

## **Accelerated Reading Improvement Program**

School districts are required to implement early intervention programs to accelerate reading instruction for students identified as at-risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia. Intensive, targeted intervention was provided for identified students on every campus in Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3 and Grade 4 for the 2003-2004 school year.

As specified in TEC Section 28.006, each school district is required to administer a reading instrument in kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2. Results of all assessments administered must be reported in writing to the parent and/or guardian of each individual student.

Data from the early reading instrument should be the primary criteria for student placement in an early intervention program. Identified students should receive additional instruction in the areas of weakness as indicated on the reading instrument: phonological awareness, decoding, fluency and comprehension. Assessment results were linked to the performance of the identified students on the reading portion of the Grade 3 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) beginning in 2003.

A comprehensive program in grades K, 1, 2, 3 and 4 should provide instruction in all critical areas of reading – phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, decoding, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension.

### **Student Eligibility**

First and second grade students, who performed at below grade level, did not pass the screening portion of the assessment, displayed lack of mastery of the concepts assessed on the inventory, and were frustrational on the first grade level passage in the fall, should be referred to the SAS Committee to determine if placement in the tutorial program is appropriate. Placement by the SAS Committee should be a case-by-case decision. Performance on the TPRI should be the primary criteria, but not the only consideration. These students should be reevaluated at mid-year to determine their level of progress. Upon reevaluation, if it is determined that the first or second grade student is still performing below grade level, still cannot pass the screening, or is still frustrational on beginning grade level passages, then the SAS Committee is to determine if other interventions in addition to placement in the tutorial program are appropriate.

Kindergarten students, who were evaluated in January, and did not pass the screening portion of the assessment or who are still developing in three of the four areas of the inventory, should also be referred to the SAS Committee. Again, placement by the SAS Committee should be a case-by-case decision, and performance on the TPRI should be the primary criteria for placement in the early intervention program.

Grade three students who indicated a need for intervention based on prior performance on the end of year second grade TPRI, TAKS benchmarks, or classroom work should have been referred to the SAS Committee to consider appropriate interventions. Students in grade four who failed the administration of the TAKS exam at the end of third grade should be referred to the SAS Committee. Again, placement by the SAS Committee should be a case-by-case decision, and performance on the TAKS should be the primary criteria for placement.

### **Teacher Qualifications**

Teachers who wish to participate in the tutorial program are to be highly trained professionals with a deep understanding of the scientific research base for early reading. Therefore, these teachers should have attended a Teacher Reading Academy. This training has been offered on an ongoing basis through the regional service centers throughout the state, as an on-line training, and has been hosted by our district during the past four summers. In addition to having attended a Teacher Reading Academy, teachers must participate in a professional development session provided by the district on the materials that are to be used in the tutorial program. These materials are directly correlated to the concepts evaluated by the TPRI. The strategies and materials used with targeted students must address and be appropriate for each student's needs.

### **Program Procedures**

Parents must be notified of the student's eligibility for accelerated reading instruction and services provided in the tutorial program. This notification is the responsibility of the SAS Committee. Parents must be advised that the performance of the identified student will be further monitored on the reading portion of the Grade 3 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) beginning in 2003. TEA advises that the district use the Parent Guide to Testing Requirements for this purpose. Consent to serve the student must be obtained in writing from the parent prior to the beginning of service in the program. If parental consent cannot be obtained to serve the student in the accelerated reading instruction tutorial program, then the SAS Committee may consider summer school as a means of intervention.

\*Note: Excerpt from FAQ

Are parents required to send a child to an Accelerated Reading Instruction Program scheduled outside of regular school hours?

Unless specifically exempted under the TEC 25.086, a student must attend an accelerated reading instruction program to which the student is assigned. (Refer to Texas Education Code, Section 25.085. Compulsory School Attendance)

A set time of service within the program is to be established for each child. Students who are placed in the program should receive a minimum of two periods per week, with each period of instruction being no less than 30 minutes long. It is recommended that at least 12 weeks of instruction be provided for struggling readers. The SAS Committee should determine the amount of time and frequency of lessons based upon student need. Each period, or lesson, must have a targeted purpose outlined by a lesson plan that addresses the student's specific needs.

The administrators at each campus will determine the number of students needing service and establish a master tutorial schedule for each grade level. Students struggling with reading concepts can be served in groups of up to but not more than four children to receive intervention help. Identified students should receive systematic and explicit instruction. Instructional activities during each intervention session should be research-based and match the student's instructional level in reading.

Final administration of the TPRI and a subsequent summary report should reflect the effectiveness of the intervention instruction. Each student's program folder should reflect the results of the final assessment for that student.