

Read to Lead Task Force

Friday, July 29, 2011 – Meeting Agenda

Guest Speakers

- I. Patricia Levesque, Foundation for Excellence in Education
- II. Robert Pondiscio, Core Knowledge Foundation

Review and Discussion of Consensus Items to Date

I. Teacher Preparation and Licensure

The Task Force discussed the need for a “roadmap” that would create greater uniformity among Wisconsin institutions of higher education about what teachers should know and be able to do to teach reading. There was agreement that all teachers should have additional preparation in reading. The Task Force also agreed that there should be some additional way of measuring teachers’ content knowledge in reading before they enter the classroom.

- How many reading/literacy credits should elementary teachers be required to take, and what competencies should they cover? How many reading/literacy credits should middle and high school teachers be required to take, and what competencies should they cover? Can certain competencies be embedded into existing courses, or should new courses be required?
- Keeping in mind the importance of graduating in 4 years, are there any required teacher courses that are unnecessary?
- What changes should be made to the Wisconsin teacher licensing exams to better prepare future teachers for reading instruction while ensuring mastery of essential content knowledge?

II. Professional Development for In-Service Teachers

We agreed generally around the need for additional professional development resources for teachers, but did not reach consensus around what that should look like.

- How should professional development be targeted:
 - Educators whose students are struggling in reading?
 - Schools performing poorly in reading?
 - Districts performing poorly in reading?
- How could initial educators (teachers in their first three years in the classroom) receive greater support and professional development in teaching reading, particularly for diverse learners?
- How could additional support and training be provided or targeted to veteran teachers to ensure that they have the most up-to-date knowledge, skills, and strategies – the kind of knowledge we are now expecting the colleges of education to deliver?

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- How could the role of reaching specialists and/or reading coaches be strengthened or incentivized as part of the teacher career ladder?
- Should the Task Force recommend certain best practices for how to best use reading specialists/coaches? What might those look like?

III. Screening and Interventions

The Task Force agreed that there should be a universal kindergarten entry screener that measures reading readiness.

- The Task Force has indicated support for the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), which offers 3 specific early literacy screening tools (PALS-PreK, PALS-K, and PALS 1-3). Should the Task Force recommend the universal adoption of each of these screeners in each grade (PreK-3)?
- If so, in which early childhood programs should the PreK screener be used (4K, Head Start, state-certified child care programs, etc.)?
- Should the Task Force recommend any additional reading assessments in PreK through third grade?
- Does the Task Force want to identify or recommend specific resources, such as the National RTI Center, for districts to acquire more information about research-based intervention tools?

IV. Early Childhood

The Task Force generally agreed that more could be done to strengthen early literacy opportunities wherever possible, and that state-supported early childhood programs should have greater coordination.

- Should Youngstar, the state's quality child care rating system, include more specific program or training requirements for early literacy/reading (beyond the screening tools discussed above)? What about 4K programs?
- Similar to our discussion about teacher preparation and professional development (which also applies to 4K teachers), should child care teachers be required to have greater content knowledge in early literacy? If so, how could that be implemented?

Discussion of Societal Issues

- What are the effects of parental involvement and poverty on students trying to learn to read?
- How can the Task Force help overcome these challenges?
- Are there other socio-economic issues which impact reading that the Task Force can address?
- How quickly could these improvements be implemented?