical. Using their knowledge and shared expertise, these leaders can develop a schedule that maximizes and protects instructional time, organizes resources and personnel to efficiently support all students in the building, and ensures that instruction in special programs (e.g., Title, Special Education, ELL) is coordinated with, and is complementary to, the reading instruction provided in general education. Through grade-level/department-level teams and the School Leadership Team, school-level educators will have the opportunity to communicate and to plan instruction for students that is aligned with a coordinated School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2).

> Excellent leadership, excellent initial instruction, and excellent data systems have always been essential pieces of high performance schools.
>
> Fielding, Kerr, Rosier (2004)

Leadership Prioritizes Attainment of Reading Goals for All Students

Above all, school-level leadership prioritizes the attainment of reading goals for **ALL** students.[4] If students are **not** meeting reading goals, school leadership provides clear communication about which reading goals have not been met and which goals have. School leaders examine and present data to identify possible reasons why students did not meet reading goals and these reasons should make clear those variables the school has the ability to change. In some cases structural variables such as scheduling, grouping, and choice of instructional materials may be hindering student progress and in other cases barriers to high quality, effective implementation may be the cause. In some instances, however, both structural and quality of instruction and implementation variables may be causing the insufficient reading development of students. **Successful school leaders help identify variables under the school's control that may be contributing to poor reading outcomes, establish and implement plans to change or alter those variables, and collect data to determine whether the changes made have resulted in better student reading outcomes.**

> I want all our kids succeeding. That's what it's all about. It's going to happen. I have no doubt.
>
> Oregon Principal

An example of prioritizing reading goals based on data follows: an unusually high percentage of students may have begun the school year reading at grade level, made less progress than expected, and ended the year

[1] Center for Education Policy Analysis, 2003; Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement
[2] Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004
[3] Meltzer, 2006; Torgesen, Houston & Rissman, 2007
[4] Haynes, 2007; Torgesen & Miller, 2009

reading slightly below grade level. Implementation data collected and analyzed revealed that these students received less instructional time directly with the teacher than was specified in the School Reading Plan. Part of the solution to improve reading outcomes for these students could be to arrange the reading schedule for the following year so that these students spend more time directly with the teacher each day for explicit reading instruction. Data would be collected to determine how well the plan was implemented and whether it resulted in better reading progress and outcomes for this group of students. This would be considered a structural change.

If a sufficient number and percentage of students are meeting reading goals, and other data indicate that the quality of daily reading instruction is strong, then school leadership focuses on reinforcing the instruction that school staff is providing to students. Acknowledging and celebrating the dedicated work of staff that is directly tied to successful outcomes for students is powerful within the school community. Highlighting details of effective classroom practices associated with improved outcomes for students affirms these effective practices and provides specificity for replication. **Acknowledging the attainment of challenging reading goals will help the school maintain its focus on reading goals and effective instruction, and the celebration of these significant accomplishments communicates the central importance of effective instruction in the school's service to its students and families.**

In schools where students **are** meeting reading goals, effective leadership also emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement. The leadership identifies specific instructional practices and supports that teachers and other staff, including the school leaders themselves, can focus on as a cohesive and collaborative group. For example, a school may have been successful in improving students' expressive language. The leadership team and staff can emphasize and continue this success by focusing on the instructional expectation that students speak and write in complete sentences. The school may hang a banner in the halls that states, "At Adams School, we say the whole thing."[5] The banner is a daily reminder to students, parents, staff members, and the leadership team that encouraging and improving expressive language is an important school goal. Specific instructional goals can also be identified for small group instruction based on student reading performance, classroom observations, and other sources of trustworthy data. **Identifying school goals and instructional goals demonstrates a school's commitment to success through continuous improvement and supports the vision of providing instruction for ALL students so poor readers become good readers and good readers become great readers.**

[5] Example based on the work of the principal and staff at Laird Elementary in Phoenix, Arizona.

Leadership is Knowledgeable about Standards, Assessments, and Instruction

Principals and the school leadership staff need to be well-versed in the Oregon Reading Standards http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/newspaper/Newspaper_Section.aspx?subjectcd=ELA).[6] To effectively work toward all students being grade-level readers or above, **they need to understand how reading standards, assessments, and instruction work together** to support successful outcomes for all students. The six school-level chapters of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework provide guidance for implementing a school plan, one that is based on student data and that supports **every** reader to the grade-level reading goal. Specifically, principals and school leadership teams must have a thorough understanding of what the priority reading skills are, when they are to be met, and how the instruction necessary for successful reading development needs to be delivered. Principals accumulate this knowledge over time by studying the standards, attending professional development activities designed for teachers, and working closely with consultants hired to assist with implementation of specific reading programs and practices. Finally, principals and leadership staff need thorough knowledge of the assessment system, including what the measures are, the schedule for administration, what the results mean, and how to use the data collected to make sound decisions regarding the instruction provided to students.

As the instructional leader of the school,[7] it ultimately falls to the principal to assume the largest share of the responsibility for the overall implementation of effective reading instruction. This does not mean that the principal must have extensive expertise in all facets of the framework. Rather, principals can fill this key leadership function if they have sufficient knowledge of the three components at the heart (see framework graphic) of the framework—goals, instruction, and assessment.[8]

A deep knowledge of classroom reading instruction and the schoolwide assessment plan enables principals to make informed instructional decisions. For example, a principal who understands essential and detailed aspects of instruction and assessment will schedule initial student screening within the first few weeks of school so that instructional groups can be formed, and differentiated reading instruction can begin as early as possible. A principal who understands the importance of intense reading instruction will place the most effective reading teachers with groups of students who need the most intensive support.[9] Understanding that only teachers with special training in the necessary interventions can effectively teach students with instructional needs that cannot be met within the core reading program is critical to successful instruction for these students. The sections that follow further delineate the role of the principal and the functions of the school leadership staff.

[6] NASSP, 2005
[7] Leithwood et al., 2004
[8] National Association of Secondary Principals, 2005; NASBE, 2006
[9] Gersten et al., 2009; NASSP, 2005

Effective Leadership Is Distributed, Connected, and Consistent

Committed leadership is critical in implementing a literacy program. Leaders at the school and district levels not only need to be actively invested in pursuing successful outcomes for students, they also need to be actively invested in consistently connecting, communicating and collaborating among distributed leadership in order to sustain successes. Leaders communicating frequently and consistently around key topics for review and improvement will yield the collaboration necessary to sustain implementation efforts. Two concepts guide how effective leadership at the school level can be organized.

- First, leadership is distributed among different individuals and groups within the school.[10] **Distributed leadership** helps ensure that the range of important leadership tasks can be accomplished through multiple individuals sharing responsibility for schoolwide leadership. Distributed leadership builds the capacity within the school to provide effective reading instruction, and it promotes shared accountability among the staff for ensuring that students reach reading goals.
- Second, leadership tasks and responsibilities are conceptualized as **leadership functions**, and are not linked to specific individuals or even positions. Certainly, the dedication and skill that individuals bring to their leadership responsibilities will influence leadership quality and student reading achievement. However, important leadership positions are described in terms of the key functions they address, and these key functions are integrated within the culture of the school. For example, instead of relying on the position of a reading coach to successfully implement the reading plan, the key functions a coach performs, and how these functions can be carried out, are determined and described. One typical coaching function is observing instruction in classrooms and providing feedback. A school might use a peer coaching model to accomplish this task, or a grade-level team leader in each grade might conduct observations and provide feedback. Conducting classroom observations is the key function, and the school then specifies in the School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2) how this function is to be carried out. **As personnel within the school change over time, foundational features of the reading program, including leadership functions, do not change simply as a consequence of staff turnover or elimination of certain positions.**

> I am not an expert in reading, but with the training and coaching we've had, I've been able to learn right along with the teachers. Now I can walk in and take a teacher's group for a few minutes and know what to do.
>
> Oregon Principal

Within the school, functions associated with the principal, a reading coach, grade-level and department-level teams, and the School Leadership Team contribute to effective implementation of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework. Key functions within and among these levels of distributed leadership are described in the following sections.

[10] Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, (2004). "How leadership influences student learning"

Principal

Within the school, the principal is most responsible for developing the infrastructure necessary for teachers to provide effective reading instruction to all students.[11] Given the extensive range of a principal's responsibilities, most principals will not have deep expertise in all areas of the framework or the School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2). However, principals can understand essential issues in key areas and be engaged in school decision-making in relation to these areas. Ultimately, it is the principal who ensures that all components of the reading plan are implemented consistently with the district's framework and that teaching and learning in the classroom is continually enhanced. Below, the key responsibilities for principals in developing and supporting the School Reading Plan are outlined.

Principals facilitate planning for instruction

Effective classroom instruction is the centerpiece of a school's reading program. To that end, planning done by teachers and others to prepare for effective instruction in the classroom is a critical school priority. That is why it is essential that principals designate time for teachers to plan reading instruction.[12] By participating in the planning process in an active and supportive way, principals also make sure that the planning time is used effectively. While principals' schedules will not allow them to participate in all of the instructional planning meetings, it is critical that principals be as engaged as possible, particularly at the beginning of the year when screening data are used to form instructional groups and develop instructional support plans. Part of this planning for **elementary schools** will involve how the core reading program, supplemental materials, and intervention programs will be used as part of daily reading instruction. In **middle schools** and **high schools**, much of the planning will focus on how to integrate reading strategies into course content so students can access the information from their subject-area textbooks. Principals need to know enough about the programs and textbooks to engage meaningfully in these initial planning sessions and throughout the year as teachers use data to make instructional changes.

> If the plan is not working, we do whatever is needed to change the plan. If it is not working after two weeks or a month, you need to change it. You need to make sure the plan is working. Failure is not an option.
>
> Oregon Principal

Principals make data-based decisions

Principals need strong expertise in all facets of the school's assessment system to determine whether students are meeting goals. Because principals ensure that schoolwide assessment data (see Assessment chapter) used for formative or summative purposes are appropriate for those purposes, they must understand how to interpret data. Specifically:

- When students are screened for reading problems at the beginning of the year, or when outcome data collected at the end of year are used as **screening data** for the following year, principals make sure interpretations about reading performance are appropriate.

[11] NASSP, 2005
[12] Herman et al., 2008

- When **progress-monitoring data** are analyzed, principals determine whether individual students, or groups of students, are making progress, and whether progress is sufficient for students to reach reading goals.
- When **outcome data** are analyzed, principals, as part of a team, determine when students have met reading goals and how well the school is doing over time (e.g., successive years) in improving reading instruction and student outcomes.

Principals must then utilize screening, progress monitoring, and outcome data to drive decision making.[13] For example, a principal and staff can begin by determining the most important goals and objectives for students to accomplish by the middle of the year and by the end of the year in each of the five elements of reading (see Goals chapter, 5). The principal can then lead the staff through an examination of the data from the middle of the year (see Assessment chapter, 14-17). As they consider how they are doing, they can ask questions such as, "Are students in each class at each grade level on track for successful reading outcomes?" and "What percentage of students made adequate reading progress from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year (fall to winter)?" If student progress is not sufficient to meet reading goals, it is critical that the principal and staff identify those grades or groups of students that are not making adequate progress and devise a plan to improve performance. **When planning ways to improve outcomes, the principal takes into consideration two major areas: infrastructure (e.g., scheduling, curriculum, instructional groups) and quality of implementation (e.g., fidelity of implementation, professional development, instruction).**[14] ii
(See Instruction chapter, 2-10 and Assessment chapter, 14-17.)

Principals observe reading instruction in the classroom

Classroom observations conducted by principals serve several purposes.

- First, classroom observations of reading instruction are one of the most important and valuable ways for principals to gather information about effective reading instruction in the classroom. Principals can use what they observe in the classrooms of their **master teachers** to gain a vision of what instruction could look like in all classrooms.
- Second, by dedicating time to observe in classrooms on a regular basis, principals demonstrate to staff that **effective reading instruction is an essential school priority**.
- Third, and most importantly, regular observations allow principals to understand **how reading instruction is being delivered** in the classrooms and to use that information to support teachers' efforts to provide effective instruction.

> I visit the classrooms not with the idea of, "What are you doing right or wrong?" but "What can I learn from you?" and "How can I support you?"
>
> Oregon Principal

It is essential that the purpose of these regular classroom observations be distinguished from the observations principals do as part of their teacher supervisory responsibilities. This distinction needs to be clear at all times and communicated regularly to the teaching staff.[15]

[13] Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007; NASSP, 2005
[14] Biancarosa, & Snow (2006).
[15] David, 2008

It is more important that observations be frequent rather than lengthy, although it is generally true that the longer the observation the more that can be learned. These observations, sometimes referred to as **walk-throughs** if they are brief, can be as short as five minutes and still be very valuable. It is important that principals and teachers work together to establish a culture in which the observations and feedback exchanges are seen as opportunities to gather and share information. These exchanges are about the instruction students need to reach key reading goals. Student performance and specifically what students need instructionally are always the focus of the observations and feedback.

Structured observations are the most effective.16 There are many tools available to provide structure to the principal's observations.iii An observation framework, or tool, can help the principal know what to focus on during walk-throughs. To be effective, these observations need to be guided by a vision of reading instruction that is understood and shared by the principal and the teachers. To be effective, teachers need to know what principals are expecting to see in their classrooms. Setting schoolwide

"look fors" is an example of how to foster this shared vision.iv A principal, working with a coach or consultant, can identify common implementation issues across classrooms. The principal then creates schoolwide targets that he or she will "look for" during all classroom walk-throughs. It may be, for instance, that teachers need to provide consistent and effective correction procedures when implementing the new intervention program. The principal then communicates with teachers via a staff meeting, email, or memo that he or she will be looking for consistent use of the full-correction procedures when visiting classrooms. An example of a principal "look for" communication is provided in the figure below.

[16] Protheroe, 2009

Example of Principal "Look Fors" Communication

Teachers,

Below is the list of "Look Fors" for my next observation in your classroom. Please note: I've included previous "Look Fors." This is a continuation and growth process, and "Look Fors" are cumulative and ongoing.

- Partner reading and responses are occurring in your room. Partnerships are posted and changed as necessary.
- Pick-up and delivery of students for groups is on time. (A timer is helpful.)
- Immediate positive praise is given to students when they are doing what you are asking; this can be whole group and/or individual.
- Vocabulary words from each story are posted. (Ongoing)
- Sound/Spelling cards are displayed in your classroom; refer to them as you are teaching, "This is the /ar/ sound like the artist card." (Ongoing)
- Students are responding in full sentences, "A time when I was excited was...." This will take some practice and coaching. Needs to occur throughout day-long curriculum. (Ongoing) We've been working very hard on multiple opportunities for students to respond.

Thank you!

(principal's name)

Feedback for teachers that emerges from principal observations needs to be timely, specific, positively framed, **and student focused.** An example of written feedback from a principal walk-through is provided on the following page. This requires clear, respectful, and precise communication between the principal and teachers. The communication is content-driven and conducted in a manner that emphasizes what students need instructionally to become better readers. This communication is highly technical and professional in nature and will take time and effort on the part of both the principal and the teachers for optimal effectiveness to be achieved.

Example of Written Feedback from a Principal to a Grade 2 Teacher

Behaviors to Continue - Three "Keepers"

- The students were successful in the independent centers because the centers all provided direct practice of the core instruction lesson.
- The students were very engaged in the vocabulary review because you provided many opportunities to practice.
- The students were all working during the independent seatwork because you consistently monitored students by moving around the classroom while the students were seated at their desks.

Behaviors to Modify - Two "Polishers"

- It is important that the students have examples of the vocabulary words. To do that, please display the vocabulary words with the student-friendly definitions in the classroom. Please meet with the coach for examples of how to do that.
- It is important that students learn to use full sentences when responding to questions. In order to give them practice, try having students verbally answer comprehension questions in full sentences.

A key function often given to the reading coach is to work with teachers on instruction issues in the classroom. Consequently, it is important that the observations the principal conducts be aligned with the work of the coach. It is critical that teachers not receive different or conflicting messages from the principal and coach. This coordination will require expert communication between the principal and coach. In the section that follows, the role of a reading coach is discussed in greater detail.

Reading Coach

Whenever possible, a reading coach is assigned to each school to work with classroom teachers and school-based teams to support effective reading instruction in reading classes and effective reading instruction across the instructional areas. Coaching is a critical part of professional development.[17] In the **elementary schools** a coach's key role is typically to improve reading instruction by facilitating implementation of multiple tiers of reading support aligned with student need. In **middle schools and high schools**, the typical role of literacy coaches is to improve instruction for all students by working collaboratively with teachers across the instructional areas,[18] although secondary coaches also support reading teachers working with struggling readers. Across coaching models in which the key role of the coach is to help improve classroom instruction, there is general consensus that coaches should support, guide, and mentor teachers. Moreover, these models suggest that at different times, coaches take on the role of instructor, curriculum expert, school-level planner, data analyst, and researcher.[19] **Please note: the functions described can be distributed among team members; however, for the purposes of description, they are delineated as part of coaching duties.**

[17] Showers & Joyce, 1996; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; IRA, 2006; Bean, 2008
[18] IRA, 2006; Bean, 2008.
[19] Walpole & McKenna, 2004

These different roles can be summarized into three major coaching functions.

- First, coaches work with teachers in the classroom to help them provide robust reading instruction and subject-specific instruction that is aligned to state standards and the instructional needs of students. To accomplish this challenging agenda, teachers need **feedback and support**. The coach serves this supportive function.
- Second, coaches ensure that the objectives of the School **Reading Plan** are being implemented throughout the school. These objectives include having established measurable goals, conducting reading assessments, providing effective instruction, providing leadership, engaging in ongoing professional development, and sustaining a commitment to all students reading at grade level or higher. A coach, for example, can ensure that assessments are administered on schedule, that staff is trained to reliably administer the measures, and that the data is entered into a database in a timely fashion.
- Third, coaches assist grade-level and department-level teams in using **student reading data** to make decisions about reading instruction and reading instruction across the instructional areas.

> The purpose of ongoing collaboration is to provide the appropriate support for a teacher to learn and master a new teaching practice.
>
> Sprick, Knight, Reinke, & McKale (2006)

Ideally, mentor coaches are excellent classroom teachers who receive extensive professional development on how to be an effective coach, including specific preparation in the skills coaches need to work effectively with adults.[20] Coaches need professional development above and beyond classroom teachers on the following: effective reading programs and strategies, the use of course textbooks to teach reading, reading assessments, and data-based decision making. Good communication between a coach and teachers is essential for effective coaching, and establishing the professional environment needed for this communication to occur will take time to develop. The foundation of effective coaching communication is to focus on what students need instructionally to meet reading goals, not on what teachers should do differently to teach more effectively, or whether the teacher is doing a "good job." The ongoing, professional relationship between a coach and a teacher can be compromised if the focus is on the teacher rather than on student performance and if the coaching expectations are not clear.

> There is nothing more satisfying than seeing hordes of people engaged to do good together because of the leadership you helped produce.
>
> Michael Fullan (2005)

Coaches do not often provide instruction directly to students. Teaching students, except to model lessons for teachers, undermines the **central purpose of coaching** and also makes it difficult for coaches to fulfill their other responsibilities. For similar reasons, coaches do not carry out clerical tasks such as ordering, distributing, and managing materials.[v]

Coaching effectively is challenging, and the job can be stressful. The principal needs to be a strong supporter of the coaching role and of the coach filling that role.[21] The principal explains to the staff what the coaching functions are and why they are critical in improving reading instruction. The principal provides support and removes obstacles so the reading coach can coach and so teachers are reinforced for

[20] Bean & Eisenberg, 2009

[21] Walpole & McKenna, 2004; Neufeld & Roper, 2003

participating actively in the coaching process (as well as in other opportunities to improve their instructional skills). A strong coach will help change the culture of the school so that a continuous focus is on what students need instructionally to meet reading goals and reading goals across the instructional areas. **Changing the culture of the school is more likely to happen when the coach and principal work together to build a cohesive atmosphere among teachers that focuses on meeting the needs of students.**

School Implementation Teams

School teams oversee the day-to-day implementation of reading instruction and reading instruction across the instructional areas throughout the school.[22] It is best to have two types of teams to serve this purpose. One team includes members that cut across multiple grades or departments, which is frequently referred to as the **School Leadership Team**. A second type of team is a **grade-level team** at each grade in elementary school, and a **department-level team** in middle school and high school.[23] The focus of both types of teams is on the attainment of reading goals and objectives. The teams use assessment data and other data to make decisions about the overall system of 1) teaching reading and 2) teaching reading across the instructional areas. The teams also focus on the reading development of individual students who are not making sufficient reading progress. Each type of school-based leadership team is described in detail below.

Grade-Level Teams and Department-Level Teams

In **elementary schools**, each grade works together as a team. Grade-level teams consist of all the teachers in the grade level and relevant support staff (e.g., specialists, school psychologists). In **middle schools** and **high schools**, staff members usually meet by departments, but sometimes as integrated teams. Department-level teams include all of the teachers in a particular instructional area (e.g., mathematics, science), as well as relevant support staff (e.g., specialists). The coach works with the principal and other key faculty members to assemble these teams and to arrange for them to meet regularly to accomplish their objectives.

Regular meetings focus on using formative and summative assessment data to guide the selection of instructional programs and implementation of practices in each classroom. At the beginning of the school year, these teams examine screening data to determine the level of instructional support in reading each student needs to meet reading goals and academic expectations (see Assessment chapter and Goals chapter). Within each grade, four levels or tiers of support need to be provided to differentiate the type of reading instruction students will receive to meet reading goals and reading demands across the instructional areas. Four tiers of support are aligned to meet the needs of students who are at **no, low, moderate**, or **high** risk for **not meeting** formative and summative reading goals. This multi-tiered framework is consistent with a **Response to Intervention (RTI)** approach.[24] The teams clearly describe how instruction will be differentiated for students in each tier. This description occurs through some type of written documentation, such as an **Instructional Support Plan** (ISP)[vi] (see Instruction chapter, 40-41 that is developed for each grade or each instructional area at the beginning of the school year.

The Instructional Support Plan (ISP) includes important details of reading instruction. These details include who will provide the instruction for each tier of support, what program materials will be used, how long reading instruction will last, when during the day the instruction will occur, what the group size will be, and how reading progress will be monitored. **The ISP also addresses how reading instruction will be coordinated across**

[22] NASSP, 2005; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006

[23] In small schools with only one teacher per grade level across-grade teams can be used in place of grade-level teams. The primary purpose is to ensure that teachers have the support to analyze data and to make instructional decisions.

[26] Gersten et al., 2009

the various service delivery systems (e.g., Title 1, Special Education, programs for English language learners).

In **middle schools and high schools**, it is useful not only to have an **ISP for each grade level** that outlines reading support by tier but also to map out support that will be provided in **each instructional area**. For example, a literacy coach at the secondary level may meet with all of the social sciences teachers to make a plan for teaching students to use atlases, timelines, or other graphic tools. Instructional-area support maps can include information on accommodations that will be made for students who do not have foundational reading skills and those who have acquired foundational reading skills but continue to struggle accessing content from textbooks in literature, science, social sciences, mathematics, health, and other instructional areas.[vii]

During the school year, grade-level and department-level teams closely examine progress-monitoring data to evaluate the effectiveness of each of the multiple tiers of instructional support. They might use a tool such as the **"Elements of a Healthy System Checklist"** to guide them in a problem-solving process at the systems level.[viii] When progress is not sufficient, these teams identify ways to change instruction in the relevant tier of support. For example, the data may indicate that students at high risk of reading difficulty are making adequate progress toward important formative reading goals, but the progress of students at moderate risk is not sufficient.[25] The grade-level or department-level team, under the leadership of the coach, helps determine what instructional modifications may offer better instructional support for students at moderate risk. When students are not making adequate reading progress, the team targets the manipulation of variables that are most directly under the school's control and that are likely to have the greatest positive impact on progress. A tool that can help identify instructional variables under the school's control is the "**Alterable Variables Chart**."[ix] This tool (see Assessment chapter, 16) provides grade-level and department-level teams with a continuum of increasingly intense instructional options on five instructional dimensions.

At the end of the school year, grade-level teams and department-level teams evaluate the overall impact of reading instruction provided through multiple tiers of support by calculating the percentage of students who met formative and summative reading goals within each tier and across all tiers. Depending on the data being reviewed, this evaluation may occur at an overall staff meeting, especially at the secondary level. This staff meeting and data discussion is sometimes called a **data summit** (see Commitment chapter, 7-8). The data will help these teams reach conclusions regarding which instructional programs and practices are working effectively and should be maintained and which are not working as well as necessary and should be modified somewhat, or changed extensively. In areas where changes are needed, the teams discuss the adjustments that will be implemented by the beginning of the next school year. The rule of thumb is that the degree of adjustment should correspond to the data. For example, there should be fewer and smaller adjustments, on average, in grades where 90% of the students met end-of-year goals compared to grades where 50% of students met end-of-year goals. The following table provides an example of how a grade-level team can summarize data to make these types of decisions.[x]

[25] In a three-tiered system, Tier I may be referred to as the Benchmark, Tier II as Strategic, and Tier III as Intensive.

Grade and Literacy Skill Measure	Percent Meeting Goal Spring Last Year	Percent Meeting Goal Spring This Year	Percentage Point Increase/ Decrease (+ or -)	Percent Not Meeting Goal Spring Last Year	Percent Not Meeting Goal Spring This Year	Percentage Point Increase/ Decrease (+ or -)
Kindergarten Measure 1: (e.g., phonemic awareness)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Kindergarten Measure 2: (e.g., Word Reading)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 1 Measure 1: (e.g., Word Reading)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 1 Measure 2: (e.g., Reading Fluency)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 2 Measure 1: (e.g., Reading Fluency)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 3 Measure 1: (e.g., Reading Fluency)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	

Grade and Literacy Skill Measure	Percent Meeting Goal Spring Last Year	Percent Meeting Goal Spring This Year	Percentage Point Increase/ Decrease (+ or -)	Percent Not Meeting Goal Spring Last Year	Percent Not Meeting Goal Spring This Year	Percentage Point Increase/ Decrease (+ or -)
Grade 6-8: Measure 1 (e.g., CBM - MAZE)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 6-8: Measure 2 (e.g., OAKS)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	
Grade 9-12: Measure 1 (e.g., OAKS)	_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___		_____% ___/___	_____% ___/___	

School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team in an elementary school consists of the principal, coach, specialists, school psychologist, and grade-level representatives. In a middle school and a high school, each department is represented. This team meets regularly. The School Leadership Team has three primary functions related to the school's reading program.

First, the team maintains a focus on the overall implementation of reading instruction throughout the school. In **elementary schools**, this is accomplished by monitoring implementation of the schoolwide reading model across all grades (e.g., K-5). In **middle schools** and **high schools**, this is accomplished by a) monitoring implementation of reading interventions for students who are not reading at grade level and b) monitoring how reading is being taught and supported across the instructional areas for all students. The "blueprint" for reading instruction across these different areas needs to be described in the School Reading Plan (see Commitment chapter, 2).[xi] In secondary schools, this is often referred to as a Comprehensive Literacy Program/Plan.[26]

Second, the School Leadership Team analyzes data on student reading performance across grades and recommends adjustments to instruction that will enable more students to reach better reading outcomes. Again, the focus is not on a particular grade or department, but rather on looking across all grades and departments to identify areas of need and to prioritize. The School Leadership Team uses an **action plan** (see Commitment chapter, 4-7) to specify the instructional changes students need in order to reach stronger reading outcomes. The action plan can be used to communicate this expectation to teachers throughout the school.[xii]

Third, the School Leadership Team helps grade-level teams and department-level teams solve challenging problems. These problems might occur at the systems-level or student-level. For example, the School Leadership Team might assist the grade-level team in grade 3 to solve a systems-level problem associated with providing better reading instruction and support in Tier 2 for students at moderate risk for not meeting goals. The **problem** may be that students receiving Tier 2 instructional supports need to make greater progress towards end-of-year goals, and the **solution** may involve adjusting the schedule to allow more small-group instruction to take place each day. At the student level, the School Leadership Team in a middle school may work, for example, with a team of reading teachers to evaluate how well a student has responded to an intervention and to decide whether the intensity of the intervention should be increased by providing more time each day for explicit reading instruction.

The focus and activities of the School Leadership Team change over time. The following table describes key activities of this team across the school year.

[26] Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Haynes, 2007; NASBE, 2006

Time of the School year	School Leadership Team Focus and Activities
Beginning	• Collect two pieces of information from each grade level: (a) summary screening reports that document across each grade level the percent of students that require Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 levels of reading instruction and support and (b) an Instructional Support Plan for each grade level. • Collect instructional-area support maps from each department in the upper grades, middle school, and high school. The School Leadership Team makes sure there is alignment between the data and the support plans. That is, the team ensures that the intensity of the tiers of support matches the intensity of students' instructional needs. • Identify those grade levels that require additional support and resources to meet end-of-year goals, based on either problematic data from the previous year or a high percentage of students in the current year that require intensive levels of reading instruction and support.

During	• Meet regularly to evaluate the Instructional Support Plans (ISPs) and instructional-area support maps, including reaching formative decisions regarding how well each tier is supporting students' needs. • Representatives from each grade-level team (elementary) and department-level team (middle school and high school) provide regular updates to the School Leadership Team on student progress. Based on these reports from grade-level teams or department-level teams, **the School Leadership Team helps foster changes in the school's reading program**. For **middle school** the reading program updates include 1) the reading classes (convened based on data) recommended for every student, with specific focus on struggling reader data, and 2) reading offered across the instructional areas for all students. For **high school** the reading program updates include 1) reading classes designed for struggling readers and 2) subject-specific reading offered across the instructional areas. • If the school conducts three schoolwide assessments per year (e.g., fall, winter, and spring), the School Leadership Team examines the percent of students within each tier of support that are making adequate progress towards the end-of-year formative and summative reading goals at each point in time.

End	• Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the multiple tiers of instructional support across grade levels, within each grade level, and across the instructional areas by examining the percentage of students that have met the formative and summative reading goals. • Based on these data, the team makes decisions regarding which instructional programs and practices are working and should be maintained and which have resulted in poor reading outcomes. • For areas where there are problematic outcomes, the School Leadership Team discusses what kind of schoolwide adjustments, or within-grade adjustments, or within instructional area adjustments should be put in place at the beginning of the next school year. These proposed changes are formalized in the school **action plan**.[xiii]

Summary

It is critical that the principal, reading coach, grade-level/department-level teams, and a School Leadership Team work together to create and implement a coherent, schoolwide plan for reading. Effective building leadership must prioritize student attainment of grade-level reading goals by vigorously supporting teachers to provide classroom instruction that meets students' needs. To effectively work toward all students meeting or exceeding grade-level reading standards, the principal and the leadership teams need to become knowledgeable about state reading standards, have a thorough understanding of the instruction necessary for successful reading development, and be able to utilize the data collected from assessments to inform instruction.

Leadership needs to be distributed among different individuals and groups within the school and conceptualized as leadership functions, not linked to specific individuals or positions. Key individuals and groups include the principal, a reading coach, grade-level/department-level teams, and a School Leadership Team. It is essential that principals designate time for teachers to plan reading instruction, ensure that schoolwide data are used for formative and summative decision-making, and observe reading instruction in the classroom. If possible, a coach should work with classroom teachers, school-based teams, and the principal to support effective reading instruction. The School Leadership Team oversees the day-to-day implementation of reading instruction, including reading in all classrooms.

Links to Resources

[i] See The Planning and Evaluation Tool-Sustainability (PET-S) at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_tools.html for a handout on the critical functions of a reading program.

[ii] For a complete module on data-based leadership, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_data_based.html

[iii] Examples of principal observations tools include the Five-Minute Observation on Structural Elements, the Five-Minute Observation Form for General Features of Effective Instruction, and an observation form that focuses on background, engagement, teaching, time, environment and results. A complete training package on conducting principal walk-throughs can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/.

[iv] For more information on "look fors" see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/ldrshp_walk_throughs.html. This website provides a module on Principal Walk-Through Observations.

[v] A sample of a reading coach job description can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/. A more thorough description of coaching at the middle and high school levels can be found at http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/CoachingStandards.aspx.

[vi]See See http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html for an Instructional Support Plan template

[vii] An online template of an Instructional Area Support Map is still in initial draft form.

[viii] An "Elements of a Healthy System Checklist" can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/toolbox.html#swrm.

[ix] An example "Alterable Variables Chart" can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/inst_tools.html.

[x] A module (IBR IV: Evaluation and Planning (Spring 2004)) on using data at the end of the school year to evaluate outcomes can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/pd_cohorta_ibrs.html.

[xi] A template for School Reading Plan can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/toolbox.html.

[xii] A sample of a school action plan can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/.

[xiii] A module (IBR IV: Evaluation and Planning (Spring 2004)) on using data at the end of the school year to evaluate outcomes can be found at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/pd_cohorta_ibrs.html.

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 Development 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.nsdc.org/standards/resources.cfm)

[2] National Staff Development Council, 2001 (Retrieved from http://www.nsdc.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.**

> 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)

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**

[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]

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 delivery[15] 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[ii] website and other web resources[18] 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.

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[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

	OUTCOMES (% of Participants who Demonstrate Knowledge, Demonstrate new Skills in a Training Setting, and Use new Skills in the Classroom)		
TRAINING COMPONENTS	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.**[iii] 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.[iv]

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]

> 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)

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

[21] Garet et al., 2001; Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Gersten, Morvant & Brengelman, 1995; Gersten et al., 1986; Gersten et al., 1995; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Little, 1987; Hamilton & McInerny, 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.**

> 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)

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]

[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 achievement[28] 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. [v] [vi]

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.

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[29] Gersten et al., 1995; Hegstad, 1999; Gersten & Dimino, 2001; Gersten, et al., 1995; Little, 1987; Hamilton & McInerny, 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.

> 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 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.[vii] Coaches need

- To understand the school's formative and summative reading goals

- 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.**[viii] 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.[ix] [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] [x] Reading Next,[37] [xi] and Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers[38] [xii] 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[xiii] 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 training[39]—**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.

> 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)

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.

[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.

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; Klinger, 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] The National Staff Development Council website (http://www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm) provides standards for staff development and annotated bibliography list of resources related to staff development.

[ii] For an annotated bibliography on the topic of allocating resources for professional development, see the National Staff Development Council website (http://www.nsdc.org/standards/resources.cfm).

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

[iv] 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

[v] For a module that can help principals monitor and support adolescent literacy instruction in their schools more effectively, can be used at the late elementary school level, in subject-area classes in middle and high school, and with intervention groups or classes, see www.centeroninstruction.org .

[vi] A Principal Walk Through Module and corresponding observation tools may be downloaded at http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu .

[vii] For information on model demonstration sites to visit in Oregon, see http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/beacon_schools.html .

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

[ix] 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)

[x] The National Reading Panel Report can be downloaded for free from (http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org).

[xi] 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.

[xii] The Center on Instruction's Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Practice Brief is available for download at http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Adol%20Struggling%20Readers%20Practice%20Brief.pdf .

[xiii] The Doing What Works website has many resources for teachers (http://dww.ed.gov/).

Commitment

Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

Effective implementation of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework requires focused, ongoing commitment to ensure that all students meet or exceed reading goals.

	Goals	Assessment	Instruction	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools						★
Districts						
State						

Key Indicators of School Commitment:

- Developing a School Reading Plan
- Implementing the actions necessary to support ALL students meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals
- Providing regular reports on formative reading outcomes to school staff, district staff, and the school board and sharing information on progress with parents and the community
- Using staff and resources effectively
- Building and promoting a culture of shared responsibility
- Seeking the active involvement of parents and community members in fostering and promoting reading achievement

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

Supporting students to read at grade-level or above as soon as possible after they enter school, and at grade-level or above in grades 4-12 across the instructional areas, positions students to be successful in school, proficient in the **Essential Skill of Reading,** prepared to earn an **Oregon Diploma,** and ready for **postsecondary education opportunities and careers**. Reading clearly opens doors.

Schools are repeatedly asked to do all they can to achieve many important objectives. However, because reading is foundational to learning, schools can and should be very precise about **what** they will do to support students to read at grade level or above each year. Making sure every student is on this pathway to success in school requires high-level **commitment** from educators in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools to the following **two major objectives:**

- For students reading **below grade level**, schools at each level specify how they provide the strongest reading instruction and interventions possible to help students read at grade level. This includes a description of how teachers provide access to content across the instructional areas and how they support students who are reading below grade level to access subject-specific grade-level text.
- For students **reading at grade level or above**, schools specify how they provide the reading instruction students need to not only maintain strong reading skills but advance those skills to the greatest degree possible in elementary school and in secondary school across the instructional areas.

What is the School Reading Plan? An essential first step toward meeting the two objectives described above is for schools to delineate their commitment to addressing each one. Documenting the school's comprehensive reading program in a **School Reading Plan,**[1] or through a dedicated section of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), part of the district's Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP), makes the school's approach to these two objectives transparent. School and district staff and other stakeholders are able to examine the School Reading Plan to determine the strength of the reading program, observe the implementation of the plan, and draw conclusions through the evaluation of student outcomes to determine to what degree the school has met the two major objectives targeted in the plan.

Developing a School Reading Plan

Identifying in the School Reading Plan the specific procedures the school will use to implement each component of a comprehensive school reading program is essential in order to make sure all students are on track for reading at grade level or above. The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework describes the six components necessary to implement a comprehensive reading program:

1) Establish formative and summative reading **goals** to enable all students to read at grade level or above.
2) **Assess** students regularly.

[1] The School Reading Plan may be subsumed within a broader School Literacy Plan that could include reading, writing, and speaking (the three areas of literacy). However, because so much more is known about effective instruction in reading compared to effective instruction in writing or speaking, it is important in any plan to maintain a separate section that focuses specifically on reading. Both the broad aspects of reading instruction (e.g., number of minutes per day of explicit teacher-led reading instruction) and the details of reading instruction (how many classroom observations of reading instruction will school principals conduct each week), should be documented in the School Reading Plan.

3) Provide reading **instruction** based on research and reading instruction across the instructional areas that supports reading development and student access to subject-area materials.

4) Incorporate **leadership** structures that support reading separately as a subject and across the instructional areas.

5) Implement a system of ongoing **professional development** that prioritizes effective reading instruction and student outcomes.

6) Establish **commitment** to all students being on track to meet or exceed grade-level reading goals through the development of a School Reading Plan.

The School Reading Plan describes schoolwide reading goals for students, and it specifies what the school is going to do to help students reach these goals. In essence, the plan is **a blueprint of the school's reading program**, providing sufficient detail for thorough understanding of how reading instruction is provided at the school. A public document, the School Reading Plan is a way for the school to showcase the quality of the services it provides.

It is important that the School Reading Plan remain intact as individual staff members come and go. That is to say, a school's reading program and practices are not linked to particular administrators or teachers. Rather, the program and practices are developed as a comprehensive plan, taking into account the needs of the students in the school and the structures that will be in place to meet those needs over time.

Although **the School Reading Plan remains stable over time**, schools update the document periodically to reflect school-wide decisions about reading instruction. For example, the School Reading Plan includes formative and summative reading goals that remain relatively stable across years. But as research is conducted on formative reading goals, changes to the formative reading goals that reflect the scientific knowledge base need to be documented in the School Reading Plan.

The district should actively support each school's plan and may assist in developing plans when necessary.

Professional development is another area detailed in the School Reading Plan that will require updating. While the overarching approach to professional development may remain stable, school decisions about how to organize professional development experiences that will address the specific and changing needs of students will impact the School Reading Plan and need to be recorded in the plan. For example, a School Reading Plan may indicate that professional development targeting classroom instruction include extended opportunities for teachers to practice new instructional techniques with their students in the presence of an expert who provides specific feedback to teachers. While principles of professional development such as this one might remain constant over time, the yearly planning of professional development needs to be dynamic—responsive to student data and staff input regarding important professional development needs in the school.

The School Reading Plan is divided into two parts. **Part 1** is an introduction that includes an overview of why the school is using a comprehensive reading program, the school's overarching reading goals for its students, and a summary of the school's approach to the six components. Part 2 provides details on how each of the six components will be implemented in the school. Under the assessment component, for example, information is provided on the timeline for the administration of screening measures for all students, how the measures will be administered and scored, what approach the school will use to

assemble the assessment team members, and how data will be entered into a database and summarized.

It is important for the School Reading Plan to be shared widely, in and out of the field of education, with district personnel, school board members, parents, business leaders, and community members. The School Reading Plan is of **benefit to the district** because the plan gives the superintendent information on how each school provides the instruction students need to meet or exceed formative and summative reading goals. As such, it is important for the district to actively support the School Reading Plan by providing assistance when necessary in helping schools develop a strong plan and to sign off on the plan when it is completed or significantly updated. The School Reading Plan **helps school board members** understand what the school does to provide effective reading instruction for all of its students. Through regular updates on the implementation of the plan and through reports on student reading progress, the school board has information it needs to discuss with district leaders how all students in each school can be supported to meet reading outcomes. The School Reading Plan **provides transparency to families of students** in the school about the instruction their child is receiving. (Utilizing the School Reading Plan to foster parent involvement is discussed later in the chapter.) The transparency of the School Reading Plan is **of benefit to business leaders and community members** interested in the welfare and the prospects of the children in the community.

Action Planning to Promote Continuous School Improvement

As schools implement their School Reading Plan, they carefully monitor student progress toward meeting formative and summative reading goals at each grade level. When students are not meeting reading goals, the school determines what should occur so that classroom instruction better meets students' needs. To meet the needs of **ALL** students, teachers must have sufficient time to plan instruction, reflect on and refine the instruction they have provided, and examine student data to determine if the changes they made are helping students reach reading goals. Grade-level or department-level teams help build and facilitate these structures and actions. **For students not making adequate progress, the team determines school actions to improve student progress.**

For example, in second grade, only 20% of the students at high risk may be making adequate progress toward a reading fluency goal. The grade-level team uses this information to identify an action, or series of actions, to improve the progress of these students. The action may involve providing an additional 30 minutes of reading instruction outside the regular reading block using an intensive intervention program. The grade-level team submits the proposed action to the School Leadership Team for review and incorporation into an **action plan**. This type of team action-planning, based on data, is a major dynamic of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.

> Implementation involves complexity in every aspect. Implementation requires change. . . Changes in skill levels, organizational capacity, organizational culture and so on require education, practice, and time to mature.
>
> Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, Wallace, (2005)

Action plans are tools schools use to make ongoing adjustments in the school's reading program based on the needs of students. The action planning process occurs at least twice a year (e.g., middle of the year and end of the year), typically after major data collection periods. The action plan, based on multiple sources of data, reflects the need to change instruction and instructional plans over time as student and classroom implementation data are collected and analyzed.

A strong action plan is made up of the following elements:

- The component being addressed by the action—for example, assessment, differentiated instruction, professional development
- The intended target or scope of the action—for example, schoolwide, a specific grade or instructional group
- The specific action(s) to be implemented
- The person or group responsible for implementing the action
- How progress on implementation of the action will be reported as well as the timeline for implementation

It is important that schools address only a reasonable number of action items at one time so that quality and follow-through are high. A good rule of thumb is that a school should include no more than eight to ten action items for any year. **Schools should consider incorporating actions that result in improved reading performance into the School Reading Plan to be implemented regularly from that point forward.**

The following example is an action plan developed by an Oregon elementary school at the end of the year based on spring data. The second example is an action plan developed by a middle school.

Sample Action Plan for an Elementary School

Topic	Indicate Schoolwide or Specific Grade and Group	Action to Be Taken (be specific enough so that it is possible to determine when the action has been implemented)	Person Responsible	Report on Progress of Implementations
1. **Instructional Programs and Materials**	All third grade students in the low-strategic range	1. Implement Phonics for Reading with students in the low-strategic range (failed HM Phonics/Decoding Screening Assessment) every other day.	Reading Coach and 3rd grade teacher teaching students	
2. **Instructional Programs and Materials**	First/Second Grade Intensive Students	1. Systematically Enhance Read Well and Read Well Plus using the templates. Teachers will create charts for each unit of Read Well and Read Well Plus. 2. A pacing guide for Read Well and Read Well Plus will be developed specifying lessons to be covered each week during the reading block and the extra instructional period in the afternoon.	Reading Coach and Intensive Teachers	
3. **Instructional Time**	Kindergarten	1. Currently 48/80 kindergarten students qualify for KIIP (extra session of kinder) during which time they receive ERI. Title 1 teachers will provide ERI to students on the wait list for KIIP during the extended day time.	Reading Coach, Title 1 teachers, and Kindergarten teachers	

Topic	Indicate Schoolwide or Specific Grade and Group	Action to Be Taken (be specific enough so that it is possible to determine when the action has been implemented)	Person Responsible	Report on Progress of Implementations
4. **Differentiated Instruction/ Grouping/ Scheduling**	First Grade	1. Currently first grade students are grouped: one class of intensive/low strategic and 3 classes of high strategic/ benchmark. Next year first grade will regroup students similarly to the current second and third grade model: intensive/low strategic, low strategic, high strategic and benchmark. Additional support will be available to low strategic students (failed HM Phonics/ Decoding Screening Assessment).	Reading Coach, Title 1 teacher and first grade team	
5. **Differentiated Instruction/ Grouping/ Scheduling**	Schoolwide	1. 06-07 ELD schedule impacted the duration of reading block at each grade level (including double-dose). New ELD schedule will increase literacy blocks and have all ELL children pulled from each grade at one time (K-3 in afternoon).	ESL teachers and Reading Coach	

Sample Action Plan for a Middle School

Topic	Indicate Schoolwide or Specific Grade and Group	Action to Be Taken (be specific enough so that it is possible to determine when the action has been implemented)	Person Responsible	Report on Progress of Implementation
1. **Instructional Programs and Materials**	6-8th Grade Students who score in the lowest 20 percent on a MAZE reading test, have been progress monitored and continue to be below the aimline after one semester (Tier 3)	1. Implement research based (i.e. Rewards, Corrective Reading, etc.) intensive reading intervention daily	Reading Coach and Language Arts Teacher	Quarterly
2. **Instructional Programs and Materials**	6-8th Grade Students who score in the lowest 20 percent on MAZE and/or below the 35th percentile on the OAKS (Tier 2)	1. Receive instruction from core materials plus differentiated intervention program based on skill gaps (i.e. Read Naturally for fluency, students must be reading at least 50 words correct per minute for this intervention)	Reading Coach and assigned teachers and others as necessary	Quarterly

Topic	Indicate Schoolwide or Specific Grade and Group	Action to Be Taken (be specific enough so that it is possible to determine when the action has been implemented)	Person Responsible	Report on Progress of Implementation
3. Instructional Time	6-8th Grade Students who score in the lowest 20 percent on MAZE, have been progress monitored and continue to be below the aimline after one semester (Tier 3)	1. Two periods dedicated to intensive district-approved intervention possibly in addition to Core Language Arts depending on building resources	Reading Coach, Language Arts Teachers; Principal will work on FTE for extra period of intensive reading instruction	Quarterly
4. Differentiated Instruction/ Grouping/ Scheduling	6-8th Grade Students who score in the lowest 20 percent on the MAZE and or below the 35th percentile on the OAKS (Tier 2)	1. One additional period beyond Language Arts dedicated to core with differentiated intervention	Reading Coach, and assigned teachers	Quarterly
5. Assessment	6-8th Grade Students in Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention	1. MAZE progress monitoring twice monthly 2. Phonics Screener each semester 3. Intervention embedded mastery tests	Reading Coach facilitates progress monitoring schedule, teachers collect data	At least twice monthly

Providing Regular Reports on Progress to Stakeholders

Communication and collaboration among a variety of stakeholders is essential to the successful implementation of the School Reading Plan. Stakeholders include school and district staff, the school board, parents, business leaders, and community members. There are many ways effective communication can occur within and across these various contexts and constituents.

Sharing Data within the Building

To communicate progress that is being made toward the two major objectives of the School Reading Plan (see pg. 2), elementary and middle schools can hold "**data summits**."[2] Data summits involve the whole staff coming together to review and report on student reading data. Data summits are particularly timely following schoolwide data collection periods in the fall, winter, and spring. For high schools where reading is taught to all students in the instructional areas, except for students who are below grade level

[2] NASSP, 2005; Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007; Torgesen, Houston, & Rissman, 2007; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006

and receiving additional instruction, a yearly data summit to analyze OAKS assessment scores is effective.

A benefit of data summits is **transparency.** The performance and progress of students throughout the entire school, and within important levels of the school, such as grade levels and categories of reading risk, can be communicated to everyone working in the school. Data-based communication maintains a focus on reading outcomes and sets the stage for any changes needed in the school's action plan to address these outcomes. Because action plans, including professional development priorities, are adopted based on student outcomes, data summits for school staff also provide an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate important successes based on the success of the current targeted action plan.

Making data on student progress toward meeting formative reading goals transparent within and outside the building contributes to a sense of shared accountability.

Principals lead the data summits by delivering a **State of the School Reading Report**. This report includes: (a) a review of the mid-year or end-of-year outcomes and comparisons across years; and (b) an evaluation of the effectiveness of instructional support systems for the current year.

The first section of the report, reviewing outcomes, summarizes data on the percentage of students meeting or exceeding reading goals and the percentage of students that are not meeting these goals. These percentages are analyzed **across years** to show whether the school is improving its system of reading instruction over time and to what degree. Across multiple years, important areas of support can be addressed—for example, support by grade, support within categories of students at specific levels of risk, or support for English learners.

The second section of the report, evaluating instructional effectiveness, addresses the degree to which the needs of students have been met in the **current year**. The report highlights the percentage of students who made adequate reading progress over time during the year. For example, the percentage of all students who made adequate reading progress from the fall to winter are reported, as well as the progress of specific groups of students. The report highlights priority groups. For example, it reports on the progress of students who began the year at low risk for reading difficulties as well as students who began the year at high risk. The progress rates of students from one point in time to another are examined to identify those groups of students that require more intensive instructional support. If, for example, only 60% of the students who began the year at low risk for reading difficulty made adequate progress from fall to winter, then a school will want to consider such factors as the programs selected and the length of reading periods.

Data-based communication helps maintain a focus on reading outcomes, it helps staff understand why certain professional development priorities and action plans are adopted, and it provides an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate important successes.

Sharing Data within the District

The principal also reports the progress the school is making to the district office and to the school board.[3] The **State of the School Reading Report** clearly shows the district and school board which students need further support to move beyond their current reading level and learn to read at grade level

[3] Togneri & Anderson, 2003

or above. When presenting the report, the principal identifies the strategic changes or adjustments the school will make to improve reading outcomes for these students. The principal also discusses ways the school has identified that the district, school board, other agencies, and possibly the community can support the school's effort to increase the percentage of students reading at grade level and above and meeting formative reading goals.

The transparent presentation of reading data, within and outside the building, contributes to meaningful accountability that is shared across all stakeholders.[4] Transparency helps the school stay the course on accountability for strong reading outcomes for all students. The fact that administrators, teachers, specialists, and instructional assistants are essential for student reading progress is made clear. What is more, periodic presentations of student performance data by school keeps school board members informed and ultimately helps shape district policies on reading.[5]

Sharing Data at Parent Conferences

In **grades K-5**, meeting with parents regularly to clearly present the progress their child is making toward meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals and to explain the grade-level Instructional Support Plan (ISP)[6] that is used for their child's grade (see the Instruction chapter, 40-41) is critical. It is important for teachers to explain to parents the assessments administered and describe the critical benchmarks the child should be meeting; that is, what is the desired level of reading performance and at what point in the school year it is important for the child to meet the goal. Graphs and other visual displays of data are essential in helping parents understand the progress their child is making.

For a child not yet reading at grade level, the progress that child has made since the last meeting with the parents is presented followed by a discussion of what instructional adjustments have been made for the student and how effective they have been. If the instructional adjustments have not been effective, the discussion with the parents includes what additional changes the school and the teacher are going to implement to increase the likelihood the child will meet grade-level reading goals.

During parent conferences for **grades 6-8** students, teachers clearly present to parents the progress their student is making toward meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals. Because reading impacts student performance across the instructional areas, reading well in every class is essential. The student's reading class placement is discussed and screening and/or progress-monitoring data is presented. For students reading below grade level whose progress is being monitored, teachers present data to show parents the progress their student is making. If previous instructional adjustments have not been effective and the student is not making progress, the discussion with the parents includes what additional changes the school and the teachers are going to implement to increase the likelihood the student will meet grade-level reading goals.

Parent conferences for **grade 9** students are critical as students need grade-level or above reading skills that will serve them well across the instructional areas throughout high school. Teachers clearly present the progress their student is making toward meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals. This may be the only year that the high school screens all students, and the screening data is presented and explained to parents. For students who were identified through the screening as needing reading support

[4] Earl & Katz, 2006
[5] National School Boards Foundation, 2003
[6] See Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of how to develop an instructional support plan.

and have been given additional instruction, teachers present the progress-monitoring data and explain the progress of the student. If previous instructional adjustments have not been effective and the student is not making progress, the discussion with the parents includes what additional changes the school and the teachers are going to implement to increase the likelihood the student will meet grade-level reading goals.

During parent conferences for students in **grades 10-12,** teachers inform parents if their student has met or exceeded high school grade-level standards in reading thereby demonstrating proficiency in the Essential Skill of Reading. If not, teachers clearly present the progress their student is making toward meeting or exceeding grade-level reading goals and demonstrating reading proficiency required to earn an Oregon Diploma. For parents of students receiving additional reading instruction, progress-monitoring data is presented and explained. If previous instructional adjustments have not been effective and the student is not making progress, the discussion with the parents includes what additional changes the school and the teachers are going to implement to increase the likelihood the student will meet grade-level reading goals.

> Once elementary principals began looking at the situation instead of their frustration, they saw the logic. Who better to assure that their students could read. It was not the legislators at either the state or federal levels who could look at student and classroom data, determine use of time, choose curriculum, assign teachers, and make building level adjustments.
>
> Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier, (2004)

Using Staff and Resources Effectively

The School Reading Plan also includes information on staffing and resource considerations necessary to support the implementation of the plan over time.

Addressing staffing for reading success in the School Reading Plan makes sense. Attracting highly-qualified educators that can help implement the objectives of the School Reading Plan is essential[7] to the effective, ongoing implementation of schoolwide reading instruction. Planning for inevitable staff turnover is also essential. Effective staffing involves

- Hiring personnel who have the preparation and motivation to work on achieving the schoolwide reading goals. Sharing the School Reading Plan with applicants is a helpful first step, and structuring part of the interview process around the components of the plan may be useful.
- Planning proactively for staff turnover, which includes introducing new staff to the School Reading Plan and the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework as well as providing professional development to new staff to support the plan. Addressing staff turnover in the School Reading Plan strengthens the school's reading program over time. Schools can build capacity to handle staff turnover, as well as staff absences, by making sure that knowledge and leadership are distributed among staff members. Distributing knowledge and leadership helps ensure that success does not depend on one or several key individuals.[8] For example, rather than sending only a building-level coach to program trainings, a school could also identify and send experts at each grade level to receive the training. A school might also identify teacher

[7] Smith, 2008

[8] Elmore, 2000; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Spillane & Diamond, 2007

leaders at each grade who could learn to lead grade-level team meetings along with the coach. The School Leadership Team[9] could be responsible for making sure the building runs smoothly in the event that the principal or other key leadership team members are away.

School **budgets** are complex, and reading program budgets add to the complexity as they come from multiple funding sources. Because funding sources often have use and reporting requirements, it is important for schools to explore rules and regulations about the use of funds. Schools are encouraged to study ways to maximize the use of school funds to improve reading outcomes for all students. This responsibility typically falls to the principal. The effort may be productive, however, as schools may find flexibility that warrants further study. For example, schools may not be aware that up to 15% of their special education (IDEA Part B) funding can be used to support early intervention services for students in kindergarten through grade 12 who are not yet identified for special education services. In other words, special education funds can be used with students **before** they are determined to have a disability.[10] If a school's objective is to increase the intensity of reading instruction, 15% of the funding they receive from special education may be used to help support early intervention instruction.

A Culture of Shared Responsibility

Schools committed to formative and summative reading goals promote a culture of shared responsibility that makes it possible for all students to reach these goals.[11]

Elementary school staff make important decisions together regarding instruction and the supports students need. For example, **grade-level teams** map out the instructional support students will receive in each instructional tier, decide how they will implement the instruction students need, and monitor students' progress to track if students are making expected gains. Grade-level teams often come together to solve particularly challenging problems as well, further supporting the schoolwide effort to provide the instruction and support each student needs.

> The first thing parents want schools to do is to assure their children's physical safety. And the second thing they wanted schools to do is to teach their children to read.
>
> Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier (2004)

Grouping students for instruction across **elementary** classrooms is a clear example of sharing responsibility. Data from screening measures are used to form fluid instructional groups, and in many cases the best configuration of these groups, in terms of effective resource allocation, is to group students from different classrooms. In this model, sometimes called **"walk to read,"** students at the same instructional level, but from different classrooms, are taught by the assigned teacher or specialist for some portion of their reading instruction.[12] In some cases, cross-grade reading groupings may best serve the needs of students. For example, a student might be moved from the student's classroom setting to a smaller group in a different grade.

[9] The School Leadership Team is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4: Leadership
[10] IDEA
[11] Paine, 2007; NASSP, 2005; Wilhelm, 2009
[12] Stanovich citation

By instituting cross-class and cross-grade fluid instructional grouping, teachers are sharing "ownership" of student outcomes with the understanding that the larger team is responsible for the progress of all students in the grade. Usually, each teacher is "responsible" for only those students in his or her classroom; however, this approach can be instructionally challenging. While sharing instructional responsibility is more complex and requires planning and collaboration, shared instructional responsibilities open up many more possibilities for providing students with the instruction they need to meet reading goals.

Middle school and high school staff regularly make important decisions together regarding instruction and the supports students need. For example, **department-level teams** map out the instructional support students will receive in each instructional tier, decide how they will implement the instruction students need, and monitor students' progress to track if students are making expected gains. Department-level teams often come together to solve particularly challenging problems as well, further supporting the schoolwide effort to provide the instruction and support each student needs.

Teaching reading across the instructional areas in **middle school and high school** epitomizes a culture of shared responsibility. While traditionally secondary teachers have been viewed as content experts, within the context of a comprehensive reading program they are viewed not only as content experts but as experts on teaching students how to read texts in their field.

Parent and Community Involvement

It is important for parents and the community to also view reading as a priority. If the school broadly communicates its major objectives for students as summarized in the School Reading Plan—all students being supported to read at grade level or above, then the next step is for school personnel to actively help parents, businesses, and community members understand what it means for the school to make a commitment to reading achievement. Perhaps a version of the plan prepared specifically for parents, businesses, and community members would be effective for this purpose. The School Reading Plan enables stakeholders to see the focus of reading instruction in each grade and how the school supports students reading below grade level and those students reading at grade level and above. When parents, business leaders, and community members understand the objectives of the School Reading Plan, it increases the likelihood that they will become involved in promoting literacy in the school and in the community.

Parent Involvement

Schools can enhance reading outcomes for students by encouraging parents to support reading activities outside of school.[13] However, schools must take precautions to make this a positive experience and not one in which parents feel guilty they are not doing more to help their child. The following table includes suggestions for how parents of students in **grades K-3** can support reading skills at home. Children who regularly read outside of school typically make good gains in reading. Reading to a child, with a child, and interacting with a child around sounds, letters, words, stories, information, and ideas is an investment which will pay rich dividends.

[13] Henderson & Mapp, 2002

In the Home (Grades K-3)
1. Encourage and support reading outside of school.
2. Visit the library regularly.
3. Help a younger child learn letter names and the sounds letters make.
4. Read **with** your child (shared reading) every day when they are learning to read.
5. Read **to** your child every day from books with higher vocabulary and more complex sentences than they can read on their own.
6. Talk **with** your child about what you read together; ask questions; talk about unfamiliar words; help them connect their reading to the world around them.
7. Set an example for reading in the home by reading yourself.
8. Limit "screen time" (television, videos, games, computer) to prioritize time for daily reading.
9. Play word games to build your child's vocabulary.

The following table describes how parents of students in **grades 4 and up** can support reading skills at home. Students who regularly read outside of school typically make good gains in reading. Parents can encourage their student to read regularly outside of school as this practice pays rich dividends for the student in school and beyond.

In the Home (Grades 4 and up)
1. Independent readers will want to read at home. Expect and encourage reading at home. At least twenty minutes/day, five days/week, depending on grade, provides invaluable practice for continued reading growth.
2. Set an example for reading at home by reading yourself.
3. Provide access to appropriate books and reading materials at the student's level of difficulty and of high interest.
4. Visit the library regularly with the student or encourage an older student to visit regularly.
5. Provide guidance, as needed and as appropriate, to a student in selecting books and reading materials.

6. Provide ongoing opportunities for discussing books and reading materials.
7. Talk about and use vocabulary the student notices from reading.
8. Encourage students to write about what they have read.
9. Limit "screen time" (television, videos, games, computer), as appropriate, to encourage daily reading.
10. Encourage the student to participate in book clubs.
11. Support having students read with a friend and exchange books and share ideas with a friend about what they read.

An important consideration is for schools to ensure that parents know how their child is doing under the School Reading Plan. Parents should know if their child is, or is not, reading at grade level. If their child **is** reading at grade level or above, parents should know what the school is doing to maintain and accelerate their child's reading proficiency. If their child **is not** reading at grade level, parents should understand what the school is doing instructionally so their child will be able to "catch up" to grade-level reading expectations.

Schools should communicate to parents directly that it is okay to ask—in fact, parents should be encouraged to ask—how well the school's plan is working for their child. It should be clear to parents that their child's teacher(s), or another professional in the building (e.g., the principal or coach), will be able to summarize at any point during the school year their child's progress. If the reading plan is not working as well as intended, teachers should be able to describe verbally and in writing what process is being used to determine when and how the child's plan will be changed, how the new plan will be monitored, and what the school will do if the child's progress does not improve over time.

Community Involvement

For optimal results, schools also seek active involvement of community members in their efforts to improve reading.[14] It's important that a school share the School Reading Plan with the community and provide regular updates on students' progress toward meeting reading goals. More importantly, schools can identify ways the community can support the school reading program. Engaging citizens, businesses, and community organizations can assist parents and schools in promoting reading as a top priority. Schools can effectively make the case that when students learn to read well and succeed in school academically, the whole community benefits. When this dynamic plays out in schools across the state, the case can be made that the entire state benefits!

Citizens understand the importance of education, the importance of schools, and the importance of learning to read proficiently. When schools and districts set clear reading goals and enthusiastically share their results with the community, they open up new possibilities to engage citizens, businesses, and community organizations in the life of the school.

[14] Blank, Berg, & Malaville, 2006; Henderson & Mapp, 2002

One particularly important way community members may support the School Reading Plan is to help the school purchase books for the school library collection and classroom library collections (see below). When students are motivated to read for pleasure and for information that interests them, they steadily become better and better readers over time. However, providing an array of motivating reading materials at all levels in the school library and in classrooms may be a budgetary challenge for schools. A community focus on providing funding for a rich array of library books and materials for the school would enrich the culture of reading in the school and directly impact the school reading program. The importance of daily practice, inside and outside of school, for improving reading has been widely demonstrated.

Transparency regarding the School Reading Plan invites opportunities for the community to see and understand what needs to be done and what can be done to support student learning and achievement. Using this information as a catalyst, members of the community can be recruited to support students in the school, and in many cases community members will step up on their own to contribute to the effort. A strong and committed community can help schools accomplish reading goals.

In the Community
1. Share reading goals and reading data with the community; note successes, and cite needs for support.
2. Ask segments of the community to "market**" reading outside-of-school** to kids, parents, and grandparents.
3. Encourage parents and community members to help the school promote and facilitate reading for pleasure and information by increasing the school library collection and classroom library collections through donations of money and volunteer time to prepare the books for student use.
4. Develop strong parent and community volunteer programs to supplement reading support for students.

Summary

Making sure all students K-12 meet formative and summative reading goals so they may be successful early in school and across the instructional areas later in school, proficient in the **Essential Skill of Reading**, and finally eligible to earn an **Oregon Diploma** is critical. It requires high-level **commitment** from educators in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools to the implementation of a comprehensive school reading program.

The Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework provides a structure (six components) for implementation of a comprehensive school reading program, and the School Reading Plan provides documentation of how the school will engage in implementation. Schools develop action plans to make ongoing adjustments in their reading program based on data collected at the middle and end of the school year.

Providing regular reports to school staff on school progress through data summits demonstrates the school's commitment to strong reading outcomes. Principals present a State of the School Reading Report to school staff, district staff, and the school board. Making data on student progress toward meeting formative reading goals transparent within and outside the school contributes to a sense of shared accountability. Schools share the School Reading Plan with parents and the community and regularly communicate progress. Involvement of parents and community members in this effort strengthens the overall commitment.

References: Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework

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