i3 Update

Funds to Support Scale Up of Descubriendo la Lectura

Emily Rodgers, Trainer, The Ohio State University
Jerome D’Agostino, Director, International Data Evaluation Center

The Investing in Innovation (i3) fund has two goals: to scale up proven practices and to test innovations on the designs of those proven practices. To date, the i3 award to scale up Reading Recovery has funded the training of nearly 1,200 new teachers in Reading Recovery; by the end of this school year these teachers will have taught 11,608 students in Reading Recovery and an additional 52,236 students during the other part of their school day in their other teaching roles.

In 2012–2013, the fund will be used to support the scale up of an important innovation of Reading Recovery: Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL), the reconstruction of Reading Recovery for Spanish-speaking children. The goal of DLL is to dramatically reduce the number of bilingual first-grade students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write in bilingual classrooms and to reduce the cost of these learners to educational systems.

The university training centers that provide DLL professional development are working together to fund a rigorously designed study to evaluate DLL and study the impact of its scale up under i3. An external research team will carry out the study.

Timeline: Scaling Up Reading Recovery and DLL in Cicero School District 99

Cicero School District 99 is situated near Chicago and is comprised of 16 schools serving students in grades K–8. Twelve of these schools serve either preK to third grade or preK to sixth grade and all have a large (53%) bilingual population of English and Spanish speakers.

2010–2011
• The school district decided to implement, as part of a comprehensive literacy plan and in a partnership with National Louis University, both Reading Recovery and DLL.

2011–2012
• A Reading Recovery/DLL teacher leader was hired to train teachers from four different elementary schools: six teachers for Reading Recovery and five teachers for DLL.

• Using i3 funds, the district is training seven new teachers in Reading Recovery for four additional primary buildings and a second teacher leader.

• Using their own funds, the district is training 10 additional DLL teachers to teach first-grade
Implementation

students who receive literacy instruction in Spanish.

2012–2013

• i3 funds will be used to add at least four Reading Recovery and four DLL teachers to the district.

• A total of 35 trained teachers and two full–time teacher leaders will be working in Cicero School District 99 designing and delivering Reading Recovery or DLL lessons.

The impact of Reading Recovery and DLL professional development on teachers and students is immeasurable. Each teacher trained will teach about 8 to 10 students in Reading Recovery/DLL each year. In addition, during the other part of the day, they will each provide literacy interventions to about 35 additional students either by pushing into the classroom during reading workshop or pulling out students to work with them in small groups. As a result, each teacher will work with about 45 students a year in their combined roles as Literacy Intervention/Reading Recovery teacher.

In addition to providing literacy instruction to students, Reading Recovery and DLL teachers participate in the training and professional development of classroom teachers and other interventionists in their schools and throughout the district, thereby magnifying the positive effect of this early intervention districtwide.

Cicero School District 99 is a superb example of i3 funding being used to fund the scale up of Reading Recovery and its Spanish innovation, DLL, so that the needs of all students are met across the school district.

Special thanks to Mary Ann Poparad, trainer at National Louis University; and Nancy Mills, teacher leader in the Cicero District, for their help coordinating the visit and for providing numerical information.

About the Authors

Dr. Emily Rodgers is an associate professor in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University and a Reading Recovery trainer. She is co–director of the i3 project to scale up Reading Recovery.

Dr. Jerome D’Agostino is a professor in the Quantitative Research, Evaluation, and Measurement program and director of the International Data Evaluation Center at The Ohio State University. He is director of the i3 project to scale up Reading Recovery.

About the Cover

“Reading is awesome,” says third grader Briana Damas–Mendez. “I can read anything. Books are so entertaining! I like to read chapter books. My recent favorite is *Purple Princess Wins a Prize*.”

But reading wasn’t always so easy. After 32 weeks of classroom instruction, Briana was only reading at Level 12 and was accepted as a third round Reading Recovery student at Simonton Elementary School in Gwinnett County, Georgia. Once in Reading Recovery, her rapid acceleration enabled her to successfully discontinue her lessons after only 4 weeks at Level 24, reading and writing on grade level.

“Briana is an example of how powerful early intervention can be,” said Sheri Denson, Briana’s Reading Recovery teacher, “Reading Recovery gives students the opportunity to make successful gains in the areas of reading and writing. It builds confidence so that students can make progress in all academic areas.”

Today Briana is exceeding on all state and local assessments and, as a result, is in enrichment classes for reading, writing, and math.