

# Administration Reports

December 2014

## Focus for December – RTI Reading Interventions during the school day.

### AC Houghton Elementary

#### Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will all participate in our core reading curriculum *Journeys*, at some point during the school year. Students are placed in, and frequently monitored, in ability-leveled reading groups. All students are asked to read their *Journey's* leveled readers to their parents as homework. At ACH we supplement *Journeys* with spelling dictation in which students practice spelling, sounding out, writing words from our reading curriculum, and also high frequency words. The goal is to write simple sentences to prepare students for 1<sup>st</sup> grade. ACH teachers are especially focusing on letter recognition and letter sounds. Students are monitored monthly and also assessed quarterly to ensure academic progress. Our core curriculum is also supplemented with color word worksheets, letter-sound skill building sheets, handwriting practice and also *Zoo Phonics*; which has been an integral part of our reading intervention. Students who are ready, get to work in phonics books in which they identify a picture and write a 3-letter word that matches the picture. These phonics books continue to become more difficult and the students love the challenge!

Kindergarten students who are not ready for *Journeys* at the beginning of the school year participate in Mrs. Sherman's reading program. This program consists of several components including: assessment, language, vocabulary development, comprehension skills, phonemic awareness, letter-sound identification, and handwriting. *Zoo Phonics* is also used in her reading block as well. Students are assessed often and once they possess the necessary abilities are placed in a core reading group.

We currently have several students at an independent reading level this school year, and the goal is for them to participate in the *Accelerated Reader Program*. Finally, students who are ready to do so also get to read in phonetic readers, with this program they take them home to read to their parents in their reading folders and return them daily.

#### First Grade

First grade has been working on letter name and letter sound recognition during intervention. This group struggles with being able to accurately and confidently identify both. In order for them to begin reading or reading with more accuracy the students need to be stronger in this skill.

This year we are using two approved intervention programs: Reading Mastery and Phonics for Reading (both are direct instruction programs). During Reading Mastery students are ability grouped. This allows for them to be doing reading at their instructional level. During Phonics for Reading we do this whole group.

We are using the Progress Monitoring in the EasyCBM every two-four weeks to check progress on the letter sounds and letter names. We continually are adjusting and moving our students to best meet their academic needs.

#### Second Grade

Second grade reading intervention happens in two ways. If a student is in the bottom 20%, according to EasyCBM, then they will go with Mrs. Pullen for a 30 minutes intervention. They are working in the *Phonics for Reading* adopted intervention program. Their progress is tested on the unit test and every

two weeks on their fluency through EasyCBM. After Christmas break the intervention group will go into Read Naturally.

Students are also getting a 30 minutes skills group. Second grade teachers have grouped all second grade students into high, medium, and low depending on their EasyCBM reading fluency. Each group gets 2 weeks of Reading, Writing, and Math. When the low group gets to reading they are working on comprehension with answering in complete sentences. The medium group is working on sequencing a story. The high group is working on researching and writing reports.

Progress is tracked through the use of weekly and quarterly assessments

### Third Grade

Third grade students are using iPads in many different ways. We regularly take Accelerated Reader tests on them. Periodically, we take the Star tests on them since we only take this once a quarter. In Reading Block, students can use the iPads to work on Think Central assignments; this website is part of our newly adopted Journeys curriculum. Students are able to access every part of the new Common Core Literature program, including listening to the stories, having access to the bevy of additional books that go with each lesson, and taking assessment tests online. Teachers are able to see test scores immediately and check for remediation strategies if needed. Our students work on math fluency skills as well as common core math using the iPads. Third grade students have also enjoyed using iPads in science and social studies while integrating writing. They have created written works, and then presented them to their peers using technology. Students, parents, and teachers have been very excited all year to have access to the educational opportunities offered through our iPad program. Many of the programs have parent accessibility to the progress their student is achieving. Students are able, in many cases, to access and continue work at home under parent supervision. Students and parents have their own access codes and passwords for this homework.

### Heppner Elementary & Heppner High School

The Heppner Teachers continue working as PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) planning and strategizing how to best meet the needs of students as we prepare to implement the Smarter Balance Testing. Included in this month's board report is a summary of our Heppner 236 intervention plan and how it correlates with our RtI (Response to Intervention) plan to ensure that all students are meeting their benchmarks goals and showing adequate annual growth.

In Heppner we continue to use the Three Tier Pyramid Response to Intervention as a decision making tool designed to allow for early and effective responses to our student's learning and behavioral difficulties. This process provides them with a level of instructional support matched to their level of need using teacher data and assessment results for evaluating the effectiveness of our instructional practices. RtI relies on evidence-based instructional practices and frequent progress monitoring to provide the assessment data necessary to make decisions about student progress and the need (if any) for more additional support and more intensive interventions. These steps of the plan are also known as; Tier 2-supplemental support and Tier 3-intensive interventions. The pyramid model is intended to reduce unnecessary referrals to special education by ensuring that all children in the general education setting (Tier 1) have access to high quality curriculum and instruction that are taught with fidelity, and that each student receives a level of instruction matched to their level of need. This model is not intended to replace special education and its procedural safeguards, but rather through the Intervention component of our 236 plan, provide students who are struggling with additional opportunities to learn and show the necessary growth to meet grade level benchmark goals before the end of the school year.

Tier 1 Core Program components that are currently in place in Heppner to help ensure that all students are meeting the mark in regards to Reading include; Journeys in grades K-6, HEROES Reading Program

with grades K-3, Easy CBM, educational assistant support/help in the classroom, parent volunteer help/support in the classroom, and study halls to name a few.

At HES, we also hold 100% meetings three times a year to analyze the health of the Core Reading program – Journeys. The data from EasyCBM Benchmark Assessments is analyzed at every grade level. All students participate in Benchmark Assessments in Reading and Math, and all teachers attend this meeting together. We also hold 20% meetings about every eight weeks to review progress monitor data and to adjust intervention groups. Students in intervention groups for reading are progress monitored with EasyCBM every two weeks.

Tier 2 Supplemental Program components for Reading support include; READ 180 at HHS, Success Maker at HES, Read Naturally, COLT Tracks, and C.O.L.T. Intervention/Reading Time. It is under the Tier 2 component of our buildings RtI/236 plan where students receive extra additional supports and may be required to attend Benchmark Boost/Intervention Fridays to close the gap between their benchmark goals and end of the first semester progress towards them. Benchmark Boost/Intervention is a structured Friday program that has been effectively utilized to provide extra support in both reading and math for students who have not yet met their grade level benchmarks or are not on track to meet them by the end of the year. Summer School is then strongly recommended after the end of the year testing results are known for any third through twelfth grade students who have not yet met grade level benchmarks or adequate growth. Summer School is also offered for kindergarten through second grade students who are identified as “at-risk” of not meeting grade level benchmarks.

Tier 3 Intensive Program components for reading support include; Special Education with specialized instruction. At Heppner Elementary School several evidence based programs are utilized to support reading including: Success Maker, Read Naturally, Unique Learning System, and Phonics for Reading. Heppner High School has also implemented evidence reading intervention programs including READ 180, Success Maker, and Read Naturally. In addition, both schools offer Required Benchmark Boost and Summer School for students who need continued support for both Reading and Math.

We continually seek opportunities to increase partnerships with all stakeholders for continued implementation of our District 236 plan and to provide the necessary programs, learning opportunities, and learning interventions to facilitate this goal.

I would like to end by again thanking each of you for your support of Heppner Schools, and your commitment to all students of the Morrow County School District.

## Irrigon Elementary School

### **IES Spotlight on Reading Interventions in the RTI process**

Our **Title One program** supports students that are slightly below grade level in Reading. As a district, we use a curriculum called Strategies to Achieve Reading Success (STARS) by Curriculum Associates LLC.

STARS (Strategies To Achieve Reading Success) is a prescriptive reading series that provides essential instruction program that works on 12 reading strategies. This series provides precise instruction in and practice with the strategies students need in order to master reading success. It uses several effective

**PART TWO: Learn About the Strategy** ★★☆☆

**WHAT TO KNOW**

What happens and why is called **cause and effect**.  
Why something happens is the **cause**.  
What happens because of the cause is the **effect**.

- A cause is the reason that something happens.
- An effect is what happens as a result of the cause.
- Clue words such as *so, so that, since, because, and if* often signal cause and effect. Other clue words are *reason* and *as a result*.

Read this article about birds that don't fly. As you read, think about one thing that happened to some types of birds and why.

All birds have wings, but not all birds fly. Scientists believe that there once was a time when all birds could fly. In time, however, some types of birds no longer needed to fly in order to survive. So these birds became flightless. The two most common types of flightless birds are penguins and ostriches.

Penguins have flippers instead of wings. They use their flippers to help them swim underwater at fast speeds. Ostriches also move quickly, even though they are the largest birds on Earth. Their wings help them balance as they run. These birds can run at speeds up to 35 miles per hour.

One thing that happened to some types of birds and why is:  
What happened: **They became flightless.**  
Why it happened: **They no longer needed to fly in order to survive.**



instructional procedures that support all students. Some of those procedures include providing opportunities to activate prior knowledge, explicit instruction in key English language concepts as well as providing step by step scaffolded approach to build a clear understanding of the reading strategies. It proves to be a great tool for remediation.

**Title One** also uses the **Phonics for Reading** series which is a systematic research-based, instructional program that provides explicit instruction in phonics as well as phonemic awareness, fluency and comprehension. The series is carefully sequenced to guide and build students' learning. Each Level in the three level series features consistent teaching routines, repeated practice and immediate corrective feedback to help improve students' reading skills. It supports students who struggle with reading comprehension from weak phonemic awareness and decoding skills, by building phonemic awareness, decoding, and fluency skills to strengthen reading comprehension and uses systematic, explicit instruction which builds confidence and motivation.

**Title One** uses the SRA Box as needed (Tier 3). This intervention develops comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, word analysis, and study skills. It works to reinforce specific skills in which certain students show a weakness, engage students' interest and increase their knowledge base using a wide array of Fiction and nonfiction selections and promotes guided independent student work.

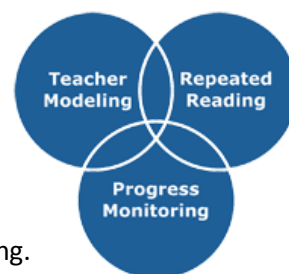


In our **Title One and SPED programs** we also use Read Naturally to help aid in reading fluency remediation. The Read Naturally program

supports the five essential components of reading; phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Read Naturally's structured reading program combine strategies such as teacher modeling, repeated reading and progress monitoring.

**Teacher modeling** uses the strategy of a proficient reader modeling correct pronunciation, expression and phrasing, as well as helping students learn new words.

By **repeating** the story, students are able to not only show fluency improvement, it also builds confidence. Like in all that we do, **progress monitoring** maintains teacher awareness about their student's progress, as well as motivating students to continue to read and improve. Read Naturally is used with our Title and Special Education students.



Elements of the Read Naturally Strategy

### **Classroom Interventions (an example from Ms. Luke, 6<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Our new reading adoption, Journey's, also includes interventions for the classroom. In our 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms, one of our teachers is using the Write in Reader while she teaches small groups. She uses this material as an intervention for students that need more direct teaching of specific skills. While the rest of the class is working on centers, she teaches up to 7 students using the scripted lesson at the back of the Journey's teacher edition. While there are interventions for decoding, grammar and writing, at this time, I specifically focus on the interventions for vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. She briefly reinforces vocabulary that is taught to the whole class. Each student then reads the page to themselves and then one student reads the page aloud. There is a comprehension question at the bottom of each page that focuses on a specific skill and requires the students to provide evidence from the text. The teacher edition provides questioning strategies that guide students to an understanding of that question and how to use information from the text to support their answer. It typically takes two days to read through the short story and then answer critical thinking questions at the end. Once students have finished this, she reviews the whole class story from the textbook and answers questions using information from the text.

### **Irrigon Jr/Sr High School**

We are currently in our fourth year of utilizing READ180 as our primary intervention program. Currently we are offering two sections at both the high school and middle school levels. Having additional sections this year has enabled us to keep our class sizes down considerably which provides a better opportunity for more individualized instruction to students to strengthen their reading skills and ultimately meet the essential skills requirements for reading. Once students have benchmarked in reading, we rotate them out and rotate others in. So far we have had two rotate out and two more who are close. We also have seven students who have improved by at least half a grade level already this year.

Additionally, every middle school student at Irrigon Jr/Sr High School receives a full period of both reading and writing, essentially “double-dipping” them each in English-Language Arts. Our MS reading and writing teachers work collaboratively to develop lessons that not only support each other but are aligned with the common core formative assessments. We are optimistic that our students will perform well on these new assessments.

### **Riverside Jr/Sr High School**

The Riverside staff has worked hard to implement several different reading supports or interventions during the school day. We have Read 180 that is designed to give extra support to our lowest readers’ 7-12 grade. Students can take this class in conjunction with their regular language arts class or as a standalone depending on their level of need. Students are placed into this class based on previous test scores, IEP plans, and teacher recommendation.

We also have time in the language arts classrooms where the teachers focus on developing stronger reading / comprehension strategies with the students. This is supported with the new textbooks that were adopted last school year.

Students are also able to get support from our GEAR UP staff on Monday’s and Wednesday’s during the school day and after school.

After school support is also available from teachers daily and on multiple Friday’s throughout the school year.

### **Sam Boardman Elementary School**

This year we have been implementing an Rti system that is allowing our students to receive targeted interventions to ensure they continue to grow in their ability to read.

Rti at Sam Boardman is composed of a few critical pieces and ideas that allow us to meet the learning needs of all of our students:

- Assessment
  - EasyCBM Benchmarks for all students in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.
  - EasyCBM Progress Monitoring assessments given every 2-3 weeks to students in targeted intervention groups are making progress.
  - Additional assessments such as STAR and end-of-chapter/unit assessments that provide a more complete picture of a student’s learning.
  - MAPS for students who are at the very low or very high end of the spectrum to help us make the best educational decisions for those students.
- Core Instruction

- A newly adopted comprehensive reading curriculum (Journeys).
- “100%” meetings immediately after the EasyCBM benchmark tests are administered to review the effectiveness of the core (regular whole group) reading instruction.
- Prescribed Interventions
  - An initial “20%” meeting to place students into intervention or enrichment groups.
    - Teachers use the assessment results to determine what skills each student needs to improve.
    - Students are placed in groups with a specific intervention.
    - The severity of the need/deficiency determines the group size: A group with a severe skill deficit will have an intensive intervention curriculum and a very small group size of no more than 6 students.
      - Higher need = smaller group size.
      - Enrichment groups are larger (typically 15-20 students)
- PLC Meetings
  - Staff meets weekly as a grade level to discuss progress, review progress monitoring data, and move students between groups as necessary.
  - Teams continually collaborate to find ways to fine tune and improve their instruction.

The Oregon RtI Project is focused solely on reading, but to the extent that we are able and have the resources to do so, we apply these same structures and principles to math instruction as well. It has been a shift for our staff to integrate assessment so tightly into instruction and to move students around in a broader system – as a grade level team instead of just within the classroom, but the growth is already apparent, and we are excited to see how much they grow over the course of the year.

### **Windy River Elementary School**

Reading is a big concentration at Windy River Elementary. Here are a few things we are doing to improve Reading for students with specific interventions.

1. Reading Intervention period - every day we have 40 minutes of extra intervention in the regular classroom teacher’s class. Classes are leveled which means a student can either go to a teacher to get enrichment reading (above grade), level grade reading or below grade reading. This is besides the 110 minute reading core block time they all get in the core reading program.
2. During that 40 minute intervention Reading time, students may also attend a specialty reading intervention. Students could go to ESL reading intervention, Title I reading intervention or Special Education interventions. Each one of these interventions could have 1 to 2 other instructional aids there to help give small group interventions to their students.
3. Time to Read Intervention - because the master schedule is very closely monitored, we have placed time for students to just read. This reading is for library AR books, reading of social studies and science texts. During the week, 40 minutes is set for library reading. During Friday School, time will be set to read AR books to stay on top of their reading goals. Students are also sent to the Academic Lunch Workroom to stay on top of classroom work and AR reading if they are behind. Reading is important at WRE.
4. Specific Student Reading Interventions - students who are still showing struggles in Reading are given specific reading interventions on a one-on-one basis. After the meeting of a Student Study Team, a student is given Reading instructional support with a specific curriculum in a specific area of reading for an exact amount of time. If the student shows growth this is good, more

support is given. If the student is not showing growth, then a possible referral is made for testing to see if the student qualifies for Special Education.

5. Instructional Aid support - during the core 110 minute reading block at Windy River, instructional aides are placed with ESL, SPED and struggling students to help them in the main core reading program. This additional adult support helps the lower students in the core reading program.

## **Management's Discussion and Analysis**

### **Financial Highlights**

We are not expecting any significant changes in state-wide funding in 2014-15 (second year of biennium). However, we are hoping to hear good news about future budgets very early in the legislative session

### **Future Financial Planning**

Here is the PERS update that was received from the November 21<sup>st</sup> PERS board meeting:

- The rate of return on the program through September 30 was 6.10%; through October it was 6.80%. The rate is on target to hit the assumed rate of 7.75%.
- Matt Larrabee from Milliman presented a report on Financial Modeling of the system.
  - System average base rates are set at 17.5% for 2015-17, and, assuming a 'steady state' return of 7.75%, are expected to decline slowly over the next 20 years to below 15% of payroll. Assuming a steady return of 5%, rates are projected to rise to 30% over the next 20 years; at 10.5%, rates would decline to zero by 2027.
  - In the variable return model, which was based on a stochastic simulation using 10,000 trials, the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile rate of return hovers in the high 6% range until 2019, then stabilizes at a low 7% rate, somewhat lower than the assumed rate of 7.75%. Larrabee indicated that Milliman was somewhat more 'bearish' on the fund than the assumed rate, given the low rates of return on fixed income positions within the PERS portfolio.
  - System average base rates at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile rise to 18.2% in 2017-19 and then stabilize in the mid 17% range until 2029 when they begin to decline. Although Milliman indicated that system averages were extremely misleading given different pools and given the fact that some jurisdictions have side accounts when others don't, Matt Larrabee did suggest that the rate of change was relevant for all rate categories.
  - System net contribution rates (taking into account side accounts) will stay within the 10-11% range until 2027, when they rise substantially to a mid-16% level given the expected expiration of the side accounts. At that point, the bonds associated with the side accounts will also have matured, hopefully evening out the net increase.
  - Stress testing of the variable model suggests that there is a 75% chance that the funded status will exceed 100% at some point over the next 20 years. However, there is a substantial chance (44%) that the funded status will be less than 60% over the same period, demonstrating the significant volatility of the system. The likelihood that the system average base rate would exceed 30% over the next 20 years was also fairly high at 41% probability.
  - The probability of a rate increase exceeding 3% of pay over the next three biennia was 65%; an increase of 4% was 49% likely, and an increase of 5% was 31% likely.

- **Editor's comment:** Taken together with the potential for a judicial reversal of recent legislative changes, the volatility of the system suggests that employers would be prudent to maintain a PERS reserve.

## **Maintenance**

The district has selected McKinstry as our project managers. The contract will need to be finalized for the ESCO process to begin; however, we plan to use McKinstry in conjunction with the DLR Group in developing a 10 year plan. The goal of the McKinstry group will be to help the district receive grants and funding for energy conservation projects and be the general contractor on the significant projects. The first process goal will be to overhaul our HVAC controls to a standard web based program for ALL schools. We will be working on this and heating solutions at Sam Boardman classrooms as we continue to see HVAC units failing. We will then focus on long term maintenance plans to ensure we are maintaining our equipment to increase the useful life.

The district also met with the DLR Group to start the vision process for the school district. The goal will be to have school site visits and building analysis completed and presented to the Board at the February 9, 2015 Board meeting. A long range facility committee will be formed by February 10, 2015. The committee will be tasked with developing the long range plan for facilities for ALL communities.

## **Injury Report**

No workers compensation claims to report at this time.