
Developing a Reading Program

Adopted for

Intermediate District 287

**A Proposal Submitted to the District Curriculum Committee
October 2006**

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Executive Summary

The District-wide Curriculum Committee of Intermediate District 287 charged a group of qualified and interested staff to make recommendations for reading curriculum and instruction across the district. The group met throughout the summer and early fall of 2006 with the goal of presenting recommendations for reading to the districtwide curriculum committee at the first regularly-scheduled meeting of the academic year.

The group assessed current instruction in programs across the district and compiled relevant research. After synthesizing their findings, they adopted *What Adolescents Deserve: Principles For Supporting Adolescents/Literacy Growth* (2006) as the foundational document for their recommendations:

1. Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.
2. Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.
3. Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.
4. Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.
5. Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.
6. Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.
7. Adolescents deserve homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.

The recommendations that follow from these seven principles are:

- The instructional framework needs to address individual differences and motivation, not “one size fits all.” Therefore the program should include a variety of genres (including electronic) and address academic content, life skills and leisure reading.
- Programs and buildings need to develop a culture of reading.
- Quality reading instruction is offered to every student every day. Instruction by all staff should address specific reading skills and strategies that include explicit instruction modeling and opportunities for students to practice new skills.
- The instructional framework should include initial assessment to determine each student’s needs and learner characteristics in reading, as well as ongoing assessment to monitor growth and adjust instruction as needed.
- Professional development and ongoing support should be provided to ensure staff members (including content-area teachers, educational assistants, volunteers and administrators) develop the expertise necessary to implement the instructional framework.
- Individualized assessment and an intervention plan for additional instruction is provided by a licensed reading specialist for students whose reading instruction needs are beyond the scope of what the regular classroom teacher can provide.
- There must be ongoing professional development and support for teachers that is research-based and aligned with effective practices for reading instruction that respect the individual characteristics and complexities of students.
- Enlist the involvement of families, administration, higher education and the broader community in addressing the reading needs of our unique population of students.

After determining these recommendations, the group outlined potential next steps at three levels: district, program, and classroom, thereby including all staff in the district vision of developing an effective literacy program.

Overview

This report contains the following sections:

- Group Membership and Purpose
- Assessment of Current Programming
- Review of Research
- Recommendations
- Coordination
- Evaluation
- Appendixes

Group Membership and Purpose

The Districtwide Curriculum Committee charged a group to begin meeting in Summer 2006 to review district practices related to reading and to make recommendations. Reading had not been recognized previously as a separate discipline on the district standards adoption and improvement cycle, but the need to address reading improvement had been a focus of discussion for over a year. Six teachers who either (1) had been a part of Hamline University's reading licensure cohort hosted in the district or (2) had previously received reading certification, met along with four members of the Intermediate District 916 staff to explore common areas of need. 287 members included: Kayleen Taffe, Catherine Pinkosky, Sharon Kowski, Sharon Landrud, Jean Westerlund, and Donna Moe. Jane Holmberg facilitated the group. The 916 group members were: Jessica Wiley, Brian Fetyko, Lisa Hexom, and Sara Sirna. The resulting report contains their recommendations for a district-wide reading program, including related district, program, and classroom actions.

Assessment of Current Programming

The group began by taking an inventory of current reading curriculum and instruction in each of the major programming areas of 287 in which academic reading is necessary to engage in the curriculum. The inventories provided a baseline for discussion regarding our need for a comprehensive reading program. These inventories are listed in the appendix. Areas include:

- Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Programs
- English Language Learner (ELL) Programs
- Emotional Behavioral Disordered (EBD) Programs
- Area Learning Center (ALC) Programs

In addition to our own assessment, need is documented by reports of current adolescent literacy levels. The group's charge is underscored by national reports such as those summarized in the *Adolescent Literacy Fact Sheet* (Alliance for Excellent Education, February 2006) included as Appendix B.

Review of Research

In the research phase, the group determined that a document from the Commission on Adolescent Literacy of the International Reading Association could guide us in two important ways. First, the seven principles for supporting adolescent literacy provided a summary that could also serve as a standard to which the district could aspire. Second, the summary also could be used as the framework for the report and subsequent recommendations.

WHAT ADOLESCENTS DESERVE: PRINCIPLES FOR SUPPORTING ADOLESCENTS' LITERACY GROWTH

1. *Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.*
2. *Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.*

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3. *Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.*
 4. *Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.*
 5. *Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.*
 6. *Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.*
 7. *Adolescents deserve homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.*

Several related research reports confirm these principles and suggest that the overall goal for the district should be to develop a reading program, not simply talk about reading instruction or reading intervention. The reading program could include reading in the content areas, staff development, and developing a culture of reading in addition to explicit reading instruction as its own subject area.

Studies reported by the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratories support the development of a comprehensive district literacy program. These reports are summarized below and included in their entirety in the appendix section of this report.

The first of these corroborating reports is the *Improving Reading Achievement of America's Children* report from which the following 10 Research-based Principles for Elementary Literacy can be derived:

1. Home language and literacy experiences
2. Preschool Programs
3. Skills that predict later reading success
4. Primary level instruction that supports successful reading acquisition
5. Primary level environments and classrooms
6. Cultural and linguistic diversity
7. Children who are identified as having reading difficulties
8. Proficient reading in 3rd grade and above
9. Professional opportunities
10. Entire school staff is involved

The second related report is the Reading Next report produced by the Carnegie Corporation. From this report, 15 Key Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Programs can be derived. These elements, divided into two groups – instructional improvements and infrastructure improvements, include:

Instructional Improvements:

1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction:
2. Effective Instructional Principles Embedded in Content
3. Motivation and Self-directed Learning
4. Text-based Collaborative learning
5. Strategic Tutoring
6. Diverse Texts
7. Intensive Writing
8. A Technology Component
9. Ongoing Formative Assessment of Students

Infrastructure Elements

10. Extended Time for Literacy
11. Professional development
12. Ongoing Summative Assessment of Students and Program
13. Teacher Teams
14. Leadership
15. A Comprehensive and Coordinated Literacy Program

A complete outline of the findings as well as the report itself is included in Appendix C.

The third major report that provides the research base for this report is the Learning Point Characteristics of Outstanding Literacy Programs (OLP) (2004).

- The literature-based program is focused on text understanding (i.e., comprehension).
- Reading across the curriculum is an important part of the program.
- Accelerated word knowledge is based on metacognitive learning processes.
- In this program, writing supports reading comprehension, and reading helps writing.
- Writing across the curriculum is a significant component of this literacy program.
- A strong library or media center with a capable librarian is a foundation of the program.
- Time is set aside during each school day for recreational or enrichment reading.
- Remedial, intervention, and accelerated programs support basic reading.
- Both program and learner assessments are based on multiple measures.
- An effective, self-renewing staff development effort is an important program foundation.

Taken together, the four major reports cited—the three above plus the Adolescent Literacy Principles—provide a strong base of research support for the group recommendations. Table 1 summarizes the relationship among the reports and the principles.

Table 1

<i>Adolescent Literacy Principle</i>	<i>Related Research</i>
<i>1. Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.</i>	Key element 3: Motivation and self-directed learning Key element 4: Text-based collaborative learning Key element 6: Diverse texts Key element 8: A technology component Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program Best Practices: Primary level literacy environments Characteristics of OLP: The literature-based program is focused on text understanding (i.e., comprehension). Characteristics of OLP: strong library or media center with a capable librarian is a foundation of the program.

<i>Adolescent Literacy Principle</i>	<i>Related Research</i>
<p>2. <i>Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.</i></p>	<p>Key element 1: Direct explicit comprehension instruction Key element 2: Effective instructional principles embedded in content Key element 3: Motivation and self-directed learning Key element 4: Text-based collaborative learning Key element 7: Intensive writing Key element 8: A technology component Key element 9: Ongoing formative assessment of students Key element 10: Extended time for literacy Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program</p> <p>Best Practices: Skills that predict later reading success</p> <p>Best Practices: Primary level instruction that supports successful reading acquisition</p> <p>Best Practices: Proficient reading in 3rd grade and above</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: The reading program is founded upon strong instructional leadership and a shared reading program vision.</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: The literature-based program is focused on text understanding (i.e., comprehension).</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: Time is set aside during each school day for recreational or enrichment reading.</p>
<p>3. <i>Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.</i></p>	<p>Key element 1: Direct, explicit comprehension instruction Key element 5: Strategic tutoring Key element 11: Professional development Key element 13: Teacher teams Key element 14: Leadership Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program</p> <p>Best Practices: Proficient reading in 3rd grade and above</p> <p>Best Practices: Professional opportunities</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: The literature-based program is focused on text understanding (i.e., comprehension).</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: Reading across the curriculum is an important part of the program.</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: Accelerated word knowledge is based on metacognitive learning processes.</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: In this program, writing supports reading comprehension, and reading helps writing. Writing across the curriculum is a significant component of this literacy program.</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: An effective, self-renewing staff development effort is an important program foundation.</p>

<i>Adolescent Literacy Principle</i>	<i>Related Research</i>
<p>4. <i>Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.</i></p>	<p>Key element 1: Direct, explicit comprehension instruction Key element 5: Strategic tutoring Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program</p> <p><i>Reading specialist / Literacy Coordinator</i> whose role includes overseeing: Professional development, assessment, curriculum and instruction, school liaison/ leadership <i>Literacy coaches</i> - train and support the teachers <i>Reading teachers</i> – Provide instruction to students</p> <p>Best Practices: Children who are identified as having reading difficulties</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: The literature-based program is focused on text understanding (i.e., comprehension).</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: Accelerated word knowledge is based on metacognitive learning processes.</p> <p>Characteristics of OLP: Remedial, intervention, and accelerated programs support basic reading.</p>
<p>5. <i>Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.</i></p>	<p>Key element 3: Motivation and self-directed learning Key element 11: Professional development (teachers, EAs, volunteers, administration) Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program</p> <p>Best Practices: Cultural and linguistic diversity</p>
<p>6. <i>Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.</i></p>	<p>Key element 9: Ongoing formative assessment of students Key element 12: Resources to provide ongoing summative assessment of students and programs Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program Characteristics of OLP: Both program and learner assessments are based on multiple measures.</p>
<p>7. <i>Adolescents deserve administration, homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.</i></p>	<p>Key element 14: Leadership Key element 15: A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program</p> <p>Best Practices: Home language and literacy Best Practices: Preschool Programs Characteristics of OLP: The reading program is founded upon strong instructional leadership and a shared reading program vision. Characteristics of OLP: Active parental participation at home and at school supports the reading program. Characteristics of OLP: A strong sense of volunteerism attracts community people into the school to help.</p>

Recommendations

Beginning with the first adolescent literacy principle and continuing in the same pattern for subsequent principles, the group listed recommendations for Intermediate District 287. In addition, specific actions that could be taken to support the recommendations are listed. The three levels for action are: District, Building or Program, and Classroom or Staff.

<i>Adolescent Literacy Principle 1: Curriculum and Instruction</i>		
<i>Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.</i>		
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructional framework needs to address individual differences and motivation, not “one size fits all.” Therefore the program should include a variety of genres (including electronic) and address academic content, life skills and leisure reading. • Programs and buildings need to develop a culture of reading. 		
<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop budgeting process and guidelines for ordering reading materials that meet elements of the recommendations. • Conduct a survey of existing materials and availability. • Develop a centralized system of ordering reading materials and related equipment, consulting about orders with a reading specialist. • Foster a culture of reading by modeling system wide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct program-wide and building wide literacy events including all staff and students. • Provide newspaper and magazine subscriptions. • Provide school and classroom libraries. • Foster a culture of reading by modeling system wide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate students to read by reading aloud and silent reading, providing a variety of materials. • Set aside time for instructional and leisure reading. • Foster a culture of reading by modeling system wide.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.

Recommendation:

- Quality reading instruction is offered to every student every day. Instruction by all staff should address specific reading skills and strategies that include explicit instruction modeling and opportunities for students to practice new skills.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide materials and training. • Develop reading outcomes and commitment for reading instruction across all areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each develops its own program instruction vision for reading. • Support for daily reading instruction across all areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model, teach and provide opportunities to use specific strategies. • Assess often to see if providing optimal level of challenge. • Learn new strategies to teach.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 3: Assessment

Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.

Recommendation:

- The instructional framework should include initial assessment to determine each student’s needs and learner characteristics in reading, as well as ongoing assessment to monitor growth and adjust instruction as needed.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile and disseminate up to date inventory of research based testing instruments. • Provide training necessary to conduct assessments. • Order additional assessments as recommended by reading specialists and committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose initial reading assessment. • Provide consistent initial reading assessment. • Develop and maintain a common system for collecting data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use assessment results to develop students’ curriculum (goals). • Monitor student growth.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 4: Staff Development and Staffing

Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum

Recommendation:

- Professional development and ongoing support should be provided to ensure staff members (including content-area teachers, educational assistants, volunteers and administrators) develop the expertise necessary to implement the instructional framework.
- Professional development should be provided.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop district wide incentives and expectations to ensure that all staff teach reading systematically and routinely with an emphasis on reading improvement for all students. • Provide Staff Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workshops emphasizing reading in all subject areas. ○ Publications ○ District web site ○ Reading Resource Room ○ Newsletters – email disseminated by Reading Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage cross-curricular collaboration with reading specialists. • Provide structures for teachers to support one another as they model and share instructional strategies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Classroom observation. ○ Teacher teaming and sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of professional development opportunities. • Share your expertise. • Teamwork. • Join a professional organization (i.e., IRA) • Develop every content lesson plan to include a reading goal, as well. • Collaborate with reading specialists to design curriculum. • Learn reading instructional practices.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 5: Staff Development and Staffing

Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read

Recommendation:

Individualized assessment and an intervention plan for additional instruction is provided by a licensed reading specialist for students whose reading instruction needs are beyond the scope of what the regular classroom teacher can provide.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide district reading specialist available to building reading staff and content area teachers. • Provide networking opportunities for licensed reading staff to work together and with reading staff in other districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure each building or program has a reading specialist, coach and/or reading teacher <u>OR</u> access to the above. • Develop individualized programs for students with significant needs. • Support for content area teachers by reading professional. • Make available to all instructional staff access to a licensed reading professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with reading professional to determine which students need interventions beyond what the classroom teacher can provide. • When working with students, the reading specialist will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide a safe, welcoming environment for students who struggle. ○ Work specifically to develop students’ sense of self-confidence about their ability to learn to read. ○ Use effective practice materials and methods.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 6: Staff Development and Staffing

Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences and respond to their characteristics

Recommendation:

- There must be ongoing professional development and support for teachers that is research-based and aligned with effective practices for reading instruction that respect the individual characteristics and complexities of students.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development opportunities for all staff - centered on strategies for working with diverse learners cultures. • District should maintain membership in reading organizations (i.e. NRA) for access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Materials ○ Workshops ○ Websites ○ Updates ○ Instructional strategies. • Investigate grant opportunities for researching highly unique student populations and literacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make reading workshop opportunities available to staff as part of their IGP/PLC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider student characteristics when selecting reading materials and during delivery of instruction. • Include Young Adult literature in novel study curriculum. • Include high interest topics for discussion. • Relate classic texts to modern world.

Adolescent Literacy Principle 7: Community and Family Involvement

Adolescents deserve homes, communities and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed

Recommendation:

- Enlist the involvement of families, administration, higher education and the broader community in addressing the reading needs of our unique population of students.

<i>District Action</i>	<i>Building or Program Action</i>	<i>Classroom or Staff Action</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine and implement district vision for student literacy. • Formalize district reading group as an ongoing element of districtwide curriculum review and improvement. • Create “reading” section on website for parents and community. • Enlist the support of higher education partners to diminish need for post-secondary remedial reading instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify staff to be involved in reading association activities. • Recruit community reading volunteers. • Provide info on reading at open houses and parent nights. • Set up parent and student book clubs. • Sponsor periodic reading “activity” for parents and community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and communicate <u>specific</u> ways families and community members can help with reading. • Send home summer and school year reading lists. • Have classroom reading nights. • Conduct book exchanges. • Take advantage of resources available through public library system.

Coordination

In order to carry out the recommendations at the district, program, and classroom levels, the following steps are offered as a means of coordinating the work:

1. Establish a Reading Subgroup of the District Curriculum Committee.

This subgroup will plan and initiate the monitoring process, gather data, facilitate collaboration and decision-making, and communicate findings. The group making this report has completed some of these steps in a cursory manner in order to make recommendations. Ongoing development and improvement may include more in-depth work for:

- Conducting a needs assessment for additional information to improve the literacy program.
- Formulating questions to focus the monitoring, particularly at the site level and in coordination with Professional Learning Communities' work.
- Establishing reading standards.

2. Work with Administrative Staff to Address District and Program Recommendations.

The administrative representative to the group will facilitate administrative considerations related to the recommendations, especially with regard to staffing and budgeting.

3. Work with Staff Development Committee to Coordinate Staff Development Recommendations.

Reading group members who are also members of the Staff Development Committee will bring forward recommendations that relate to staff development to assure coordination with district staff development efforts.

Evaluation

The following Standards for Developing and Evaluating Instructional Models are derived from the University of Kansas Strategic Instruction Model (2004). They provide parameters for evaluation of the model.

1. The instructional procedure must be palatable for teachers. If it isn't, teachers won't adopt it for use in their classrooms.
2. The instructional procedure must have value and be perceived to have value by high-achieving and average achieving students.
3. The procedure must be sufficiently powerful to have an effect on low-achieving students.
4. The procedure must result in statistically significant gains for students.
5. The procedure must result in socially significant gains for students. (If a procedure results in an increase in a student's performance from 20% to 40%, although the result might be statistically significant, it is not socially significant because the student is still failing).
6. The degree to which students will maintain the skill or strategy they have been taught and generalize it for use in other situations is important in determining whether the instructional procedure is successful and has merit.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Assessment of Current Reading Instruction by Area
 Appendix B: Adolescent Literacy Fact Sheet
 Appendix C: Related Research
 Appendix D: Combined Reading Recommendations Overview

Appendix A – Assessment of Current Reading Instruction by Area

General Program Area: 287 D/HH Itinerant
Completed by: Cathy Pinkosky

Instructional Model	Instrument/s Used to Assess Reading Level	Curriculum Materials/ Series Used	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>struggling readers may receive 1-1 with D/HH teacher per IEP (comprehension, vocabulary, figurative language,, writing, use of graphic organizers; phonics generally limited to elementary, as well as recent increased attention to phonemic awareness)</i> • <i>struggling readers may receive instruction/ intervention within mainstream setting</i> • <i>struggling readers also identified as LD (difficult for D/HH to qualify) may receive instruction/ intervention from an LD teacher</i> • <i>combination</i> 	<p>Reading: WJ-III QRI-4 SRI-2</p> <p>Burns & Rowe</p> <p>TERA-2 TERA-D/HH TORC-3</p> <p>Gray Silent Reading Test PIAT-R subtest 3 (Rdg)</p> <p>Vocabulary: The WORD Test (elementary) The WORD Test Adolescent E/ROWPVT PPVT-III CPVT (for D/HH) CREVT</p>	<p>Classroom materials (elementary reading series, MS/HS content-area texts, assigned readings, study guides)</p> <p>Supplemental materials (available through 287 Media Center, teacher-owned materials, teacher-created materials, on-line resources)</p> <p>Series available through 287: Reading Milestones, Reading Bridge, SRA – Clues for Better Reading Kit (additional mat’ls from SLPHS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited time with/access to students and work space • Generally good rapport with administration & staff in the schools <p>Needs Survey (Spring 2006):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream teacher cooperation varies, need timely access to vocab/content information • Management of vocab & materials • Progress monitoring • Needs survey respondents expressed greatest interest in access to technology and best (effective) practices information • Dearth of research specific to D/HH.

General Program Area: Deaf/Hard of Hearing Itinerant Staff Development
Completed by: Sherry L. Landrud

READING-Related Staff Development for 2005-2006:

Who: D/HH Itinerant and D/HH St. Louis Park Staff

When: Once monthly during monthly meetings

What: **Staff Development Reading Strategy Training**

- September 2005: 2 hour power point of current best practices of vocabulary instruction applied to teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing presented by S. Landrud
- October 2005: 2 hour overview of current best practices in reading applied to teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing presented by S. Landrud
- November-April: 35 minutes of specific comprehension strand strategy lessons taught monthly by C. Pinkosky and S. Landrud
- Comprehension strand reading activities were disseminated to staff each month for utilization with students

What: **Professional Learning Communities with Reading Emphasis: 2005-2006**

4 PLCs were established:

Preschool: Phonics/Phonemic Awareness

Elementary: Fluency

Elementary: Vocabulary

Secondary: Comprehension Strands

PLAN FOR 2006-2007 School Year:

Continued PLC work with research training from Dr. Sue Rose, U of M on Curriculum Based Assessment and Measurement (CBAs and CBMs) applied to reading. (St. Paul itinerant and ISD 287 itinerant teachers will jointly collaborate on this training/implementation)

General Program Area: *ELL*

Completed by: *Donna Moe*

Program Name	Instructional Model	Instrument/s Used to Assess Reading Level	Curriculum Materials/Series Used	Comments
ACT (Alternative Center and Transition) ELL – North Vista Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Guided reading •Shared reading •Partner reading •Direct instruction of comprehension strategies •Direct instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary 	John’s Basic Reading Inventory Caught Reading Plus Reading Placement Assessment	Caught Reading Plus Series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Works well; life skills and content area age-appropriate readings and novels for secondary students; non-literate to grade 4 reading levels; balanced reading program covering decoding, vocabulary, spelling, fluency, comprehension, reading strategies; multicultural.
ACT (Alternative Center and Transition) ELL – Lincoln Hills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Independent reading •Reading in the content areas •Repeated reading •Round Robin reading 	BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Reading A-Z Assessments	Be a Better Reader Series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Works well; age-appropriate reading in the content areas and life skills for secondary students; 3rd - 10th grade reading levels; research-based covering word analysis, vocabulary, critical thinking, comprehension, reading strategies, study skills.
ACT (Academic and Career Training) – Hennepin Technical College, BPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Choral reading •Popcorn reading 		Reading A-Z Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Works well; comprehensive reading program for non-literate through grade 5 reading levels, though some materials at the lower level are not age-appropriate for secondary learners; covers phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, high frequency site words, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension; materials retrieved online; some online interactive books; could be costly if a large number of books have to be printed.
			New Vistas Series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Works well; age-appropriate for secondary ELLs; literacy to advanced levels covering reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, culture; multicultural.
			Grammar in Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Works well for teaching grammar and American culture using reading passages and exercises.

General Program Area: 287 EBD (DCD)

Completed by: Kayleen Taffe

Program Name	Instructional Model	Instrument/s Used to Assess Reading Level	Curriculum Materials/Series Used	Comments
Hosterman Strive	<p>*Struggling readers are assigned to a small reading group.</p> <p>*Student's are grouped according to reading level- largest group is 10 with 1 instructor and up to 3 paras.</p> <p>*Instruction is given for 1 hr per day</p>	<p>*For 3 year assessment – Woodcock Johnson</p> <p>*Reading mastery placement test</p> <p>*Map started this year</p> <p>*For struggling learners- DIBELS, QRI and CBM</p>	<p>*Reading Mastery including decoding, comprehension and general RM workbooks and texts.</p> <p>*For readers below 1st grade reading level- Touch Phonics, Reading learning centers and many supplemental materials to enhance learning</p>	<p>*Reading Mastery works well for many of our students.</p> <p>*Challenges for High readers with low comprehension</p> <p>*Reading Mastery can not be used for students reading below a 1st grade level</p> <p>*Teacher needs to have the flexibility to supplement and enhance instruction.</p> <p>* Currently Reading Mastery is mandated for all readers in our EBD programs.</p>
Hosterman Elementary EBD (grades 1-5)	Class size up to 15	DI Placement tests	We use exclusively direct instruction in the elementary	I like the reading program we have here and I think it is a complete curriculum including spelling!! The upper levels are time consuming and tedious, but if the lessons are completed over two days it helps. Unfortunately, the kids will not be moving as fast, but they will retain more of what they learn. Direct instruction also has their own placement tests as I'm sure you know and encourages reading timings to monitor fluency.
Hosterman Middle EBD (grades 6-8)	Class size of up to 15	Assessment provided by SRA	Direct Instruction/Reading mastery/Decoding and Comprehension by SRA	
InVEST Transition/ Strive Transition		Woodcock-Johnson, Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (K-TEA), and Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT). DI provided tests	Direct Instruction Reading Curriculum,	If a student's skills exceed DI materials, they are placed in a Literature class to maintain and improve their functional reading skills, as well as to encourage a lifelong habit of reading both for information and pleasure. Literature curriculum is developed by each teacher.

General Program Area: *Area Learning Center*
Completed by: *Sharon Kowski*

Program Name	Instructional Model	Instrument/s Used to Assess Reading Level	Curriculum Materials/Series Used	Comments
Lincoln Hills (WAVE & South Vista)	No formal reading instruction; somewhat traditional secondary literature program. Students are grouped by age and/or ability	Basic Skills Test (BST) + MCAs. TABE (Test of Adult Basic Ed.) is used as entrance screen to determine Grade Equiv. Rdg. Score. Generally we expect secondary students to read at a 4 th -5 th grade level min.	None—no formal curric. or series. Plays and novels are often read together as a class. Basic Skills Test (BST) prep	Maximum class size of 22 prohibits much individualization or reading instruction.
North Vista, PCA, RAP	Very similar—especially at NVEC—PCA & RAP more individualized packets	BST, MCA	Packets, novels, BST prep	Besides ELL & Epsilon, there is not a comprehensive reading or reading recovery program in the ALCs.

Adolescent Literacy

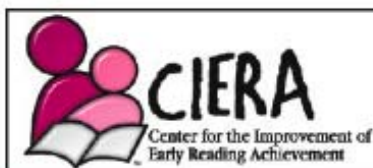
In recent years, policymakers have directed considerable resources toward improving the literacy skills of the nation's youngest schoolchildren, with the goal of helping every child to master the basics of reading by the end of the third grade. However, America's adolescents face a literacy crisis every bit as alarming as that which confronts their younger siblings. According to *The Nation's Report Card*, fewer than one third of eighth graders read at a proficient level. Today, millions of students are leaving school unprepared for college, work, and the many demands of adulthood.

A wealth of evidence shows that intensive, high-quality instruction can help struggling readers to catch up to grade level and build the skills they need to succeed in high school and beyond. But unless the nation makes a greater investment in reading and writing instruction in grades 4-12, it will squander the considerable resources it has spent on grades K-3, and it will undermine its other investments in the teaching of math, science, and other subjects.

- **More than eight million students in grades 4-12 read below grade level. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005)**
- **Only thirty-one percent of America's eighth grade students—and roughly the same percentage of twelfth graders—meet the National Assessment of Educational Progress standard of reading “proficiency” for their grade level. (NCES, 2005, 2003)**
- **Among low-income eighth graders, just fifteen percent read at a proficient level. (NCES, 2005)**
- **In a typical high-poverty urban school, approximately half of incoming ninth-grade students read at a sixth- or seventh-grade level. (Balfanz et al, 2002)**
- **A mere three percent of all eighth graders read at an advanced level. (NCES, 2005)**
- **High school students' ability to read complex texts is strongly predictive of their performance in college math and science courses. (ACT, 2006)**
- **Between 1971 and 2004, the reading levels of America's seventeen year-olds showed no improvement at all. (NCES, 2004)**
- **On average, African-American and Hispanic twelfth-grade students read at the same level as white eighth-grade students. (Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2002)**
- **The twenty-five fastest-growing professions have far greater than average literacy demands, while the fastest-declining professions have lower than average literacy demands. (Barton, 2000)**
- **At the nation's four-year colleges, nearly eight percent of all entering students are required to take at least one remedial reading course. Only about one-third of such students are likely to graduate within eight years. (Adelman, 2006, 2004)**
- **Roughly twenty-three percent of high school graduates are not ready to succeed in an introductory-level college writing course. (ACT, 2005)**
- **About forty percent of high school graduates lack the literacy skills employers seek. (Achieve, 2005).**
- **Among the eight million students in grades 4-12 who read below grade level, most are able to sound out words—the challenge isn't to teach them to *decode* text but, rather, to help them *comprehend* what they read. (Biancarosa and Snow, 2004)**
- **Researchers are in strong consensus as to a number of specific steps that can be taken to improve middle and high school literacy instruction—when it comes to adolescent literacy, there are no “reading wars.” (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004)**

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Improving the Reading Achievement of America's Children

10 Research-Based Principles

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1. Home language and literacy experiences that lead to the development of key print concepts are plentiful among children who enter school prepared to learn to read. Joint book reading with family members helps children develop a wide range of knowledge that supports them in school-based reading. Once students are in school, parental help in the form of modeling good reading habits and monitoring homework and television viewing is associated with gains in student achievement. Programs that assist families in initiating and sustaining these sorts of activities show positive benefits for children's reading achievement.

2. Preschool programs are particularly beneficial for children who do not experience informal learning opportunities in their homes. These preschool experiences include opportunities to listen to and examine books, say nursery rhymes, write messages, and see and talk about print. Such preschool experiences lead to improved reading achievement in the school years, with some effects proving durable through grade 3.

3. Skills that predict later reading success can be promoted through a variety of classroom language and meaningful reading and writing events in kindergarten and grade 1. The two most powerful of these predictors are letter-name knowledge and phonemic awareness (the conscious awareness of the sounds in spoken words). Instruction that promotes phonemic awareness engages children in hearing and blending sounds. Activities that promote this attention to sounds can be motivating and playful for young children, including oral renditions of rhymes, poems, and songs, as well as writing their own journals and messages. Such instruction has demonstrated positive effects on primary-grade reading achievement, especially when it is coupled with letter-sound instruction.

4. Primary-level instruction that supports successful reading acquisition is consistent, well-designed, and focused. Teachers lead lessons where children receive systematic word recognition instruction on common, consistent letter-sound relationships and important but often unpredictable high-frequency words, such as *the* and *what*. Teachers ensure that children become adept at monitoring the accuracy of their reading as well their understanding of texts through instruction in strategies such as predicting, inferencing, clarifying misunderstandings, and summarizing. Instructional activities that promote growth in word recognition and comprehension include repeated reading of text, guided reading and writing, strategy lessons, reading aloud with feedback, and conversations about texts children have read.

5. Primary-level classroom environments in successful schools provide opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in teacher-guided instruction to everyday reading and writing. In these classrooms, teachers read books aloud and hold follow-up discussions, children read independently every day, and children write stories and keep journals. These events are monitored frequently by teachers, ensuring that time is well spent and that children receive feedback on their efforts. Teachers design these events carefully, using information from ongoing assessment of children's strengths and needs as the primary basis for new activities.

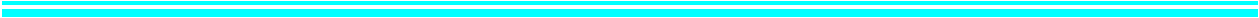
6. Cultural and linguistic diversity among America's children reflects the variations within the communities and homes in which they live and is manifest in differences in their dispositions toward and knowledge about topics, language, and literacy. Effective instruction includes assessment, integration, and extension of relevant background knowledge and the use of texts that recognize these diverse backgrounds. The language of children's homes is especially critical for schools to build on when children are learning to speak, listen to, write, and read English. There is considerable evidence that the linguistic and orthographic knowledge students acquire in speaking and reading their first language predicts and transfers to learning to read a second language. When teachers capitalize on the advantages of bilingualism or biliteracy, second language reading acquisition is significantly enhanced.

7. Children who are identified as having reading disabilities benefit from systematic instruction, but not at the cost of opportunities to engage in meaningful reading and writing. These children profit from the same sort of well-balanced instructional programs that benefit all children who are learning to read and write. Programs are characterized by intensive one-on-one or small-group instruction, attention to both comprehension and word recognition processes, thoroughly individualized assessment and instructional planning, and extensive experiences with an array of texts.

8. Proficient reading in third grade and above is sustained and enhanced by programs that adhere to four fundamental features: (1) deep and wide opportunities to read, (2) the acquisition of new knowledge and vocabulary, partially through wide reading but also through explicit attention to acquiring networks of new concepts through instruction, (3) an emphasis on the influence that the kinds of text (e.g., stories versus essays) and the ways writers organize particular texts has on understanding, and (4) explicit attention to assisting students in reasoning about text.

9. Professional opportunities to improve reading achievement are prominent in successful schools and programs. These opportunities allow teachers and administrators to analyze instruction, assessment, and achievement, to set goals for improvement, to learn about effective practices, and to participate in on-going communities in which participants deliberately try to understand both successes and persistent problems.

10. Entire school communities, not just first-grade teachers, are involved in bringing children to high levels of achievement. In successful schools, goals for reading achievement are clearly stated, high expectations for children's attainment of these goals are shared with all participants, instructional means for attaining these goals are articulated, and shared assessments are used to monitor children's progress. Instructional programs in successful schools may have many different components, including a range of materials and technology, but they maintain a focus on reading and writing. Successful programs extend into the home by involving parents in their children's reading and homework. Community partnerships, including volunteer tutoring programs, are common in such schools.



x	x	x	x	x
	x			
	x			

Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy, a report to Carnegie Corporation of New York

THE FIFTEEN KEY ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE ADOLESCENT LITERACY PROGRAMS

To establish a list of promising elements of effective adolescent literacy programs, the panel considered elements that had a substantial base in research and/or professional opinion. After considerable discussion, they determined a list of fifteen critical components (see Table 1). Literature supporting these elements is cited in Appendix A.

In an ideal world, schools would be able to implement all fifteen elements, but the list may also be used to construct a unique blend of elements suited to the needs of the students they serve. This report treats each element as a distinct entity, but it is important to recognize that the elements are often synergistically related, and the addition of one element can stimulate the inclusion of another. The elements should not be seen simply as isolated elements in an inventory of potential elements, but rather as a group in which elements have a dynamic and powerful interrelationship. For instance, it is difficult to implement text-based collaborative learning (Element 4) without a classroom library of diverse texts (Element 6). We expect that a mixture of these elements will generate the biggest return. It remains to be seen what that optimal mix is, and it may be different for different subpopulations of students.

THE OPTIMAL MIX

In the medical profession, treatment needs to be tailored to an individual patient's needs; at times, more than one intervention is needed to effectively treat a patient. Similarly, educators need to test mixes of intervention elements to find the ones that work best for students with different needs.

Table 1. Key Elements in Programs Designed to Improve Adolescent Literacy Achievement in Middle and High Schools

x
x
x
x
x
x
x
x
x



Instructional Improvements	Infrastructure Improvements
1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction	10. Extended time for literacy
2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content	11. Professional development
3. Motivation and self-directed learning	12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs
4. Text-based collaborative learning	13. Teacher teams
5. Strategic tutoring	14. Leadership
6. Diverse texts	15. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program
7. Intensive writing	
8. A technology component	
9. Ongoing formative assessment of students	

Two Categories of Elements: Instruction and Infrastructure

The list of elements is divided into two sections: instructional improvements and infrastructural improvements. While the instructional improvements can have a tremendous impact, it is important to realize that they would be more effective if they were implemented in conjunction with infrastructural supports. Furthermore, the instructional improvements are unlikely to be maintained or extended beyond the original intervention classrooms if these infrastructural factors are not in place. Despite the clear advantage of linking instructional improvements to infrastructural improvements, the list prioritizes instructional improvements because of our focus on the individual learner as the unit of intervention and analysis and on improved instruction as the most important element influencing student outcomes.

Improving the overall school climate is undeniably a critical factor in improving adolescent literacy, and school reorganization and reform efforts have helped dramatically in this area. However, it too often happens that the climate improves with little or no impact on achievement. For the biggest returns, stakeholders must invest in school reform, with an eye toward curricular improvement. That is, structure and infrastructure changes should be determined by curricular and instructional considerations. Too frequently, changes in school structure (for example, block scheduling, small schools, and so on) have been adopted without *first* carefully considering curricular and instructional implications.

The list of the fifteen key elements begins with instruction and then focuses on infrastructure that will support the instructional improvements. Improving instruction, whether done by an entire school or a single teacher, can have dramatic effects on student achievement. However, improving school infrastructure to better support literacy teachers and students *in addition to instructional improvement* will reap the biggest rewards. Ultimately, change can occur from the top down, the bottom up, or the middle in, but truly effective and enduring change must include elements of both instruction and infrastructure. There are no shortcuts; the process of implementing instructional *and* organizational change to improve adolescents' literacy skills is necessarily time-consuming and complex.

Instructional Elements

Direct, explicit comprehension instruction

Effective adolescent literacy interventions must address reading comprehension. A number of excellent approaches have been shown to be effective in middle and high school contexts, but no one approach is necessarily better than another; the ideal intervention will tap more than one comprehension instructional approach. Possible approaches include

- *comprehension strategies instruction*, which is instruction that explicitly gives students strategies that aid them in comprehending a wide variety of texts;
- *comprehension monitoring and metacognition instruction*, which is instruction that teaches students to become aware of how they understand while they read;
- *teacher modeling*, which involves the teacher reading texts aloud, making her own use of strategies and practices apparent to her students;
- *scaffolded instruction*, which involves teachers giving high support for students practicing new skills and then slowly decreasing that support to increase student ownership and self-sufficiency; and
- *apprenticeship models*, which involve teachers engaging students in a content-centered learning relationship.

DIRECT, EXPLICIT COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION: AN EXAMPLE

Reciprocal Teaching is a **scaffolded approach** to teaching **comprehension strategies**. It was designed for youth at any grade level, typically scoring in the thirty-fifth percentile or below on standardized reading measures, with the aim of teaching them to actively process the text they read in small groups. The **teacher models** four critical strategies: *questioning, clarifying, predicting, and summarizing*. The teacher then transfers responsibility for implementing the strategies to students by having them work in small groups. Students either take turns using each strategy or lead discussions by using all four strategies, in the latter case becoming the “teacher.” By taking turns using each of the strategies with a series of texts, children learn to independently and flexibly apply the strategies on their own.

Questioning poses questions based on a portion of a text the group has read, either aloud or silently.

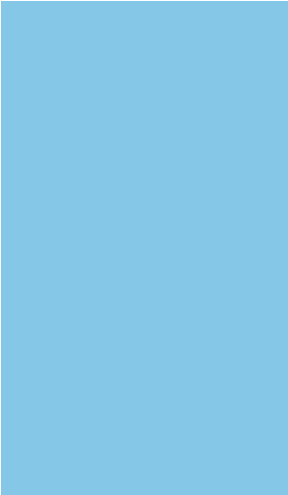
Clarifying resolves confusions about words, phrases, or concepts, drawing on the text when possible.

Predicting suggests what will next happen in or be learned next from the text.

Summarizing sums up the content, identifying the gist of what has been read and discussed.

Source: Palincsar & Herrenkohl, 2002.

Note, too, that these approaches are not listed in order of importance and have been utilized by effective readers long before they were ever dubbed and defined as “strategies” or “metacognition.”



From age ten, [Benjamin] Franklin was largely a self-taught reader (he had a tutor for a year). To improve his reading comprehension, he copied passages, made short summaries, rewrote passages, turned essays into rhyming verse and other games, and avidly discussed what he read with peers. [Frederick] Douglass was also briefly tutored but then forbidden to read. Forced to learn on his own, he too invented reading and writing exercises, summarized passages, played word games, and practiced giving speeches and responding to issues in debate. (Trabasso and Bouchard, 2002)

Many of the existing instructional options utilize more than one of these approaches. Whatever approach is utilized, teachers should teach these approaches explicitly by explaining to students how and when to use certain strategies. Teachers should also explain why they are teaching particular strategies and have students employ them in multiple contexts with texts from a variety of genres and subject areas.

Effective Instructional Principles Embedded in Content

This element has two forms. The first form applies to the language arts teacher. When instructional principles are embedded in content, the language arts teacher does not simply teach a technique (such as outlining) as an abstract skill, but teaches it using content-area materials. Students should receive instruction and then practice their new skills using these materials. Too often reading and writing instruction focuses solely on literature and does not promote the transfer of the skills into the context of content-area materials. Furthermore, learning from reading in content-area texts requires skills that are different than the skills needed to comprehend literature. Language arts teachers need to expand their instruction to include approaches and texts that will facilitate not only comprehension but also learning from texts.

The second form of this element applies to subject-area teachers. When instructional principles are embedded in content, subject-area teachers provide or reinforce instruction in the skills and strategies that are particularly effective in their subject areas.

This instruction should be coordinated with the language arts teachers, literacy coaches, and other subject-area teachers. The idea is not that content-area teachers should become reading and writing teachers, but rather that they should emphasize the reading and writing practices that are specific to their subjects, so students are encouraged to read and write like historians, scientists, mathematicians, and other subject-area

DIRECT, EXPLICIT COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION: A SECOND EXAMPLE

Reading Apprenticeship puts the teacher in the role of content-area expert, and late-middle and high school students are “apprenticed” into the reasons and ways reading and writing are used within a “discipline” (subject area) and the strategies and thinking that are particularly useful in that discipline. In reading apprenticeship classrooms, *how* we read and *why* we read in the ways we do become part of the curriculum, accompanying a focus on what we read.

Rather than offering a sequence of strategies, reading apprenticeship is focused on creating classrooms where students become active and effective readers and learners. To accomplish this, teachers are encouraged to plan along four dimensions: *social*, *personal*, *cognitive*, and *knowledge-building*.

The *social* dimension focuses on establishing and maintaining a safe and supportive environment, where all members’ processes, resources, and difficulties are shared and collaboration is valued.

The *personal* dimension focuses on improving students’ identities and attitudes as readers and their interest in reading. It also promotes self-awareness, self-assessment, metacognition, and ownership.

The *cognitive* dimension is where students are given the reading tools and strategies they need to read like experts in the discipline.

The *knowledge-building* dimension focuses on building content and topic knowledge and knowledge of a discipline’s typical text structures and styles.

The main tactic is that of metacognitive conversations that make the invisible aspects of these dimensions visible and open for discussion.

Source: Jordan, Jensen, and Greenleaf, 2001.

experts. Additionally, it is important that all subject matter teachers use teaching aids and devices that will help at-risk students better understand and remember the content they are teaching. The use of such tools as graphic organizers, prompted outlines, structured reviews, guided discussions, and other instructional tactics that will modify and enhance the curriculum content in ways that promote its understanding and mastery have been shown to greatly enhance student performance—for all students in academically diverse classes, not just students who are struggling.

Motivation and Self-Directed Learning

This element addresses the need to promote greater student engagement and motivation. As students progress through the grades, they become increasingly “tuned out,” and building student choices into the school day is an important way to reawaken student engagement. This is critical, because competency in reading is necessary but insufficient by itself to engender better academic performance. Students need to be self-regulating not only to become more successful academically, but also to be able to employ their skills flexibly long after they leave school.

One way that motivation and engagement are instilled and maintained is to provide students with opportunities to select for themselves the materials they read and topics they research. One of the easiest ways to build some choice into the students’ school day is to incorporate independent reading time in which they can read whatever they choose. Yet this piece of the curriculum is often dropped after the primary grades. Providing students with additional choices, such as research and writing topics, further stimulates motivated and engaged students. However, self-regulation is only developed when students are given choices *and* the instructional support and aids needed to succeed at their chosen tasks.

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRINCIPLES EMBEDDED IN CONTENT: AN EXAMPLE

The Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) provides teachers with an array of *Content Enhancement Routines* to enable them to teach complex curriculum content in ways that make it easier to understand and remember difficult subject matter. For example, there are routines that help teachers show how lesson or unit content is organized as well as to help them clearly explain the important features of a new concept. Additionally, SIM provides an array of targeted strategies to help students learn and deal with a variety of academic tasks. There are four reading strategies: the *Word Identification Strategy*, the *Visual Imagery Strategy*, the *Self-Questioning Strategy*, and the *Paraphrasing Strategy*.

The *Word Identification Strategy* helps students to break down multisyllabic words using three simple syllabication rules and a knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes.

The *Visual Imagery Strategy* helps students create “mental movies” of narratives they read in order to increase comprehension.

The *Self-Questioning Strategy* helps students determine a motivation for reading by getting them to create questions about the material they will be reading, form predictions about what the answers will be, and locate their answers in the text.

The *Paraphrasing Strategy* helps students summarize the text stating the main idea and major details in their own words.

Source: Center for Research on Learning, 2001.

Another way to better engage students in literacy and learning is to promote relevancy in what students read and learn. As a first step, teachers need to “tune in” to their students’ lives in order to understand what they find relevant and why. Then teachers can begin to redesign instruction so that it is more obviously relevant to students.

Text-Based Collaborative Learning

Another element is text-based collaborative learning, which means that when students work in small groups, they should not simply discuss a topic, but interact with each other around a text.

This text might be assigned or self-selected reading, or it might be essays that the students are writing. The former case involves designing learning opportunities for pairs or small groups of students that are similar to the book clubs or literature circles implemented in primary grades.

Learning is decentralized in these groups because the meaning drawn from a text or multiple texts is negotiated through a group process. In addition, such an approach is not limited to the language arts classroom, but can be implemented in subject-area classes and with students who have a wide range of abilities. For instance, students might read different texts about the Underground Railroad—each at his or her own reading level—and then present the ideas (rather than the plots) to the circle. A

similar approach can be used in any subject area, even math, by having students work together on the same problem or on a set of similar problems. Moreover, text-based collaborative learning is effective in improving not only reading skills but also writing skills. The important aspect of this approach is that teachers provide scaffolding for engagement at every ability level in the class and promote better oral language and content-

TEXT-BASED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: AN EXAMPLE

Questioning the Author engages upper elementary students in whole-class or small-group Discussions of texts (including nonfiction) aimed at improving their comprehension and critical-thinking skills. Through guiding “queries” (open-ended questions without clear right answers) teachers get children to literally question the author’s purpose and choices; students eventually come to regard the text as fallible and as a source of information about the author’s thinking. Notable in these discussions is the degree to which children are engaged in trying to comprehend the text. The technique also gets children to voice their confusions as they arise without fear of being regarded as “stupid” for not understanding, as in the following example, where a small group of fourth-grade students discusses a passage about hermit crabs that includes the line “As the crab grows, it changes its shell for a larger one.”

Michael: Maybe it’s growing or something. It said it’s changing its shell for a larger one. But do they take it off?

Nicole: They get them off with their claws.

Terrence: They exchange them.

Investigator: So, what are you saying isn’t clear?

Michael: How could they change one shell? I mean, I thought it stuck to the body.

Nicole: But they get bigger, too.

Michael: I know, but when they grow I thought the shell grows with them.

Nicole: It’s like people. Do you keep your clothes on and when you get bigger you break out of them?

Terrence: As the crab grows, the shell breaks and it exchanges for another. It wants a larger shell as it gets bigger than it is now.

Michael: It’s like clothes, putting it on.

Source: McKeown, Beck, and Worthy, 1993, pp. 564–65.

area skills by giving the students concrete problems to discuss or solve. Such an approach requires that the teacher provide instruction about how to use time effectively, which means assigning roles within each group, at least initially, to ensure effective implementation.

Strategic Tutoring

Some students require or would benefit from intense, individualized instruction. This is particularly true of the student who struggles with decoding and fluency, but is also true of students requiring short-term, focused help. Such students should be given the opportunity to participate in tutoring, which need not occur only during the school day. Furthermore, through approaches detailed above, instruction in general education classes should be differentiated to allow students access to important content. Tutoring is referred to as strategic in this element to emphasize that while students may need tutorial help to acquire critical curriculum knowledge, they also need to be taught “how to learn” curriculum information. Hence, within strategic tutoring sessions, tutors teach learning strategies while helping students complete their content assignments. The goal of strategic tutoring is to empower adolescents to complete similar tasks independently in the future.

Diverse Texts

This element involves providing students with diverse texts that present a wide range of topics at a variety of reading levels. Whether teaching reading and writing or a subject area, teachers need to find texts at a wide range of difficulty levels. Too often students become frustrated because they are forced to read books that are simply too difficult for them to decode and comprehend simultaneously. Learning cannot occur under these conditions. Texts must be below students’ frustration level, but must also be interesting; that is, they should be high interest and low readability. Given the wide range of reading and writing abilities present in almost any middle or high school classroom, this means having books available from a wide range of levels on the same topic. The term “diverse texts” is also used to indicate that the material should represent a wide range of topics. Topical diversity in any classroom (or school) library affords students more choices for self-selected reading and research projects. The range of topics should include a wide variety of cultural, linguistic, and demographic groups. Students should be able to find representatives of themselves in the available books, but they should also be able to find representatives of others about whom they wish to learn. High-interest, low-difficulty texts play a significant role in an adolescent literacy program and are critical for fostering the reading skills of struggling readers and the engagement of all students. In addition to using appropriate grade-level textbooks that may already be available in the classroom, it is crucial to have a range of texts in the classroom that link to multiple ability levels and connect to students’ background experiences.

Intensive Writing

Effective adolescent literacy programs must include an element that helps students improve their writing skills. Fourteen percent of all freshmen entering degree-granting postsecondary institutions take remedial writing courses (NCES, 2004). At public two-year institutions, 23 percent of entering freshmen take remedial writing courses (NCES, 2004). Even the best readers in high school do not necessarily write well enough to succeed in the business world or college—or perform well on the SAT, which now includes a writing component. As of January 2006, 849 degree-granting postsecondary institutions require students applying for admission to take the SAT writing component (College Board, 2006).

Research supports the idea that writing instruction also improves reading comprehension. For example, students who are given the opportunity to write in conjunction with reading show more evidence of critical thinking about reading. Likewise, many of the skills involved in writing—such as grammar and spelling—reinforce reading skills. However, traditional explicit grammar instruction is not effective and may actually be harmful to writing development, whereas instruction in sentence combining, summarization, and writing strategies significantly improve students' writing. Instruction in the writing process is also helpful, provided that it is connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will be expected to perform well in high school and beyond.

**WRITING REMEDIATION
NEEDED**

More freshmen entering degree-granting postsecondary institutions take remedial writing courses than take remedial reading courses (NCES, 2004).

The defining characteristic of quality intensive writing instruction is not that there is simply more of it. Rather, such instruction has clear objectives and expectations and consistently challenges students, regardless of ability, to engage with academic content at high levels of reasoning.

A Technology Component

Professionals and lay people are increasingly voicing support for inclusion of this element in a literacy program, because technology plays an increasingly central role in our society. Technology is both a facilitator of literacy and a medium of literacy. Effective adolescent literacy programs therefore should use technology as both an instructional tool and an instructional topic.

As a tool, technology can help teachers provide needed supports for struggling readers, including instructional reinforcement and opportunities for guided practice. For example, there are computer programs that help students improve decoding, spelling, fluency, and vocabulary, and more programs are quickly being developed to address comprehension and writing.

As a topic, technology is changing the reading and writing demands of modern society. Reading and writing in the fast-paced, networked world require new skills unimaginable a decade ago.

Ongoing Formative Assessment of Students

This element is included under instructional improvements because the best instructional improvements are informed by ongoing assessment of student strengths and needs. Such assessments are often, but not exclusively, informal and frequently occur on a daily basis, and therefore are not necessarily suited to the summative task of accountability reporting systems. Data should be cataloged on a computer system that would allow teachers, administrators, and evaluators to inspect students' progress individually and by class. These formative assessments are specifically designed to inform instruction on a very frequent basis so that adjustments in instruction can be made to ensure that students are on pace to reach mastery targets.

Infrastructural Elements

Extended Time for Literacy

None of the above-mentioned elements are likely to effect much change if instruction is limited to thirty or

learning daily. This time is to be spent with texts and a focus on reading and writing effectively. 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.

To leverage time for increased interaction with texts across subject areas, teachers will need to reconceptualize their understanding of what it means to teach in a subject area. In other words, teachers need to realize they are not just teaching content knowledge but also ways of reading and writing specific to a subject area. This reconceptualization, in turn, will require rearticulation of standards and revision of preservice training.

Professional Development

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. The development effort should also be systemic, including not only classroom teachers but also literacy coaches, resource room personnel, librarians, and administrators. Effective professional development will use data from research studies of adult learning and the conditions needed to effect sustained change. Professional development opportunities should be built into the regular school schedule, with consistent opportunities to learn about new research and practices as well as opportunities to implement and reflect upon new ideas. 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.

Ongoing Summative Assessment of Students and Programs

This element is listed under infrastructural improvements because of the substantial coordination that such assessment requires and because of its intended audience, which is the local school district administration, the state and federal departments of education, and others who fund and/or support the school, such as private foundations, the local community, parents, and students. In contrast to formative assessments, these assessments are designed specifically for implementation with continuous progress-monitoring systems. These systems would allow teachers to track students throughout a school year and, ideally, over an entire academic career, from kindergarten through high school. In addition, these systems would allow for ongoing internal and external evaluation of the implemented program. These data and more formative assessment data could be catalogued on a computer system that would allow teachers, administrators, and evaluators to inspect students' progress individually, by class, by cohort, and by school. These assessments are more formal than the formative assessments, but should go beyond state assessments and be designed to demonstrate progress specific to school and program goals, and, if possible, to also inform instruction. Ideally, the assessment results would be generated and shared in a timely fashion so that they might also be of use to teachers in planning instruction and to students in monitoring their success and progress in school.

Teacher Teams

This element ensures that the school structure supports coordinated instruction and planning in an

have in common and to align instruction. In the primary grades students see one teacher; in middle and high school grades, their daily routine changes, and they see many teachers during discrete blocks of time devoted to discrete subjects. This shift often causes a loss in consistency in literacy instruction. Teacher teams are viewed as helpful for reestablishing coordinated instruction in higher grades and as a way to promote teacher collegiality and heighten the likelihood that no child will slip through the cracks. Teacher teams that meet regularly allow teachers to plan for consistency in instruction across subject areas, which is an important step toward a comprehensive and coordinated literacy program.

Leadership

Without a principal's clear commitment and enthusiasm, a curricular and instructional reform has no more chance of succeeding than any other schoolwide reform. It is critical that a principal assumes the role of an instructional leader, who demonstrates commitment and participates in the school community. This leadership role includes a principal building his or her own personal knowledge of how young people learn and struggle with reading and writing and how they differ in their needs. In addition, a principal who takes on the role of instructional leader will attend professional development sessions organized primarily for teachers. This knowledge and experience will give a principal the necessary understanding to organize and coordinate changes in a school's literacy program. It will further give a principal the proper foundation for making the necessary decisions to alter structural elements, such as class schedules, to ensure optimal programming for student learning.

This element also applies to teachers, who should assume leadership roles and spearhead curricular improvements. Teachers play a role in ensuring the success of curricular reform, and their involvement is all the more crucial when a principal has not assumed the instructional leadership role. Without someone with an informed vision of what good literacy instruction entails leading the charge, instructional change is likely to be beset with problems.

A Comprehensive and Coordinated Literacy Program

In many ways, this component of a program is not obtainable without the other infrastructural improvements and is especially closely aligned to leadership and the establishment of teacher teams. Included in these teams would be additional school personnel, such as librarians, reading specialists, literacy coaches, and resource room teachers. Often in today's schools one teacher has no idea what another is teaching; this is particularly true in high schools. The vision for an effective literacy program recognizes that creating fluent and proficient readers and writers is a very complex task and requires that teachers coordinate their instruction to reinforce important strategies and concepts. It is important in a comprehensive and coordinated literacy program that teachers work in teams and are responsible for a cohort of students. This is not to advocate that math, science, and history teachers should become teachers of reading and writing, but rather that interdisciplinary teams that meet on a regular basis will provide opportunities for reading and writing teachers to better support content-area teachers. These teams can also create more consistent instruction by reinforcing reading and writing skills, such as note-taking and comprehension strategies. An effective literacy program should implement many of the instructional elements in a consistent and coordinated way.

Because the literacy needs of adolescents are so diverse, the intensity and nature of instruction in a

considerably. Some students need their content teachers to make only modest accommodations or adjustments; other students need learning strategies embedded in content material, explicit strategy instruction, or instruction in basic skills or even the basic language elements that are the foundation of literacy competence. Secondary schools must recognize adolescents' varying needs and develop a comprehensive program that will successfully address the needs of all their students.

A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program will also initiate or augment collaborations with out-of-school organizations and the local community to provide more broad-based interactions and greater support for students. These collaborations would further secure student motivation by providing students with a sense of consistency between what they experience in and out of school.

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15 Key Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Programs
An outline of the previous report.

- Instructional Improvements:*
1. **Direct, explicit comprehension instruction:**
 - a. Teach the how, when, and why of comprehension
 - b. No one approach is better than another, so tap into more than one comprehension approach:
 - i. Comprehension strategies instruction
 - ii. Comprehension monitoring and metacognition
 - iii. Teacher modeling
 - iv. Scaffolded instruction
 - v. Apprenticeship model
 2. **Effective Instructional Principles Embedded in Content:**
 - a. The reading / language arts / ELL teacher teaches skills (i.e., outlining) using the student's other subject-matter materials.
 - b. The subject area teacher coordinates with the reading teacher to learn how to emphasize reading and writing specific to their subject area.
 - vi. Pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading strategies and aids
 - vii. Note: The subject area teacher does not become a reading and writing teacher.
 3. **Motivation and Self-directed Learning**
 - a. The program must include engagement and motivation for struggling readers.
 - viii. Offer choices – for independent reading, research and writing.
 - ix. Self-regulating
 - x. Competency in reading insufficient by itself; the program needs to improve academic performance
 - xi. The staff need to provide instructional support and aids
 - b. The curriculum has to have relevance for the student
 - xii. It may mean that instruction needs to be redesigned.
 4. **Text-based Collaborative learning**
 - a. Small groups interact with each other around texts
 - xiii. Concrete problems to discuss or share
 - b. Meaning is negotiated through a group process
 - c. Students read at individual level, then present their ideas, not the plots
 - i. Improves reading and verbal skills
 - d. Teacher provides scaffolding
 - e. Assigned roles
 5. **Strategic Tutoring**
 - a. Intense, individual instruction
 - i. For students who need instruction in decoding, fluency stage of learning to read
 - a. Offer differentiated instruction for those students so they can get important content.

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- ii. The reading teacher teaches learning strategies while at the same time helping the students complete their content assignments.
 6. **Diverse Texts**
 - a. Provide a wide variety of topics and reading levels
 - iii. At students “instructional” level of reading
 - iv. High interest, low-level readability
 - v. Covers a variety of cultural, linguistic and demographic groups and appeals to both students’ background experiences and those outside their experiences.
 - vi. Age appropriate material
 7. **Intensive Writing**
 - a. Writing instruction improves reading comprehension
 - b. Students can show more evidence of critical thinking
 - c. Grammar and spelling can reinforce reading skills (depending on how it is approached and taught)
 - d. Provide clear objectives and expectations that challenge students
 8. **A Technology Component**
 - a. Technology is a facilitator of literacy and a medium of literacy
 - vii. As an instructional tool
 - viii. Guided practice
 - ix. As an instructional topic
 - x. 21st century brings changing reading and writing demands
 - xi. Requires new skills
 9. **Ongoing Formative Assessment of Students**
 - a. Mostly informal
 - b. Should be catalogued on a computer system for easy data retrieval and analysis by all involved
 - c. Designed to be monitored on a frequent basis to adjust instruction

Infrastructure Elements

10. **Extended Time for Literacy**
 - a. Four hours of literary-connected learning daily (reading and writing)
 - i. One or two periods daily of literacy is not enough
 - b. This includes material taught by all subject-area teachers
 - ii. More reading and writing in classes!
 - iii. Again, teaching reading and writing specific to their subject area
 - c. This requires reading standards to be incorporated in the content area classes
 11. **Professional development**
 - a. On-going long-term
 - i. Not one time or even a series of workshops
 - b. Systematic
 - ii. Teachers, literacy coaches, librarians, administration, EAs, etc.
 - c. Built into the regular schools schedule
 12. **Ongoing Summative Assessment of Students and Program**
 - a. More formal
 - b. Audience – administration, state and federal agencies, community, parents, students
 13. **Teacher Teams**
 - a. Interdisciplinary, maybe thematic
 - i. Regular meetings to discuss students and alignment of curriculum
 - ii. Must have consistency of instruction across subject areas for a comprehensive and coordinated literacy program!
 14. **Leadership**
 - a. Administration becomes informed
 - i. Builds knowledge of how young people learn
 - ii. Attends professional development
 - iii. Has foundation for structural decision making
 15. **A Comprehensive and Coordinated Literacy Program**
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- a. Aligned closely with leadership and teacher teams
 - b. Teams include:
 - i. Reading teacher, subject area teachers, literacy coaches, literacy coordinators, reading specialists, librarians, resource teachers, ELL teachers, etc.
 - c. Coordination of instruction to reinforce important strategies
 - d. Teachers and teams responsible for cohort of students
 - e. Meetings ensure reading teacher can better support content area teachers
 - f. Addresses a variety of needs
 - i. Some students need content area teachers only to make minor accommodations or adjustments in instruction
 - ii. Some students need learning strategies embedded in content material
 - iii. Some students need explicit strategy instruction and basic reading skills
 - g. Collaboration with out of school organizations and community
 - h. Provide clear objectives and expectations that challenge students