

Florida Reading Reform

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Important to Note

- Much of the information contained within slides 3 through 22 was taken from Katherine Kersten's position paper titled "Preparing all Minnesota Children to Read by Third Grade."

Third Grade

- Third grade is the watershed year for reading. Before grade three, students are learning to read. After third grade, they are reading to learn.
- Students with a reading issue who are not identified and proper forms of intervention given to them have only a 25% chance of reading at grade level in their school careers. (National Institutes of Health studies)

Reading Statistics

- Students who don't read proficiently by third grade are four times as likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers. (Annie E. Casey Foundation study released in April, 2011)
- Students who struggle with reading in third grade comprise 88% of high school dropouts.
- 89% of students in poverty who do read at grade level by the end of third grade graduate from high school on time.

Reading Statistics

- By 2018, two-thirds of American jobs will require post-high school training. To be prepared for the future, MN students must be proficient readers by the end of third grade.
- In 2010, 27% of MN fourth graders scored below grade level in reading on the MN Comprehensive Assessment (MCA-II).
- In 2010, 53% of MN black fourth graders were below grade level in reading as were 51% of the state's Hispanic fourth graders.
- 20% of white fourth graders were below grade level on the same assessment in 2010.

Reading Statistics

- As of 2010, in Minneapolis, 65% of black fourth graders could not read at grade level. Approximately 40% scored at the lowest level and effectively cannot read at all.
- As of 2010, 21% of white fourth through eighth graders scored below grade level in reading.
- Research demonstrates that students who enter fourth grade without mastering basic literacy skills will fall farther and farther behind in every subject, with every passing year. These children become frustrated and humiliated, and many begin to give up in middle school.

Reading Statistics

- MN has the widest racial reading gap of any state as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the nation's report card.
- In MN, the vast majority of third grade students who lack basic literacy skills are “socially promoted” to fourth grade, despite their inability to do the academic work.
- Teachers and parents pass low-performing students on because they hope they will catch up with their classmates. They are also anxious to avoid damaging their self-esteem.
- Schools get harder every year and promoting students to fourth grade without the skills to succeed just sets them up for greater failure.

Reading

- Reading skills build cumulatively. Every year we fail to address a young reader's difficulties, the problem becomes more difficult to remedy, and the costs mount.
- Most students who struggle with reading are not neurologically miss wired. They are not dyslexic. Instead, they are instructional casualties.
- Good news: When reading problems are identified and addressed in the early grades, the vast majority can be successfully remediated.

Florida Reading Reform

- In the last decade, the state of Florida has enacted far-reaching education reforms that have achieved remarkable reading gains.
- In 1998, only about half of the state's fourth grade students could read. Today, 72% can.
- Ten years ago, Florida students were at the bottom in reading from a national perspective. Today, Florida's white fourth graders score higher in reading on NAEP than do Minnesota's fourth graders. But Florida's African American and Hispanic students' scores have risen fastest.

Florida Reading Reform

- Today, Florida's black fourth graders are about a year and a half ahead of their black peers in Minnesota in reading, and its Hispanic fourth graders are about three years ahead of their peers here.
- Eighth grade reading scores have risen as well. Between 2003 and 2009, Florida made the largest jump in NAEP eighth grade reading scores of any state in the nation. (Education Week's "Quality Counts 2011)

Florida Reading Reform

- Florida is one of only three states to be recognized by the US Department of Education for significantly narrowing the racial and ethnic achievement gap. In 2011, Education Week ranked Florida's schools fifth in the nation, based in large part on dramatic improvements in reading scores.
- Florida's ground-breaking education reforms hold valuable lessons for Minnesota

Florida Reading Reform

- One of the most important aspects of Florida's reading reform campaign has been ending social promotion. The state's schools identify struggling readers in grades K-3, assess their difficulties, and provide intensive intervention. If a child continues to struggle by the end of third grade—scoring one out of five on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), he/she is retained for a year, unless a good cause exemption applies. The retention policy began in 2002-03.

Florida Reading Reform

- Florida education officials know that retention is not the best option for every low-scoring student. Students who score a 1 on the FCAT are given the chance to succeed on an alternative test, or their teachers can assemble a portfolio that demonstrates that the children can read sufficiently well. Other exemptions also apply.

Florida Reading Reform

- In Florida, retention is not viewed as a punishment, but as an opportunity for a child at risk of failure to gain the vital, life-long reading skills he or she lacks. Florida educators realize that the real punishment for struggling third-grade readers is to automatically pass them on to fourth grade, despite their inability to meet its challenges.

Florida Reading Reform

- Florida's innovative retention policy differs markedly from the stereotype of retention that most Minnesotans hold. The policy creates a "safety net" for at-risk children as they gain the skills they need to succeed in the rest of their academic career.
- Retained third graders do not just repeat the previous year's instruction. Each one gets a new program of intensive intervention tailored to his/her learning style and taught by a high-performance teacher with a track record of success in reading instruction.

Florida Reading Reform

- The cornerstone of this enriched program is a 90 minute block of uninterrupted, scientifically-based reading instruction time with a teacher with a proven track record of helping struggling readers.

Florida Reading Reform

- Retained students' reading gains appear to be maintained over time.
 - After two years, Florida's retained third graders outperform their socially-promoted peers by about two-thirds of a school year.
 - Since 2006, when the first retained third graders entered sixth grade, middle school FCAT reading scores have improved substantially, and the percentage of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders scoring "below basic" has fallen to 16 percent, the lowest level ever.

Florida Reading Reform

- Even more significantly, since 2003, the number of Florida third graders who score low enough on the FCAT to be retained has fallen by 41 percent. When the state’s schools were given a third grade deadline for reading proficiency, they took creative measures to successfully address the problems earlier—in grades K-2.
- The fact that thousands of “at-risk” children now learn to read without the need for retention is the retention policy’s most important and lasting fruit.

Florida Reading Reform

- The central lesson of Florida's success is this: When schools are held accountable on their students' performance in reading—when they have a deadline for proficiency, with accountability and oversight—they will succeed in preparing children to read by the fourth grade.

Florida Reading Reform

- Minnesota can learn from Florida's successful education reforms. Our primary reform goal should be to create a comprehensive plan to improve K-12 reading.
 - The plan should focus on ensuring that all elementary students receive scientifically-based reading instruction, and on identifying, assessing, and remediating struggling readers starting in kindergarten.
 - If MN can implement a new literacy framework, third grade retention would not be needed;

Minnesota Reading Reform

- We need to hold districts, schools, and teachers accountable for students reading progress/lack of progress;
- We should take advantage of the capabilities of our educational data system to link struggling readers with our highest performing teachers of reading;
- We should also expand access to, and support for, the Minnesota Reading Corps, a highly effective literacy program for children ages 3 through third grade;

Minnesota Reading Reform

- To improve our students' reading scores, we need a laser-like focus on reading that begins in kindergarten. Children at risk of struggling to read need to be identified, assessed for individual needs, and provided with intense support at the earliest possible stage.

Steps to Success: A New Literacy Framework

- Four Components
 1. Quality Core Instruction
 2. Data-Based Decision Making
 3. Response to Intervention (RTI) Model
 4. Time for Professional Collaboration

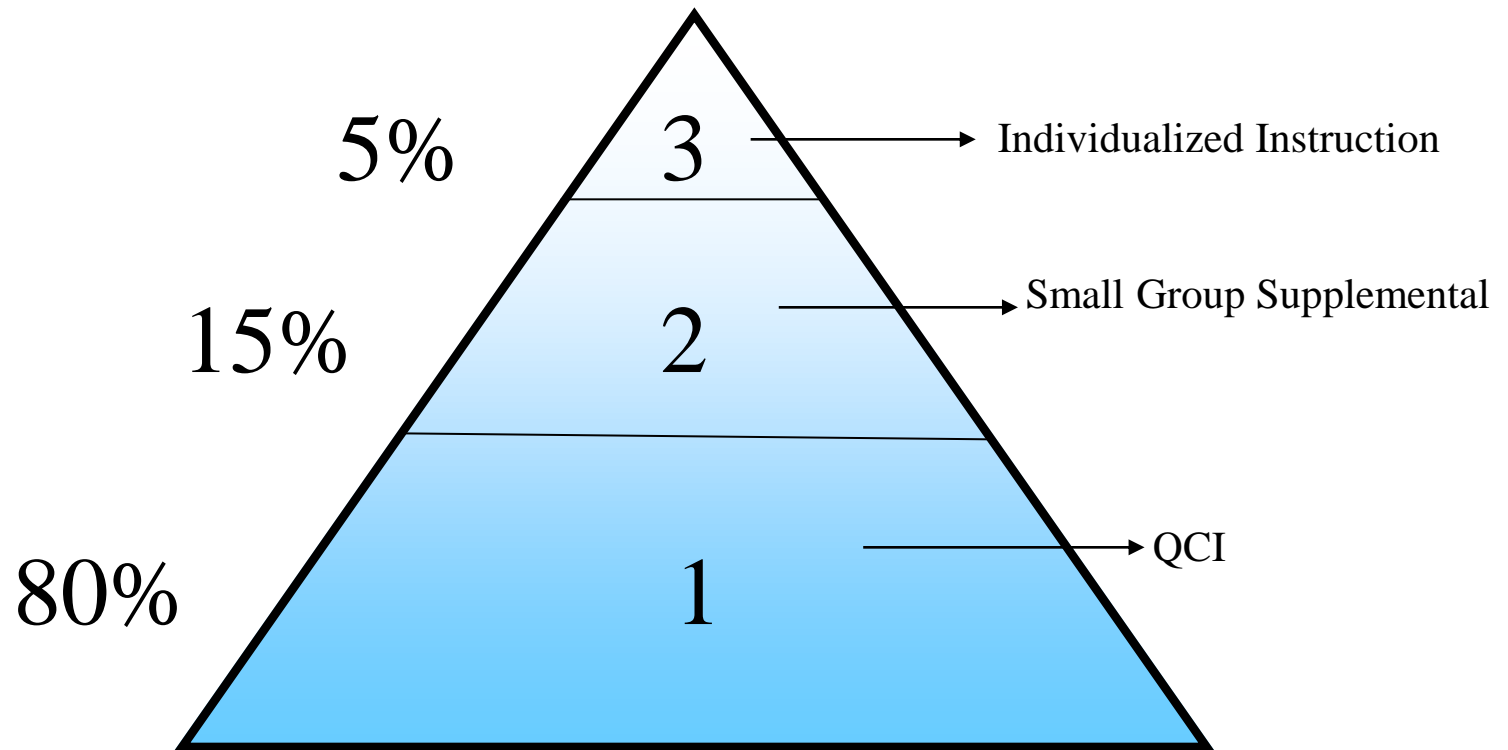
Quality Core Instruction

Quality Core Instruction includes:

- a. Explicit, systematic instruction in the five strands of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension;
- b. Using a curriculum that supports explicit, systematic instruction in the five strands;
- c. Enough time allocated during the day for literacy instruction (90 to 120 minutes);
- d. Appropriate grouping of students (throw out old paradigms and think outside of the box—e.g., multi-grade grouping);

Response to Intervention Model

RTI Model



New Literacy Framework:

An Economic Argument for Policy Change

- California Kindergarten Three-year Study
 - Avg. cost of the intervention: \$200 per student per year (\$600/student for three years);
 - 2001-02: 11 second grade students in Resource Room for reading \$3,000 per student (conservative estimate of special education cost);
 - \$3,000 per year for 11 students; over ten years (third through twelfth grade) = \$330,000
 - 2003-04 year after 3 year identification and intervention 2 students in second grade Resource Room for reading; this is an 80% reduction;
 - \$6,000 per year for 2 students for Resource Room for reading; over ten years = \$60,000;
 - Savings of \$270,000 over 10 years for this one class;

New Literacy Framework: An Economic Argument for Policy Change

Minnesota 2005 Census Numbers:

- 827,000 students in K-12 public schools; equates to approximately 64,000 per grade;
- Approximately 12% receive special education services; this equates to approximately 7,700 students per grade;
- Approximately 50% of special education students are learning disabled; this equates to approximately 3,900 students per grade;
- Of all LD students, approximately 70% have a reading disability; this equates to approximately 2,730 students per grade;
- Average cost of special education for reading disabled: \$3,000 per year (conservative);
- Cost of one year of special education for reading disabled is \$8,190,000; over ten years \$81,900,000;

New Literacy Framework: An Economic Argument for Policy Change

Potential Cost Savings using early ID and Intervention Program:

- California Study reduced Resource Room help by 80%; if we are more conservative and use 60%, the savings:
- $2,730$ (number of reading disabled students) \times $.4$ (percent of student still needing services) = $1,092$ students;
- $1,092 \times \$3,000$ per year of services = $\$3,276,000$ per year or
- $\$32,760,000$ over ten years (third through twelfth grade);
- $\$49,140,000$ savings in special education costs over ten years ($\$81,900,000$ cost for $2,730$ students less $\$32,760,000$ cost for $1,092$ students);
- Less $\$39,000,000$ for the three year ID and Intervention Program;
- $\$10,000,000$ in net savings for one grade over ten years;
- $\$10,000,000$ per year in net savings when all ten grades are taken into consideration;