

Literacy Forum Follow Up

Session 1: We heard from Dr. Freddie Hiebert from The [Text Project](#). She explained the evolution of books that are used to teach reading and stressed the importance of building vocabulary as a key reading skill. She also talked about the need to have more eyes on text time because even though literacy times have gotten longer over time, the amount of time students spend reading hasn't increased.

We talked about the need to understand the reasons why our students struggle to learn to read and we brainstormed all of those reasons.

Session 2: We began by looking at the combined reasons for student struggle. Those can be seen on the fishbone diagram found [here](#). Teachers had the chance to examine the diagram and then chose the one they felt was the most important area for us to tackle. After discussion it was determined that we would form 2 groups around the ideas of:

1. Preparation and training is inadequate
2. Student Learning Behaviors and Assessment were combined to come up with a title of Meeting the Individual Needs of Students

The conversation around training and preparation centered around guided reading and the need for more training. We also discussed the success of the CKLA program that we are seeing in Kindergarten and several first grade teachers shared that they are also using the program because of the success in Kindergarten. Our goal was to come up with a change idea that teachers could try in classrooms to determine if we could develop one thing that could be tied to student success through the use of data. The conversations were so rich that we ended up not having time to determine the change idea.

The conversation around meeting the needs of individual learners centered around the need to have more diagnostic assessment information so we can pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of our struggling readers and also the necessity of involving our students more in being a part of their learning journey, including knowing their own strengths and weaknesses. We discussed where to start this work - with assessment or with how to respond to assessment information. While we did not complete our change ideas, we did think a good action to start with might be to create a bank of assessments, that could be accessed easily by teachers, that would provide additional information on specific reading gaps.

Reflection by IS Team

Upon reflecting on the conversations of the PD group we realized that the CKLA approach to teaching reading is one that is called [Structured Phonics](#) and it is very different than a [Guided Reading approach](#). Understanding this led us to realize that we need to have more discussions grounded in evidence around the two approaches so that we can determine exactly where we need to provide the most effective PD. We decided to back off of the change ideas we were investigating and instead look at research around methodologies of teaching reading. We know

that guided reading has a long standing implementation cycle in Campbell, and has proven successful in some contexts when teachers have a deep level of training. We also understand that adequate training has not been provided on an annual basis. Based on the success of the CKLA program we are asking ourselves if guided reading is really the best approach for the students who we know will struggle learning to read. Research says that 75% of students will learn to read without real struggle no matter what teaching approach is used. Our goal will be to focus on the best strategies for the 25% of students we know will struggle. We invite you to read the embedded research(linked above) to learn more about different reading approaches. This is our first step in professional development! Ultimately our goal is to provide high quality training that gives our elementary teachers the specific skills to feel confident teaching reading to all students. We don't necessarily see this as an either/or approach but more of an "and" when thinking about guided reading and structured phonics. Based on our reading of research we are seeing that guided reading is best for focusing on teaching comprehension.

Next Steps:

We would like to do some action research using the two reading approaches and monitor data for targeted groups of students using each approach. One group will use a structured phonics approach and one group will continue using a guided reading approach. We will work closely with teachers who are passionate about teaching students to read and willing to join us on this journey to make all students readers by 3rd grade!