

MEMORANDUM

TO: School Superintendents, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Curriculum Directors, School Principals

FROM: Judy Embry, EdD, Director of Reading Recovery Center, University of Kentucky

DATE: April 20, 2009

RE: Professional Development for continuous school improvement, enhancing teacher quality and providing effective interventions for struggling students (RtI)

The news coming from Washington in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is very encouraging for those of us who want to assure that all children have the chance to become literate. The additional funds available through Title I and IDEA provide schools an opportunity to:

- “train highly effective teachers to serve as instructional leaders”,
- “build teachers’ capacity to address academic achievement problems”,
- “provide professional development to teachers... on the use of data to inform and improve instruction”,
- train literacy “coaches to provide professional development for teachers”, (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/title-i.html>)
- “provide intensive...professional development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling-up...proven and innovative evidence-based school-wide strategies”, and
- “develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning”.
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/idea.html>

It is clear from the U.S. Department of Education Guidance that funds will be available for improving teacher quality and performance to make a difference in children’s literacy lives, especially with those children who are struggling with literacy (see <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/implementation.html>). The UK Reading Recovery Center offers a number of professional development opportunities for increasing teacher expertise in teaching the struggling learner, which include:

- Reading Recovery® training (Reading Recovery is recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse as the only beginning reading program with evidence of positive effects in all four domains – alphabets, fluency, comprehension, and general reading achievement.
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/topic/tabfig.asp#tbl1
- Comprehensive Intervention Model – A response to intervention (RtI) approach that is aligned with the principles adopted by the International Reading Association’s Commission on RtI - <http://www.reading.org/General/Publications/ReadingToday/RTY-0902-rti.aspx>:

- 1) Instruction – RTI is first and foremost intended to prevent language and literacy problems by optimizing instruction.
- 2) Responsive Teaching and Differentiation – The RTI process emphasizes increasingly differentiated and intensified instruction/intervention in language and literacy.
- 3) Assessment- An RTI approach demands assessment that can inform language and literacy teaching.
- 4) Collaboration – RTI requires a dynamic, positive, and productive collaboration among professionals with relevant expertise in language and literacy.
- 5) Systemic and Comprehensive – RTI must be part of a comprehensive, systemic approach to language and literacy assessment and instruction and should provide support for all K-12 students.
- 6) Expertise – All students have the right to receive instruction from well-prepared teachers who keep up to date, and supplemental instruction from professionals specifically prepared to teach language and literacy.

The intent of this letter is to provide information regarding the professional development opportunities available in the coming months and the next school year through the Reading Recovery University Training Center at the University of Kentucky and affiliated sites. The professional development opportunities are described in the following sections:

1. Reading Recovery training

Reading Recovery has been recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education as an effective early intervention targeting the lowest children in reading in first grade (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/reading_recovery/).

Teacher training requires participation in a graduate-level Reading Recovery course taught by a registered teacher leader for a full academic year. Concurrent with the training, the teacher works with Reading Recovery children and fulfills other educational roles as prescribed by the school district. A Reading Recovery teacher becomes a valuable member of a school's literacy team, with expertise in early intervention in literacy.

- The teachers selected for RR training must be employed in a school system that has a commitment to implementation, hold a teacher certification, and have a record of successful teaching experience.
- The candidate must be admitted to the UK graduate school.
- **COST OF TRAINING and MATERIALS: \$8,500.00*** tuition and fees for 6 hours graduate credit at UK (EDC 730- Problems in School Curriculum: Teaching Reading to Low-Achieving Primary Students I & II)
- Contact your local teacher leader or Dr. Judy Embry at the UK Reading Recovery Center (859-257-7859) for more information.

2. Training in the Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM)

The CIM is a well-coordinated, seamless design for providing services to struggling readers that align with the principles adopted by the International Reading Association's Commission on Response to Intervention (RtI). The CIM is a systemic model for reversing the reading failures of struggling readers through layered interventions, including differentiated classroom instruction and supplemental interventions in small groups or one-to-one.

- **Training for Reading Recovery teachers in Tier II interventions**

- Trained RR teachers attend the CIM Summer Institute
- Additional training is provided by the RR teacher leader through 45 hours of professional development extended over the school year
- **COST OF TRAINING: No costs this year only to Reading Recovery trained teachers.**
- **COST OF MATERIALS: \$6,000 - \$8,000.00**, depending on resources available at schools
- For more information, contact your local teacher leader or Dr. Judy Embry at the UK Reading Recovery Center (859-257-7859).

We hope to have many of you participating in the offerings for increasing teacher knowledge and performance in providing interventions for children who struggle with literacy learning and look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for all you do to make a difference in children's lives.
