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Welcome

to

Every Child Reads
Kindergarten - Third Grade

A collaborative effort of the
Iowa Department of Education,
Iowa's Area Education Agencies,
and Local School Districts



3-1785

The purpose of this packet is to introduce you to the Kindergarten - Third Grade component of *Every Child Reads.*

Please review the materials carefully and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

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Welcome

Every Child Reads
Kindergarten - Third Grade

Welcome to *Every Child Reads!*

Your team is about to endeavor on an initiative that, through the study and practice of Action Research, researched-based practices, and self-inquiry of instructional practice, will lead to new ideas of teaching reading as well as collegiality among faculty, administration, your local Area Education Agency, and the Iowa Department of Education.

Enclosed you will find information on various topics related to *Every Child Reads*:

- Goals and Sequence
- Purpose and Rationale
- Principles and Strategies
- Definitions and References

The purpose of this packet is also to help you realize the scope of the Every Child Reads program: the time involvement, the roles of the participants, the means by which it is implemented, and the importance of continuing the effort. Finally, important information is also included regarding what steps are to be taken next as the summer ends and a new school year begins.

Time Involvement

The study and practice of Schoolwide Action Research, reading professional literature, bringing new practices into the classroom, and fostering Peer Coaching will consume a great deal of time as you learn to use and implement new practices. The following should be kept in mind when setting aside time for the program:

- **Team Meetings:** The time recommended for team meetings is 1- 2 hours per week or 2 hours every 2 weeks. Team meetings must be planned ahead of time so that liaisons may plan accordingly.
- **Professional Development:** For training and facilitation of the program, it is recommended that 1- 2 hours per week, 2 hours every 2 weeks, or 32-36 hours over the course of the school year be set aside for the team.
- **Reading professional literature:** Professional articles need to be read between learning units. Time devoted to this will vary over the course of the year.
- **Peer Coaching:** Once introduced, time must be devoted for joint planning and observation among team members.

In addition, 2 all-day seminars and a final all-inclusive 2-day seminar will occur over the course of the year. These are to be attended by the entire team: teachers, central office members, AEA members, and team liaisons. The following dates have been set aside:

- October 5 (Des Moines) / October 7 (Waterloo)
- February 1 (Des Moines) / February 3 (Waterloo)
- June 12 and 13 or 13 and 14 (Des Moines)

Schools will be notified which location they are to attend on the October and February dates (note that locations are chosen based upon proximity to participating schools).

Participant Roles

School Teams (Teachers, Principals, Central Office Personnel, and AEA Staff Contacts)

School teams work with liaisons to implement collaborative Action Research, Peer Coaching, and strategies for teaching reading that are research-based.

Team Contacts

Team contacts serve as a representative of the school team and aid communication between the Department of Education, AEA participants, and liaisons. This may include attending ICN sessions, sharing information at team meetings, and collecting information from the team to share with the liaison.

Building Principals

As instructional leaders, building principals participate as team members and serve as the team contact, as well as a catalyst for change. They can support the program by demonstrating skills in the classroom, actively modeling participation in meetings, and working to resolve barriers to implementation. The role of the principal as a leader is vital to the success of this program.

School District-Central Office Personnel

It is important that the school district itself through central office personnel support and provide resources for building principals and team members. This individual is the curriculum director or the central office person assigned to curriculum and instruction.

Area Education Agency Staff Contacts

AEA staff serve as team members with the intention of ultimately becoming liaisons for school teams and supporting additional school teams within the AEAs.

Liaisons

Liaisons may be Department of Education or AEA staff who have been trained in all aspects of the *Every Child Reads* program (kindergarten - grade 3). Their role is to facilitate training sessions when necessary, meet with teams, demonstrate and model strategies, and visit schools and classrooms to facilitate implementation and answer questions.

Implementation

This pilot program of *Every Child Reads* is based upon training provided by Emily Calhoun of the Phoenix Alliance and the Iowa Department of Education staff during the 1998-1999 school year. The content has been reproduced with the intention of allowing teams to be more self-directed, yet still have a close connection and ongoing support from the Department of Education and/or Area Education Agency through a liaison.

Materials for team members will include a guidebook that will include journal articles and resources. Teams will also be furnished with or provided access to any videos, CD-ROMs, or other media needed during implementation. During this pilot year, it is necessary and important that teams follow the program and timeline given to accurately assess the effectiveness of the program.

A Long-term Effort

The *Every Child Reads* program uses Action Research with the focus on student achievement and self-inquiry of instructional practice. This program was created with the intention of encouraging change, becoming school-wide, and promoting the practice with other schools. For this to happen, collegiality, teaming, and coaching among teachers during implementation is key to the success of the program.

Goals & Sequence

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Program Goals

1. Foster ability for schools to use Action Research as a means of monitoring their teaching practice and seeking self-improvement.
2. Promote seeking and implementing research-based practices for reading within the context of Action Research.
3. Educate teachers to become critical consumers when examining research and seeking research-based practices.

Content

Process for using School Action Research

- Five Phases

- Setting the focus
- Collecting data
- Organizing data
- Analyzing data
- Taking Action

- Teaming

- Peer Coaching

Strategies for teaching reading

- Research-based practices

- Reading aloud
- Talking aloud
- Thinking aloud
- Explicit Instruction
- Picture Word Inductive Model

- Assessing reading performance

- Using formal and informal assessments

Sequence of Content

1. Establish foundation for Every Child Reads
 - Nature of working in/with teams
 - Importance of becoming a building-wide effort by year 2
 - Plan of communication between teams, AEA members, facilitators, and liaisons
2. Simulate the self-inquiry of actions taken to improve reading comprehension
3. Collect data on students and environment to aid intervention
4. Study interventions for reading comprehension: Reading, talking, and thinking aloud about text
5. Practice interventions and collect data on interventions
6. Study more interventions to aid reading comprehension: Using Explicit Instruction and the Picture-Word Inductive Model
7. Continue practicing the interventions and collecting data.
8. Organize and analyze data
9. Reassess at end of cycle and be ready to choose a new focus or continue at end of year

Mode of Delivery

The pilot program for Every Child Reads is largely self-directed via a guidebook and video with some facilitation with trained liaisons. Communication will be facilitated via a listserv. A web site and CD-ROM for data collection may be developed at a later date.

Purpose & Rationale

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What is *Every Child Reads*?

Every Child Reads (ECR) is a dynamic, collaborative effort involving the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, local education agencies, colleges and universities, and stakeholder groups in building the state's capacity to implement and sustain the most effective practices in reading development, birth - grade 9.

What is the purpose?

To advance literacy among Iowa's children and youth through the establishment of high standards for reading and writing, and the adoption of research-based practices in instruction and assessment.

Why do this?

Every Child Reads has three primary motivators:

1. Evidence of challenges for the state:
 - Scores in reading have declined statewide for grades 3 - 8 over past five to eight years
(Iowa Testing Programs, 1998)
 - 15% of Iowans are at Literacy Level I, able at most to perform simple tasks involving uncomplicated texts and documents.
(Adult Literacy in Iowa, Educational Testing Service, 1994)
 - Elementary certification requires only one course in reading methods
(Iowa Department of Education, 1998)
2. Division 8 (Accountability for Student Achievement) of the revised General Education Standards of the School Rules of Iowa require schools and school districts to implement a process of comprehensive school improvement. As a result, school districts and accredited nonpublic schools are, among other things, required to assess and report annually to the community student progress in at least *reading*, mathematics, and science.
3. The Early Intervention Program (HF 743) focuses on enhancing instruction through the provision of --
 - Resources to reduce kindergarten through grade 3 class size in basic skills instruction to the state goal of 17 students for every one teacher.
 - Resources for early intervention efforts in kindergarten through grade 3 in basic skills instruction, especially reading.
 - Increased communication and accountability regarding student performance.

Principles & Strategies

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...Improve learning for all students by improving instruction....

What are the driving principles behind *Every Child Reads*?

- Communities are primarily responsible for student learning.
- The Department of Education and Area Education Agencies' primary responsibility is to help all communities succeed in meeting their responsibilities for student learning.
- Reading failure can be prevented if schools and parents apply what is known about reading and language development.

What strategies support the success of *Every Child Reads*?

- Sustained professional development
- Schoolwide effort
- Focus on student achievement
- Use of research-based instructional practices

A changing school population in Iowa demands a wide variety of instructional strategies be implemented by classroom teachers that reflect -

- A rich and responsive language environment
- Emphasis on powerful reading instruction in the early grades
- Appropriate classroom instruction for **all** students
- Alphabetic and meaning instruction at developing levels to build oral and written vocabulary.

To bring this about, well designed and executed professional development must be available to all teachers of reading. It is for this reason that the *Every Child Reads* program has been developed.

Definitions & References

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Action Research:

The process of collecting data on an ongoing system with the purpose of improving practice.

- Calhoun, E. F. (1994). How to use Action Research in the self-renewing school. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Joyce, B. & Calhoun, E.F. (Eds). (1996). Learning experiences in school renewal. University of Oregon: Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

Peer Coaching:

The model used by the *Every Child Reads* program follows the following principles as described by Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers:

- All teachers must agree to be members of peer coaching study teams.
- Verbal feedback is omitted as a coaching component.
- When pairs of teachers observe each other, the one teaching is the "coach" and the one observing is the "coached."
- The collaborative work of peer coaching teams is much broader than observations and conferences.
 - Showers, B. & Joyce, B. (1996). The evolution of peer coaching. Educational Leadership. March, 1996, 12-16.
 - Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1995). Student achievement through staff development. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers USA.

Research-based practices:

- National Research Council. (1998). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, .
- National Research Council. (1999). Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Hiebert, E. et. al. (1998). Every child a reader: Applying reading research in the classroom. University of Michigan: Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.

What's Next?

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As you prepare for the new school year, please note the following:

- Materials for the program will begin arriving in August along with instructions to begin the year.
- Soon you and your liaison will be provided contact information so that a meeting may be set up before the October session.

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