



Spring 2009

NRTAC NEWS

News from the National Reading Technical Assistance Center

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NRTAC's priorities

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NATIONAL READING
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

N R T A C

National Reading Technical Assistance Center Open for Business

In October, RMC Research Corporation was awarded a new contract through the U.S. Department of Education for the National Reading Technical Assistance Center (NRTAC). This new contract has created an opportunity to enhance its capacity to assist states in their implementation of the Reading First Program. NRTAC's priorities are to design and implement high quality technical assistance, professional development, and resources built on scientifically based reading research. All states and regions are now under one umbrella. Although the map below illustrates six cluster teams working with specific states and territories, the teams are working together to provide consistency for technical assistance and professional development across all states and territories.

At this time, the NRTAC is focusing on two major initiatives. The first one is to provide a series of professional development sessions that will be offered this spring to inform and enhance the knowledge base of reading professionals and educational leaders. These sessions will highlight the current research on literacy leadership, comprehension, vocabulary, and advanced coaching.

The second major initiative is the dissemination of high-quality materials and tools for improving the implementation of the Reading First program. Within the next six months, the U.S. Department of Education's Reading First Support website will include a variety of resources for use by reading professionals and other interested persons.

The following resources will be available electronically:

- A series of syntheses of National Reading Panel (NRP) and post-NRP studies on comprehension;

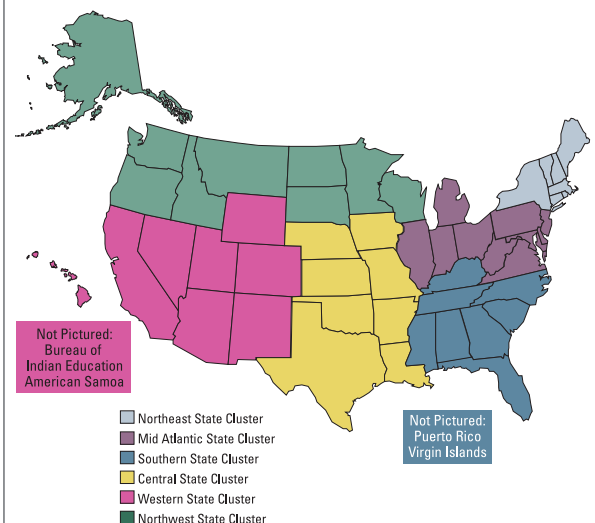
- A series of available case studies with supplemental tools designed for professional development. Topics include coaching, differentiated instruction practices, reading instruction for Spanish speaking students, and the impact of Reading First on English learners; and
- A series of studies, based on SEA evaluation reports and other public documents. Topics of these case studies include professional development, the role of coaching, instructional impact on English learners and students with disabilities, and practices of successful high implementation schools.

We are working to ensure that these resources are high quality and will soon be available for state and district professional development planning.

We look forward to working with you on these activities and hope to see you at some of our upcoming events.

— Angela Sangeorge

National Reading Technical Assistance Center State Clusters



Spotlight On States



Alabama Reading First is working collaboratively with institutions of higher education to help prepare future teachers in the use of scientifically based reading research practices in their classrooms. During the early fall of 2008, Alabama hosted a three-day academy for approximately 200 teacher-interns as well as several university faculty members. Alabama Reading First staff also recently met with 50 university reading faculty members from around the state to form a literacy partnership focused on effectively preparing teachers in the area of reading. In January 2009, training was provided to over 600 interns at seven institutions. Response has been extremely positive, with several more institutions requesting training for their pre-service teachers.

Louisiana Reading First is working collaboratively with other departments in the Louisiana Department of Education as part of a statewide initiative to increase reading outcomes in all schools. The statewide initiative is called Ensuring Literacy and Numeracy for All. The reading component, Ensuring Literacy for All, has one overarching goal: All students reading and writing at or above grade level. The key literacy components of the initiative, based on Reading First, are: essential content, instructional strategies, research-based materials and tools, formal and informal assessments, effective intervention, school culture, on-going professional development and a school improvement plan. Two new principal coach positions are a significant support for the schools in their implementation efforts. These positions replicate the Alabama plan for supporting and mentoring principals' work in the schools.

Washington State recently held two District Sustainability Planning Workshops for their Reading First districts, one on the eastern side of the state in February and one in the west in March. These workshops were adaptations of the Regional Sustainability Planning Workshops developed through the Sustaining Reading First project out of the Arlington, VA office of RMC Research Corporation. Teams from 19 districts with representatives from 50 schools participated in these two-day events. Team membership included district and school level administrators, coaches, and teachers. In addition to cross-program collaboration at the LEA level for this activity, SEA cross-program collaboration included using staff from Reading First, Title I, and School Improvement as district facilitators.

Recent Events

Scientifically Based Reading and English Language Learners

On Wednesday, March 4, 2009, Nina G. Lillian presented a four-hour professional development session on Scientifically Based Reading and English Language Learners in Lincoln, Nebraska. The focus of this session was on the most current research regarding literacy instruction of English language learners. Topics during this session included guiding reading principles, planning effective literacy, and recommended teaching practices.

Enhancing Instructional Leadership in Reading First Schools

Anneta Buenger presented Enhancing Instructional Leadership in Reading First Schools to approximately 100 superintendents, principals and district level administrators at Jefferson City, Missouri on February 24th. The training was repeated on February 25th in Springfield, Missouri to approximately 55 participants.

Upcoming Events

NRTAC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

The following professional development sessions are being sponsored by the NRTAC. Registration is being coordinated by Miko Group. For more information and to register on-line, please visit the Miko Group website at <http://www.mikogroup.com/events/default.aspx>.

Advanced Coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 12–13, Philadelphia, PA	This session is designed to provide a “training-of-trainers” opportunity. We encourage those who will disseminate the module and provide training to others in your state to attend.
Literacy Leadership Sessions Pathways to Success: Developing Vocabulary and Comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 19–20 (Part 2), Atlanta, GA	This four-part training series began with a two day session on April 21 and 22. The May 19–20 sessions continue the work of building leadership in comprehension and vocabulary skills across the Reading First continuum of local, regional, and state leaders.
Reading First & Title I Symposium <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 27–28, Chicago, IL	The purpose of the symposium is to expand the knowledge of and increase the collaboration between state Title I and Reading First program staffs. The content of the symposium will focus on an in-depth understanding of the elements that lead to and sustain successful student reading achievement in chronically low-performing schools. This day and a half session is designed for key decision-makers at the state level (e.g., Reading First Directors and Title I Directors).



Other Events

International Reading Association (IRA)

- 14th Great Lakes Regional Conference, October 28-31, Grand Rapids, MI
 - 35th Plains Regional Conference, November 4-6, Branson, MO
 - 24th Southeast Regional Conference, November 29-December 1, New Orleans, LA
- Additional information is available at <http://www.reading.org/General/Conferences.aspx>.

Reading First Sustainability Planning Workshop (Webinar)

Following are links for information and on-line registration for each session:

- May 5: <https://rmcres.webex.com/rmcres/k2/j.php?ED=112409272&UID=1038981517>
- May 6: <https://rmcres.webex.com/rmcres/k2/j.php?ED=112409552&UID=1038982532>

U.S. Department of Education Reading Institute: Expanding Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) in the Nation's Classrooms

- July 14-16, Cincinnati, OH

For more information and on-line registration, please visit <http://www.mikogroup.com/2009readinginstitute/>.



Participants of the Reading First State Directors' Meeting on April 2-3 received all of the Reading First related resources listed below. The plan is for all of these resources to be available for download from the U.S. Department of Education's Reading First Support website at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/index.html>.

Resources

NRTAC

Professional Development Modules

- **Continuing the Commitment: Sustaining Reading First Outcomes**
This module provides background information and guidance to educators who are currently implementing Reading First and intend to continue improved reading outcomes when their Reading First funding expires. The module addresses the questions: What is sustainability? Are we ready to sustain? How do we get started?
- **Using Assessment to Make Informed Decisions**
This workshop provides a comprehensive review of how effective assessment can improve and guide Reading First programs, focusing on an outcome-driven model. It is designed for local education agency teachers, staff, and instructional leaders involved in the early stages of implementation of the Reading First initiative.
- **Improving Comprehension: Understanding the Research and Applying It in the Classroom**
In February 2007, the NCRFTA held a conference in which Dr. Joseph Torgesen presented on reading comprehension research and Dr. Anita Archer presented on how to apply the research in K-3 classrooms. Dr. Torgesen's and Dr. Archer's presentations were captured on video for use in this module. Presentation materials and videos of model classroom instruction are included.
- **Advanced Training for Reading First Coaches**
This training is a follow-up to An Introductory Guide for Reading First Coaches. The module facilitates discussions with coaches on further refining their work, focusing on enhancing instruction of teachers, strengthening communication, facilitating meetings, managing change, and maximizing professional development.
- **Enhancing Instructional Leadership for Reading First Principals**
This module grows out of an earlier module, Leading for Reading Success: Building Instructional Leadership in Reading First Schools, and is designed to help Reading First principals develop the necessary skills and attributes to become powerful leaders. Topics include leading change, staffing, reading culture, aligning processes, assessment, curriculum/instruction/time, professional development, supporting the coach, walk-throughs, and district support.

Quality Briefs

- Guidelines for Sustaining Reading First Outcomes
- What is Reading Comprehension and Why is it Important?
- Effective Vocabulary Instruction

READING FIRST SUSTAINABILITY

Here's How Series for State and Local Leaders

This series of documents showcases examples of what is working well in actual states and districts around the country.

Here's How Series for State Leaders

- Institutionalizing Your Evidence Based Reading Model in State Legislation and Policy
- State Content Standards Support Reading Instruction in Washington State
- Highlighting Success to Build Support for Evidence-based Reading Programs
- Writing State Literacy Plans that Sustain Your Evidence-based Reading Model
- Using Your State's Longitudinal Data System to Sustain Your Evidence-based Reading Program
- Providing Effective State Leadership for Sustaining Evidence-based Reading Programs
- Reaching Out to Higher Education to Align Preservice Preparation with Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR)
- Structuring State Professional Development to Sustain Scientifically Based Reading Instruction

Here's How Series for Local Leaders

- Upholding Your Evidence-based Reading Program in District Policy
- Working from Standards to Practice in Sustaining Scientifically Based Reading Instruction
- Recognizing Success as an Engine for Continuous Improvement
- Coordinating Funds at the District Level to Sustain Your Evidence-based Reading Model
- Institutionalizing Continuous Improvement with Comprehensive Data Management Systems
- Maintaining Fidelity of Implementation with Walkthroughs
- Managing Staffing Practices to Sustain Reading Achievement

Sustainability Briefs

- Building a Strong Reading Culture: What You Can Do
- Developing Effective Reading Leadership
- The Role of the District: Supporting Student Success
- Planning for Success: Integrating Planning Processes to Sustain Outcomes
- Implementation: Promising Practices to Sustained Results
- Using the Sustainability Briefs in a Study Group



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<http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/index.html>