

## **What is a Literacy Collaborative School?**

Becoming a Literacy Collaborative school is a long-term process that involves comprehensive school change. It involves a whole school effort to provide a cohesive, high-quality primary, intermediate, and middle level classroom literacy instructional program with interventions for the children who need supplementary support. The school principal, literacy leadership team, literacy coach, teachers, and interventionists work together to develop a vision and support that vision with purposeful decision-making.

### **A Literacy Collaborative school is defined by the following characteristics:**

#### School-University Partnership

Teachers and administrators in the school and district have entered into a collaborative long-term relationship with Lesley University Center for Reading Recovery and Literacy Collaborative (CRRLC). The partnership involves the implementation of a research-based Literacy Collaborative model. Lesley faculty liaisons maintain contact with the school or district and provide annual ongoing professional development for coaches after initial coursework has been completed.

#### Leadership Teams

The school or district forms a leadership team for the primary grades, one for the intermediate grades, and one for the middle level. The teams attend the Literacy Leadership Institute provided by Lesley University CRRLC faculty to develop, sustain, and monitor the Literacy Collaborative model. The teams meet regularly to review the implementation, and set goals for further work. On occasion all teams across the grade levels meet together to discuss school-wide implementation issues and/or student achievement.

#### In-School Literacy Coach

The school selects a candidate for the position of literacy coach for the primary grades, one for the intermediate grades, and one for the middle level. After successfully completing the required coursework, each literacy coach teaches children daily (50% to 70% time) and provides professional development (30% to 50% time), including (a) providing initial professional development for primary, intermediate, or middle level teachers; (b) providing in-class assistance to teachers through demonstration, coaching, and reflection on teaching; and (c) planning and working collaboratively with teachers, the principal, and the leadership team in the school.

#### In-School Professional Development Sessions and Coaching

From the second year of participation at the primary, intermediate, and middle level, the majority of teachers are engaged in Literacy Collaborative ongoing professional development and follow-up coaching support provided by the literacy coach. The goal is for all teachers to participate in the professional development and coaching. At the middle level, English/Language Arts teachers participate in the full training and content area teachers receive a portion of it pertinent to them. The literacy coach and teachers are continually engaged in updating their knowledge and refining skills through ongoing training and support, which includes ongoing coaching.

#### Books and Materials

Each classroom is stocked with books for classroom libraries, adequate materials, supplies & furniture to support rich literacy programs in grades PreK-8 and to implement the language and literacy framework as designed. In addition, a set of professional books serves as the teachers' guides to high quality instruction. A school bookroom contains multiple copies of texts that can be used for small group guided reading or literature discussions as well as books to be shared by teachers: big books, poetry, read alouds.

### Prevention and Intervention

Reading Recovery is highly recommended as a 1:1 safety net for children in grade one who, even while experiencing an effective literacy program, are having difficulty in the initial stages of learning to read and write. Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) is provided as a small group (3:1) intervention for children in grades K-2 who are reading below expected grade levels. LLI for grades 3 – 8 is provided as a small group (4:1) intervention for students in those grades still experiencing difficulty in reading, writing, and vocabulary development.

### Home/School Partnership

We view our partnership with parents/caregivers as an opportunity to learn from them as well as provide information to them about Literacy Collaborative. They serve as the first teachers of their children and as such, we learn much about each student by regularly communicating with the parents/caregivers. We also try to keep parents/caregivers aware of the work that takes place in the classroom as we invite them to see what's happening, and celebrate the successes of their children's work during events such as literacy nights, authors' teas, or readers' theater presentations. Teachers talk with parents/caregivers about the importance of regular school attendance and offer support on ways to extend opportunities within the home for daily talking, reading and writing that supports literacy development.

### Data to Monitor Effectiveness

The school literacy leadership team and teachers in the school develop an evaluation plan to determine their priorities for instruction for the year and then collect and analyze data annually to assess the effectiveness of the program in their school. These evaluation plans adjust yearly to meet the ongoing needs of the school population. The data report is shared with the researcher and faculty liaisons at Lesley University, who work with the literacy coach and team to reflect on successes and and discuss plans of action to address the identified challenges.

### Registration as a Literacy Collaborative School

The school is registered with Lesley University and The Ohio State University as an active Literacy Collaborative school. With registration, schools are granted permission to use Literacy Collaborative training materials and name within the school or district. The affiliation insures that continuing contact between the school and university is maintained, and ongoing professional development and communication about successes and challenges sustains the implementation over time.