

PRINCIPAL INFORMATION SERIES

Reading Recovery is one component of your school's comprehensive literacy program. Good classroom instruction, collaboration, and communication among stakeholders create the context for a successful program, which increases outcomes for all students.



Reading Recovery

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Support at all levels of the education system is critical to maintaining an effective implementation of Reading Recovery (Clay, 2009, p. 229). Our focus here is on how you as a principal might create opportunities for collaboration and enhanced communication at the school level.

The evaluation report of the 4-year i3 scale-up of Reading Recovery identified four schemas of understanding and commitment within implementations of Reading Recovery (May, Sirinides, Gray, & Goldsworthy, 2016). Schools with an "integrated" level of implementation yielded the greatest impact on students and school-wide literacy initiatives (Briggs & Honchell, 2016). In these integrated implementations, the evaluators observed "widespread understanding of Reading Recovery, widespread commitment to making the program successful in the school context, and a clear sense that Reading Recovery was an embedded component of the school's approach to literacy instruction" (p. 131).

In such schools, the evaluators found these characteristics:

- School-wide shared understanding of Reading Recovery
- School-wide active problem-solving to ensure program fidelity
- Principal actively engaged with Reading Recovery
- Highly emphasize school-wide impact of Reading Recovery
- Reading Recovery instructional time protected
- Frequent Reading Recovery teacher/ classroom teacher communication
- Reading Recovery teacher positioned as literacy leader or resource
- Classroom instruction generally supportive of Reading Recovery (p. 131)

Administrators must take responsibility for the following actions:

- State the value of Reading Recovery
- Vocally advocate for the program
- Facilitate communication and collaboration between Reading Recovery and classroom teachers
- Identify the Reading Recovery teacher as a literacy expert
- Clearly communicate each person's role in the program (including their own) (p. 146)

Principals promoted frequent communication among teachers of Reading Recovery and classroom teachers. This communication went beyond the scope of Reading Recovery students to include a broader conversation about literacy within and across the school. Such conversations helped to build a shared understanding of the theories and practices undergirding Reading Recovery, which led to a positive impact on classroom literacy instruction.

By establishing formal and informal structures, administrators are able to promote opportunities for teachers to communicate and collaborate with the goal of integrating Reading Recovery into the school's overall approach to literacy instruction. Below are some examples of how to accomplish this goal.

Establishing a school literacy leadership team

This essential structure ensures a dedicated time and space for regular communication and collaboration. The school literacy leadership team is responsible for examining and evaluating student data, monitoring the school's comprehensive literacy goals, and ensuring that classroom instruction and curriculum materials are theoretically aligned with the philosophy that drives Reading Recovery — maintaining a seamless alignment of core instruction and intervention.

Literacy team members should include:

- Reading Recovery Teachers
- First-grade team
- Principal
- Grade-level representative from kindergarten, second grade, and third grade
- Reading Recovery teacher leader

Other important stakeholders to consider:

- Emergent bilingual (EB) representative
- Speech language pathologist
- Other literacy interventionist/Title I representative
- School psychologist/special education representative

Tapping into teacher expertise

Inviting your Reading Recovery teachers to lead faculty meetings or professional development sessions on early literacy topics expands their literacy expertise and provides the structure for knowledge sharing. Shared understandings of the purposes and processes of Reading Recovery is vital to achieving integrated implementation.

Sharing strategies in common planning time

Ensuring that Reading Recovery teachers and first-grade teachers have a common planning time creates a shared opportunity to engage in quick, informal conversation about students and also share resources and strategies.

Resources

Briggs, C., & Honchell, B. (2016). Effective implementation: What we can learn from the i3 study. *The Journal of Reading Recovery*, 16(1), 40–46.

Clay, M. M. (2009). Implementing Reading Recovery internationally. In B. Watson & B. Askew (Eds.), *Boundless horizons: Marie Clay's search for the possible in children's literacy* (pp. 221–249). Auckland, NZ: Heinemann.

May, H., Sirinides, P., Gray, A., & Goldsworthy, H. (2016). *Reading Recovery: An evaluation of the four-year i3 scale-up*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education. https://readingrecovery.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/i3_evaluation_of_reading_recovery_final_report-rev-web.pdf

