



Policy Brief

Formal Professional Development in Reading First Schools

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For CRF schools, the purpose of the additional 20 hours of formal professional development is to deepen understanding on scientifically-based reading research (SBRR) that informs educators' practice. Formal PD is results-driven and uses student data to guide the design. Formal PD is the "why," not the "how," of professional development. For example, it explores why some students have difficulty learning to read, why students must learn one skill before they learn another, why increased fluency leads to better comprehension.

Effective professional development in Reading First schools consists of several fundamental features. Attention to these features will assist educators in developing and maintaining successful strategies for professional development.

Fundamental Features of Effective Professional Development

- *Professional development plans should focus on the five essential components of scientifically-based reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Focusing on the explicit and systematic instruction of these components and how they are related will supply the foundation that teachers need to provide instruction that will help students learn to read well.*
- *Training should be provided by a knowledgeable trainer who is qualified to provide instruction to both regular and special education teachers in reading instruction that is grounded in SBRR.*
- *The professional development should be structured so that it thoroughly prepares teachers to successfully deliver core, intervention, and supplemental reading programs.*
- *While fully complying with the goals of Reading First, formal professional development must also align with state-outlined academic and performance standards. Since students will ultimately be assessed on their ability to meet state requirements outlined in the standards, those cannot be neglected.*
- *Adequate teacher learning and practice time should be considered. Time needs to be built into the system to allow teachers to collaborate, plan, and reflect as they learn. In other words, follow up to the formal professional development is essential for teachers to incorporate their new learning into practice.*

Knowledge gained from the formal professional development will then provide the appropriate context for informal PD. This will enrich individual practice and focus the coaching experience so that teachers can refine their instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students. Within this grant, every K-3 teacher, principal, assistant principal, special services provider (e.g., special education teacher, Title I teacher, ELL teacher) and coach needs to participate in 20 hours of formal PD contact hours. However, formal PD opportunities do not have to be the same for each teacher.

How Should a Professional Development Plan be Designed?

A PD plan is a comprehensive model in constructing and supporting professional goals related to the teaching and assessment of reading. PD plans should include information on how the PD needs were identified, expected outcomes, and a description of a high-quality, effective set of evidence-based instructional practices aimed to increase student achievement.

Cohort II principals were given a PD plan template at the training in September (see Section 5). While Cohort I schools are encouraged to use these templates in planning for formal professional development, **the plans are only required for Cohort II.**

The Building Leadership Team (including the principal, LEA, and literacy coach) should take responsibility for creating a school's PD plan. A needs assessment should be conducted by gathering information from student assessment data, classroom observations, walk-throughs, and input from the coach to create a PD plan. *PD should be selected based on the needs of the school.* This comprehensive PD plan should be filed in the school's body of evidence.

For all formal PD, establish a set of formally stated learning objectives keyed to content standards, performance measures, and a way to report results to the Building Leadership Team, the LEA, and in the quarterly reports. Schools are also expected to maintain a list of everyone who attended each PD session.

What Content and Delivery Options Should be Considered for Formal PD?

Content Options. The content may cover one or more of the following topics:

- The reasons why some students struggle when learning to read, as well as the instructional interventions that may remediate the problem.
- Assessment issues including data analysis and the use of data to inform instructional decisions.
- Classroom management, so that the instructional strategies teachers receive can be delivered to the students in an effective manner. Effective professional development should help teachers learn how to use their limited time in an efficient and effective manner. This training may focus on issues such as grouping strategies and differentiated instruction.

Delivery Options. Just as students respond to various instructional approaches, teachers respond to a variety of professional development delivery models. A differentiated approach to professional development delivery that may include study groups, demonstrations, analysis of student work, and academies will meet the needs of more teachers.

- A facilitated study group which meets at least every two weeks and uses "text as the expert" can be an effective way to engage teachers. The added benefit is that it can also help to establish a collaborative learning community. The text that is chosen must focus on SBRR that informs teachers' practice. In other words, the author(s) must discuss the "why" rather than the "how" of educational practice. A combination of five or six scholarly articles may also be used as a book study. Please note: no more than a quarter of the 20 hours (5 hours) can be devoted to this option.

Section 1

What is Formal Professional Development?

- The CRF Book Study List (Section 3) offers some suggestions for books to use, while the CRF Bibliography (Section 4) lists a number of articles that may be helpful. While these are not exhaustive lists, they can be a good place to start.
- Additional training in core, supplemental and/or intervention curriculum can count towards formal PD as long as it focuses on the why. Quite likely, this opportunity would be a mixture of formal and informal PD, but it is difficult to tell this from the title of a book or presentation. The portion of the presentation that focuses on the “why” can be counted toward the 20 hours of formal PD. Documentation on the content is important for the quarterly reports and in case of a school audit.
- Note: Training by a core reading program publisher’s representative will likely not count as formal PD since the publisher’s representative usually focuses on the how of program implementation. However, if one of the authors or national consultants provides the theoretical underpinnings of the program with teachers, then it would be considered formal PD.

Who Should Provide the Professional Development?

Here are some general guidelines to consider when selecting PD providers:

- Use outside experts, who are knowledgeable about SBRR, for at least half of the 20 hours of required formal PD. A carefully selected expert can provide fresh ideas and learning opportunities grounded in research for all participants.
- If someone inside the school has the expertise to do the PD, including the CRF literacy coach, then the internal person may do it. However, no more than a quarter of the 20 hours (5 hours) should be delivered by an internal person. Remember, the coach's role is to focus on informal professional development and coaching. In fact, 75% of the coach's time should be spent in these two areas. Preparing and delivering formal professional development will detract from the coach's ability to coach teachers, which is his/her primary role. Also, gaining perspective and knowledge from an outside expert will allow coaches to become actively involved in the learning process alongside their peers. Instructional coaches should help teachers integrate new learning within the classroom.
- Section 2 provides a list of potential trainers to consider. This should not be considered an “approved” or exhaustive list but is rather a place to start.

Training Delivery	Hours
In-House Expert	No more than 5 hours
Book Study	No more than 5 hours
Outside Expert	At least half (10 hours)
Total Hours	20 Hours of Formal PD

Reading First Trainers

These individuals have all worked as trainers at the Colorado Comprehensive Reading Academies (CCRAs). They were selected based on their knowledge and experience in early literacy. *Note: This is not an exhaustive or "approved" list but rather a list of suggestions to give schools a place to begin when looking for professional development providers. We cannot endorse or guarantee the services of any of these individuals.* This list will be updated on a continual basis as we become aware of new providers.

- Julie Aderman-Hagerty (babba3@msn.com)
- Judith Barnstead (JKB4reading@aol.com)
- Karen Brown (krhea@pcisys.net)
- Cathy Conery (cathy.conery@bvsd.org)
- Deb Coultas (dcoultas@egsd.org)
- Sharon DaxtonVorce (daxtons@haxtel.com)
- Nancy Devine (ndevine@earthlink.net)
- Alan Dillon (adillon@garcoschools.org)
- Judith Dodson (jdodson@myqci.com)
- Sharon Gatti-Carson (sharongc@lamar.colostate.edu)
- Pat Hagerty (pat.hagerty@comcast.net)
- Julie Holiday (jholiday@d20.co.edu)
- Mary Rose Keyes (MaryRoseKeyes@msn.com)
- Barb Kruse (brkru@frii.com)
- Bridget Matthews (bridget.matthews@adams12.org)
- Debby Middel-Katzenmeyer (debby.middel-katzenmeyer@adams12.org)
- Liz Peyton (elizpeyton@comcast.net)
- Sheila Sullivan (sjssully@frontier.net)
- Amy Thieme (thieme2a@comcast.net)
- Deb Usrey (dusrey@comcast.net)
- Cindy Weigum (cindy.weigum@holly.k12.co.us)
- Anne Whitney (anne@spectrumeducationalconsulting.com)
- Vicky Winterscheidt (Vicpetwinter@aol.com)

Professional Development Vendors:

- Sopris West-<http://www.sopriswest.com> (303) 651-2829 or (800) 547-6747
- CORE (Consortium of Reading Excellence) <http://www.corelearn.com> (888)-249-6155

Professional Development Curriculum:

- LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling); Modules 1-8 (Sopris West)

Section 3

CRF Book Study List

Note: This is not an exhaustive or “approved” list but rather a list of suggestions to give schools a place to begin when considering using a book study for part of their formal professional development hours.

Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, Johnston. *Words Their Way*. (\$32)
ISBN: 0-13-021339-X (Prentice Hall)

Beck, McKeown, Kucan. *Bring Words To Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. (\$18)
ISBN: 1-57230-753-6 (Guilford Press)

Blachowicz, Fisher. *Teaching Vocabulary in all Classrooms*. (\$21)
ISBN: 0131198033 (Prentice Hall)

Blevins. *Phonics from A to Z*. (\$16.95) ISBN: 0-590-31510-2 (Scholastic)

Blevins. *Teaching Phonics and Word Study*. (\$19.95) ISBN: 0-439-16352-8 (Scholastic)

CORE (Consortium of Reading Excellence) –

- “Teaching Reading Sourcebook for Kindergarten through 8th grade” Arena Press
ISBN: 1-57128-119-3
- “Reading Research Anothology: The Why? Of Reading Instruction (set of articles) ISBN:
1-57128-121-5

Daly, Edward; Chafouleas, Sandra; Skinner, Christopher – “Interventions for Reading Problems: Designing and Evaluating Effective Strategies” Guildford Press ISBN: 1-59385-081-6

Fox, Barbara – “Word Identification Strategies: Phonics from a New Perspective” Pearson ISBN: 0-13-110099-8

Henry, Marcia “Unlocking Literacy: Effective Decoding and Spelling Instruction” Brookes Publishing ISBN: 1-55766-664-4

Honig, Bill – “Teaching Our Children to READ: The Role of Skills in a Comprehensive Reading Program” Corwin Press ISBN: 0-8039-6405-6

Moats, Louisa – “Speech to Print Text and Workbook” (Language Essentials and Exercises for Teachers) Brookes Publishing ISBN: 1-55766-387-4 and ISBN: 1-55766-30X

Rasinski and Padak. *From Phonics to Fluency*. (\$24) ISBN: 0-321-04903-9 (Longman)

Reutzel, D. Ray and Cooter, Robert B. – “The Essentials of Teaching Children to Read: What Every Teacher Needs to Know” Pearson ISBN: 0-13-118665-5

Swigert, Nancy – “The Source for Reading Fluency” LinguiSystems ISBN: 0-7606-0445-2

Vaughn, Sharon and Linan-Thompson, Sylvia – “Research-Based Methods of Reading Instruction: Grades K-3” ASCD ISBN: 0-87120-946-2

Note: This is not an exhaustive or “approved” list but rather a list of suggestions to give schools a place to begin when considering using articles as part of a book study for part of their formal professional development hours.

Reading Process

Moats, L. (2002, June). What Scientific Research Tells Us About Reading Instruction: Learning to Read. *American School Board Journal*, 22-25

National Research Council. (2000, Summer). What Should My Child Be Learning At Each Level? *The ERIC Review*, 7(2) 19-22

Shanahan, T., *What Reading Research Says: The Promises and Limitations of Applying Research to Reading Education*. International Reading Association, Newark, DE. 8-24

Phonemic Awareness

Durica, K. M. (1998, Spring). A “Sound” Foundation for Reading: The Importance of Phonemic Awareness. *Colorado Reading Council Journal* 11-14

Kameenui, E.J. (1996, Winter). Shakespeare and Beginning Reading: “The Readiness Is All”. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 77-81

Roth, C. (1998). From Gibberish to Phonemic Awareness: Effective Decoding Instruction. *The Council of Exceptional Children*, 20-25

Yopp, H., & Yopp. R. (2000, October). Supporting Phonemic Awareness Development in the Classroom. *The Reading Teacher*, 54 (2), 130-143

Phonics

Beck, I., (1998) *Understanding Beginning Reading: A Journey Through Teaching and Research*. New York: The Guildford Press. 11-31

Gunning, T. (1995, March). Word Building: A Strategic Approach to the Teaching of Phonics. *The Reading Teacher*, 48(6) 484-487

Johnston, F. (1999, September). The Timing and Teaching of Word Families. *The Reading Teacher*, 53 (1) 64-75

Smith, C. (2000, Summer). Helping Your Child Decode Words and Gain Meanings. *The ERIC Review*, 7(2) 14-17.

Vocabulary

Biemiller, A. (2000, Fall). Vocabulary: The Missing Link Between Phonics and Comprehension
International Dyslexia Association Perspectives. 26-29

Hart, B., & Risley, T. (2003, Spring). The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap By Age
3. 2003, May. http://www.aft.org/american_educator/spring2003/catastrophe.html

Comprehension

Beck, I., & McKeown. (2001, September). Text Talk: Capturing The Benefits Of Read-Aloud
Experiences For Young Children. *The Reading Teacher*, 55(1) 10-20

Pressley, M. (2000). Comprehension Instruction: What Makes Sense Now, What Might Make
Sense Soon. 2003, June. <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/handbook/pressley/>

Fluency

Rasinski, T. (2000, October). Speed Does Matter In Reading.
The Reading Teacher, 54(2) 146-150

Richards, M. (2000, April). Be A Good Detective: Solve The Case Of Oral Reading Fluency.
The Reading Teacher, 53(7) 534-539

Section 5

CRF Formal PD Plan Template

School Name _____ District Name _____

Contact Name and Title _____ Phone Number _____ E-Mail _____

List each professional development opportunity in the table below.

# of Hours	Who will participate?	Date(s) of training?	What is the purpose?		How will the training be delivered?	How will it be evaluated?	Review by CDE (This column for cde use only.)
			List objectives.	Show data to support need.			
Example: 6	Example: All K-3 teachers of reading including the principal, literacy coach, special educators	Example: 11/2/05	Example: Participants will demonstrate an understanding of why explicit and systematic instruction is beneficial to struggling readers.	Example: A needs assessment was administered to teachers on August 30 th , following the summer CCRA. 90% of teachers reported limited comfort with the idea of teaching explicitly.	Example: We have hired an outside consultant who is also a CRF trainer who is knowledgeable about SBRR. Her name is Jane Smith.	Example: Jane Smith will administer a pre and post assessment and will summarize the results for the BLT.	

Comments/Recommendations from CRF PD Advisory Team _____

* This document can also be downloaded in MS Word from the CRF website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdecomp/rf_news.htm