

Examination of Reading Specialists Support of Structured Literacy in Elementary Schools

Recommendation 1: Provide ways for the reading specialists to have enough designated time to deliver PL to their school staff.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	1. During the 2023–2024 school year, the Elementary English Language Arts (ELA) team will continue to partner with the Office of School Support and Well Being (OSSWB) to communicate the importance of incorporating designated professional learning time on literacy during the workday.	Partially Implemented	6/14/2024

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Recommendation 2: Expand professional learning opportunities to include topics of interest, particularly writing.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writing is the most difficult task we expect students to do and the most complex skill to teach. Explicit instruction in writing foundational skills, language structure and process is part of Structured Literacy. The elementary ELA team will focus on professional learning that targets writing with the Reading Specialists in 2023–2024 so that Reading Specialists can strategically offer professional learning to their teachers. Reading specialists will receive learning on effective writing instruction during the full-day professional development session on December 4 or 6, 2024. 2. Additional opportunities to deepen teacher understanding of effective writing instruction will continue to occur as part of ongoing school-based support provided by the instructional specialists on the elementary ELA team during collaborative planning. 	Partially Implemented	6/14/2024

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Recommendation 3: Create professional learning communities for reading specialists by similar schools.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the 2023–2024 school year, the elementary ELA team restructured the direct support to schools to intentionally provide targeted support to schools with similar programs. For example, one specialist has been assigned to support all PreK–Grade 2 schools, another supports the Intermediate Grade 3–5 schools, and a third specialist supports the Two-Way Immersion (TWI) schools. This adjustment was established to increase the alignment of support to these specific schools with similar structures and programs. 2. There are plans to offer several Professional Learning Community (PLC) opportunities in 2023–2024. These include a PLC for K–Grade 2 schools, Grades 3–5 schools, and TWI schools. These sessions will be offered regularly throughout the school year. 3. Optional PLC opportunities in the form of carefully selected book studies will be available based on data needs focus areas at the school in alignment with school improvement plans and areas of interest. 4. Throughout the school year, during quarterly professional learning sessions with the reading 	Partially Implemented	6/14/2024

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	<p>specialists, seating is organized by clusters and programs to provide the opportunity for the reading specialists to engage in discussions and planning with their colleagues.</p>		
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Recommendation 4: Explore and address reasons some school staff seem more hesitant to make the shift to Structured Literacy.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The elementary ELA team will continue to elevate the academic achievement data and offer additional professional learning opportunities based on the Science of Reading research to support the shift to structured literacy to impact student learning. 2. During the 2023–2024 school year, the Instructional Specialists on the elementary ELA team will support schools with communicating the urgency and rationale for evidence-based literacy instruction in service of equitable instructional practices in alignment with the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Anti-Racist Action Plan. 3. During the 2023–2024 school year, the Instructional Specialists on the elementary ELA team will continue to partner with the Office of School Support and Well Being to support administrators with guiding their teachers to making the shift to Structured Literacy. Teachers who need specific support in implementing the practices will have access to ongoing professional learning, asynchronous modules, and peers to build capacity. 	Partially Implemented	6/14/2024

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	<p>4. During the 2023–2024 school year, additional professional learning for administrators about Structured Literacy will also occur during the four Elementary Leader Learning sessions in September, November, March and April.</p>		
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Recommendation 5: Conduct a feasibility study to hire school-level testing coordinators.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	1. In collaboration with the Department of Shared Accountability, discuss and plan a feasibility study for elementary schools.	Not Yet Implemented	

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Recommendation 6: Provide additional work days during the summer for reading specialists.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading specialists engage in and accomplish the following tasks throughout the summer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan for and attend 3 days of Instructional Leadership Team meetings with schools. • participate in planning for preservice. • analyze data. • collaborate with core and leadership teams on the School Improvement Plan. • create the master schedule to optimize instructional time. • engage in differentiated professional learning. • inventory, organize, manage and distribute literacy materials. 2. Consider adding a budget request for FY 2026. 	Not Yet Implemented	

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Recommendation 7: Continue to collaborate with other MCPS offices to align messaging to schools.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The elementary ELA team has identified team members to be the lead ally from each department to ensure continued and deeper collaboration can happen with the Department of English Learners and Multilingual Education, Special Education, Division of Early Childhood, Title 1 Programs, and Recovery Funds Pre-K Programs (Pre-K/Head Start Unit), and the Office of School Support and Well-Being. 2. Coordination across offices will occur through Friday professional learning meetings focused on the Equitable Teaching and Learning Framework implementation. 3. Identify strategies to support school improvement planning for content and service provision. 	Implemented	7/1/2023

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Recommendation 8: Continue efforts to solve the school-level substitute shortage.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Continue providing permanent substitutes in identified schools.2. Work with the Office of Human Resources and Development to attract, train, and retain substitutes.	Partially Implemented	