

Guidelines for Reviewing a Professional Development Program in Reading



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Introduction

This document was developed to assist the Curriculum and Instruction Team at the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) in the review of a professional development program in reading. The document is based on the National Staff Development Council's Standards for Staff Development and other current documents reporting quality professional development programs that advance both teacher and student learning.

Process of Using Guidelines

The Guidelines for Reviewing a Professional Development Program in Reading are organized into three broad categories—Content, Process, and Context. Research documents the importance of each of these areas for maximizing the connections between professional development and student learning. The Content category addresses the “what” of the reading professional development program. The Process category assists the reviewer in making decisions about the “how” of the professional development program. Finally, the Context category allows the reviewer to describe the organizational requirements and expectations set forth by the program. An additional area, “materials,” addresses quality issues outside the three broad categories.

To determine how a program aligns with these areas, the reviewer examines the entire program and notes how alignment occurs for each element by checking the “yes” (**Y**), “no” (**N**), or “somewhat” (**S**) columns on the document. A mere check is not sufficient; rather, it is important to cite specific examples in the “comments” column to justify each check. This supporting documentation will be helpful in the final stages of selecting a professional development program in reading.

The following resources on the FCRR website (www.fcrr.org) will assist educators who use this document to guide their own review of a professional development program in reading:

- Glossary of Reading Terms
- Continuum of Phonological Awareness Skills
- Continuum of Word Types
- FCRR Reports (reviews of professional development programs in reading already posted)
- References and Resources for Review of Reading Programs

Title of Professional Development Program in Reading:

Circle Method(s) used:

Review of Training Manual(s)
 Interview with Lead Trainer(s)
 Observation of PD session(s)

Other: _____

CONTENT	Y	N	S	Comments
				(e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
1 Is the content of the professional development program aligned with Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR)?				
2 Does the professional development program promote explicit and systematic instruction?				
3 Does the professional development program promote an uninterrupted block of time for reading instruction and/or intervention?				
4 Does the program inform educators about the use of valid and reliable classroom assessments for:				
screening purposes?				
progress monitoring purposes?				
diagnostic purposes?				
5 Does the program include clear guidelines for using assessment data to track student progress and inform instruction?				
6 Does the program provide research-based instructional strategies for differentiating instruction (e.g., effective grouping practices)?				
7 Can the program be customized to meet the varying needs of participants?				

CONTENT**Y N S****Comments****(e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)**

8	Does the program offer special content designed for school leadership (e.g., coaches and administrators)?				
9	Does the program initially develop deep content understanding as a foundation for new skill development?				
10	Does the program provide clear guidelines about integrating instructional practices with reading programs currently in place?				
11	Does the program provide clear guidelines for teaching diverse learners (e.g., English Language Learners and students with special needs)?				
12	Does the program provide clear guidelines for teaching students who are not making adequate progress?				

PROCESS**Y N S****Comments****(e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)**

1	Does the program have a coherent instructional design (e.g., goals, objectives, and activities)?				
2	Does the program include alternative delivery modes (e.g., online, CD ROM, video, and face-to-face)?				
3	Does the program provide multiple opportunities in a variety of formats for coaching and follow-up assistance to participants (e.g., observation and feedback, modeling lessons, and facilitation of study groups)?				
4	Does the program use a combination of learning models to promote the development of new skills (e.g., models in action, practice new strategies in a safe environment, and classroom support)?				

PROCESS		Y	N	S	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
5	Does the program ensure fidelity in delivery of content (e.g., presenter qualifications, presenter manuals, and electronic presentation of content)?				
6	Does program include evaluation measures to determine participant progress in attaining program goals?				
7	Does the program promote the link between student achievement and teacher implementation of the PD Program?				

CONTEXT		Y	N	S	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
1	Does the program promote a collaborative relationship among teachers, coaches, and administrators (e.g., analyzing data, reflecting on practice, and learning communities)?				
2	Does the program provide clear expectations regarding required resources and local support necessary for program success?				
3	Does the program require schoolwide participation and commitment when appropriate?				
4	Is there evidence of research based success measures used to determine efficacy of the program?				

MATERIALS		Y	N	S	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
1	Are materials/resources well organized?				
2	Are materials/resources reflective of skills being taught?				

MATERIALS**Y****N****S****Comments****(e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)**

3	Are materials/resources error-free?				
4	Will teachers have access to the necessary materials/resources to implement instructional practices?				

REFERENCES

Killion, Joellen. (2002). *What Works in the Elementary School: Results-Based Staff Development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

Learning First Alliance. (2000). *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide*. Online: www.learningfirst.org/readingguide.html.

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North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (1999). *Professional Development: Learning from the Best. A Toolkit for Schools and Districts Based on the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development*. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, USDOE.

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GLOSSARY

Certification Measures: A process to validate a particular expertise or credential usually involving observations or demonstrations of competence.

Coaching: A process of supporting teachers in implementing new classroom practices.

Follow-up: Assistance and/or resources provided to ensure implementation of professional development.

Goals: General results desired from a program of instruction.

Learning Communities: A group in which members commit to ongoing learning experiences with a deliberate intent to transform teaching and learning at their school or within their district.

Objectives: Measurable statements detailing the desired accomplishments of a program

Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR): Refers to empirical research that applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge. This includes research that: employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment; has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review; involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn; relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and can be generalized.

Train-the-trainer model: A capacity building plan to develop master trainers who then deliver the program information to users.