

# Des Moines Municipal Schools

## Literacy Plan



**2014-2015**

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## **Introduction**

Des Moines Schools plan to ensure that students are proficient readers by the end of third grade include providing every student an individualized education plan utilized to monitor progress and develop next goals for reading success. Students will conference individually with their classroom teacher weekly (more frequently for students in need of more in depth support) to discuss strengths, new learning and set new goals as readers. Parent training will be provided in order to support them working with their child at home in addition to the instructional support they are receiving at school. Students failing to make adequate progress will be referred to the district's Student Assistance Team (SAT) to request further assistance. Projecting the vital belief as a staff that all students can learn, we will utilize data and teacher observation to determine what our next instructional step will be in order to keep moving students forward.

Current research indicates that without early diagnosis and targeted interventions students will continue to struggle regardless of whether they are retained or promoted. Therefor it is district procedure to look at methods of supporting students to acquire needed skills prior to considering the option of subjecting them to the negative aspects retention presents. Students failing to progress with documented classroom interventions will be referred to the district's Student Assistance Team (SAT) for further support. Teachers will have conferenced with parents concerning student needs prior to any referral being made. Parents will receive an invitation to all SAT meetings involving their child. All decisions concerning retention would be with the SAT team which would include parent/guardian. Parents unable to attend will be notified of outcomes via mail. There have not been any students retained since the 2012-2013 school year.

As a former regional reading coach, Superintendent Diller has a clear understanding of the role of the reading coach and will effectively share that with all staff. The PED has a power point on the Region IX website that clearly explains the role of the coach which will be used as support for district staff. In addition, administration will have to provide supports necessary to ensure the regional coaching position is utilized in the manner it was designed, which is to provide job embedded professional development for K-3 teachers.

The district will evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the New Mexico Reading Coach Model and assure communication between the district, school administration, and the reading coach with frequent walkthroughs by administration, formal evaluations, open lines of communication with regional reading coach (weekly check-in), and student data. Areas of concern will be addressed throughout the year by utilizing the tools listed above and keeping in close contact with the reading coach. Administration will participate in weekly PLC meetings when possible. Monthly logs will be completed by the reading coach,

shared with school administration, emailed to Melinda Webster and uploaded to the Educational Plan of Student Success (EPSS).

### **Literacy Philosophy**

1. Des Moines Elementary will ensure fidelity of implementation of all reading programs and strategies used and determine appropriate instructional adjustments by keeping two things in mind. Primarily students are expected to be able to perform the Common Core standards at their grade level and those are the expectations of school administration. Secondly, we are teaching students, not a curriculum. The fidelity focus needs to be directed toward determining learning objectives in direct relation to CCSS, utilizing formal and informal assessment data to determine next instructional steps and referring to instructional materials and strategies that have a sound research base. In recognition of the fact there is no “one size fits all” program, teachers will use common sense and professional judgment by referencing assessment data to guide all instructional adjustments. The materials to be utilized as tools to support the CCSS will include: Saxon Phonics, Pearson’s Reading Street, Florida Center for Reading Research activities aligned to DIBELS measures, and an assortment of literature based materials.

### **Literacy Time Allocation**

2. Des Moines District will ensure the elementary school provides a minimum of a 180 minute reading block for core reading instruction, with a focus on embedding literacy throughout the day, ensuring time for intensive intervention, allocating time for daily writing, and teaching reading and writing across the content areas. During this 3 hour block students will be provided daily reading instruction in large group, small group and one-to-one settings as needed. Instruction will be provided to students in “bites” of time deemed age appropriate by brain-based research. Students will be independently engaged in literacy activities to support their growth as readers and writers. Students will be provided appropriate modeling and develop trained behaviors that allow them to work independently, consequently teachers will be able to be engaged with students in small group or individual conference settings. All students will participate in 3 large group mini-lessons daily to introduce new learning objectives and share literature as a group. Every student will also participate in a flexible small group or one-to-one setting for instruction designed to better meet their individual learning needs. Additional interventions will be provided as data indicates during small group and one-to-one student conferences.

3. The Des Moines district will facilitate improvement in and intensify interventions for schools not making academic improvements as determined by fidelity checks and student performance data by administration monitoring: 1) bi-weekly walkthroughs 2) frequency of completion and indication of student growth via DIBELS Next progress monitoring data.

The reading coach position is one of guidance and support. Data, observation and teacher communication will guide the direction of further professional development provided by the K-3 reading coach. The reading coach should be able to pinpoint specific needs and address them accordingly. The reading coach and classroom teacher's schedule should allot time for "debriefing" all coach sessions.

4. The district will provide principals with the information contained in the K-3 reading plan by the Principal/Superintendent being part of the process of building the plan. As stated earlier, if administration isn't involved in the creation and supportive of the plan it is difficult to get "buy-in" at the school site.

### **Family Involvement**

5. The district will support increased family involvement by incorporating the "Readers of the Caribbean" training provided by the PED. This parent training module will provide parents a fun way to learn specific reading strategies to support their child at home. A literacy night will be held once during each quarter of the school year to provide support to parents and showcase student outcomes in literacy.
6. The efforts to improve reading instruction in grades K-3 will be sustained next year in grades 4-5 by making this a K-6 initiative at Des Moines schools. Due to small class sizes, one class per grade level, and limited student numbers we will be able to utilize our regional reading coach across the elementary with a primary focus on grades K-3.

### **II. School Level Leadership**

Principals will ensure that state-funded reading coaches and interventionists attend all professional development opportunities provided by PED by requiring this as a prerequisite for the position, by allotting time and providing funding to ensure attendance. All professional development opportunities provided by the PED will be placed on the district calendar.

The process utilized by the principal to form and maintain the Reading Leadership Team would be similar to the one currently in place called the Elementary Instructional Team (EIT) which meets weekly for one hour. This team is comprised of all K-6 staff and literacy is the focus of these meetings.

The principal will promote the Reading Leadership Team as an integral part of the school literacy reform process by requiring participation by all staff through the Professional Development Plan and placing an emphasis on the process by participating in meetings.

1. The principal will ensure that the regional reading coach is not used as a reading resource teacher, a substitute, administrator, or in any other capacity that takes them away from being a full time professional development resource for teachers by clearly defining roles using the NM Reading Coach Model for guidance at the first meeting. The principal will frequently check-in with the reading coach and staff to ensure proper utilization of time. The principal will provide bi-weekly walkthroughs.
2. The principal, reading coach and the Reading Leadership Team will collaborate to plan for professional development. Set times will be designated at the beginning of the year for weekly Reading Leadership Team meetings and expectations for all staff will be clarified. Data will be reviewed and an outcomes based model will be utilized in order to support next steps with regard to professional development. Weekly planning meetings between the regional reading coach and the principal will be utilized to finalize professional development plan.
3. The principal will monitor teacher implementation of lesson plans and collection and utilization of assessment data, including progress monitor data, to determine intervention and support needs of students by bi-weekly walkthroughs, formal observations, reviewing the web-based DIBELS Next reports and frequent check-ins with each staff member. The principal will also be a part of the Student Assistance Team and will actively participate in meetings.
4. Assessment data will be communicated to and between teachers by incorporating data into the weekly Reading Leadership Team meetings. Monthly data meetings will be held to review growth of students and discuss needs. In addition teachers will be provided the opportunity to bring data to the table at all weekly meetings if they have a student they would like additional support with. The goal of the data based discussions will be to provide teachers a group of dedicated professionals to brainstorm ideas and develop the best practices of reading instruction.

5. Des Moines School District will implement a 55 minute early release every Wednesday during SY14-15 in order to ensure that 1.5 hours of time is provided for teachers to meet weekly for professional development opportunities. A schedule will be created to support the reading coach in spending equal amounts of time in K-3 classrooms providing modeling and one-to-one coaching sessions. Substitute coverage will be provided when necessary to allow for extended meeting times. Teacher prep periods will be utilized for coaching sessions.
6. The process used by the principal to monitor implementation of the K-3 Reading Plan, will include bi-weekly walkthroughs to observe instructional practices and student performance. The administrator will be looking for clear learning objectives, a productive classroom environment, appropriate instructional materials being utilized, high quality teacher instruction, students engaged in independent literacy activities, concepts of print being taught, the phonics program being implemented with fidelity, fluency being modeled and practiced, explicit vocabulary instruction, and strong comprehension instruction using the Reading Walkthrough Guidelines from the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR).
7. The principal and regional reading coach will provide teachers with the information contained in the K-3 Reading Plan during the in-service days at the beginning of school. All teachers except for new hires have participated in the development of this plan.
8. The principal will establish herself as a literacy leader by actively participating in the K-3 Reading Plan development, weekly PLCs, and bi-weekly walkthroughs. The principal will provide current research to teachers during meetings and via emails.
9. The principal will increase family involvement in the Des Moines Elementary school by encouraging staff participation in quarterly literacy nights and sharing in communication with all school district stake-holders the importance of parental involvement in order to ensure student literacy success.

A key factor to an individual school's success is the building leadership. The principal sets the tone as the school's instructional leader, reinforcing the positive and convincing the students, parents, and teachers that all children can learn and improve academically. In essence, the school principal has the potential to have a great impact on student learning through his or her support of teachers and coaches. In order for principals to become instructional leaders, it is imperative that they understand the literacy challenges of the populations of students whom they serve.

The regional reading/literacy coach is vital in the process of providing job embedded professional development at the school level. To describe the process for monitoring and improving reading instruction at the school level, including the role of the principal and the regional reading coach, the district commits to:

### **III. Professional Development**

1. Recent data indicates that 97% of student outcomes are directly related to teacher quality. With this in mind it is very clear that every educator has an obligation to grow as a professional and increase instructional practices. Des Moines District continues to work to align all instruction to support students attaining the required skills set forth by Common Core State Standards. Teachers have participated in the CCSS trainings and are dedicated to continue their search of best practices.
2. Throughout the last two school years the Regional Reading Coach as well as District Reading Coach provided professional development in moving toward a classrooms structure where students have been trained to develop the skills to work as independent learners and teachers are better able to provide differentiated instruction according to each individual learner's needs. This structure provides a classroom environment where students are engaged in literacy activities (reading and writing) for 80% of the reading block. This will provide them the necessary time to develop as readers and writers – practice makes perfect. During the course of the reading block students are provided 3 whole group targeted mini-lessons (brain-based research), and 3 breakout sessions where students are engaged independently and the teacher provides small group or one-to-one instruction.
3. Teachers participated in a book study of The Daily Five and The CAFÉ Book during the previous school year. They began implementation of this framework last fall. In the 2013-2014 school year staff began to refine the structure and develop a better grasp of the reading strategies that will be implemented through the use of the CAFÉ (Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency and Expand Vocabulary). Des Moines Elementary attended the Daily Five and CAFÉ training provided by the authors of the two books in Denver. The reading coach/principal attended this training as well and provide follow-up support both in the classroom and during professional development activities. Our goal for the 2014-2015 school year is to support new teacher(s) in implementing Daily Five and CAFÉ as well as enhance small group

instruction and interventions in k-6 classrooms. We would like to have new teachers take the online Daily Five and Café courses to support their implementation as well.

4. K-2 Staff continue to study the Daily Five Framework and put Tyner on the agenda for the SY 2014-2015. In order to improve and refine implementation of small group instruction, we will schedule monthly peer-observations. Peers will look for specific criteria and give one another feedback following each observation.

The following professional development will be provided during 2014-2015:

<b>Ongoing Professional Development</b>	<b>PD Content Topic</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
<b>Professional Learning Communities</b>	Teacher collaboration using data to drive instruction	Teachers will meet weekly on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30-3:15.
<b>Mentor Teachers</b>	Use of reading programs	Written evaluations from mentor and mentee
<b>Fall Book Study K-3</b>	Small Group Reading Instruction by Tyner	Reading Coach will provide follow-up support during classroom visits and PLC meetings
<b>Fall Book Study 3-6</b>  <b>Ongoing whole staff book study</b>  <b>Peer Observation</b>	The Daily Five and CAFÉ  Essential Questions by McTigh and Wiggins  Followed by:  Visible Learning for Teachers  By: Hattie  Teachers will observe small group and	New elementary staff will meet weekly with Reading Coach for 8 weeks Mentor Training  Introduction to <u>Essential Questions</u> during August in-service and focused weekly reading/ discussions will occur on Wednesday afternoon as a part of the agenda norms. Evidence of implementation will be noted in peer-observations.  Teachers will debrief with one another and discuss

	differentiation/best instructional practices in one another's classrooms.	observations and predetermined criteria.
<b>Instructional Practices</b>	Formative Assessment	Formative Assessment
<b>Differentiated Instruction to support individual learning needs</b>	Small Group Reading Instruction Video series (K-6)	Reading Coach will provide follow-up support during classroom visits and PLC meetings
<b>Common Core State Standards ELA</b>	Unit Plan Designs completed	Nine professional development days allocated in calendar to support alignment of materials to standards
<b>Reading Street Core Reading Program</b>	Unit Plan Designs with aligned materials to CCSS that meet 5 components of reading plus writing instruction	Reading Coach will provide follow-up support during classroom visits and PLC meetings
<b>DIBELS Next</b>	Assessment in K-3 components of reading and data analysis to drive instruction	K-3 collaboration during PLCs and support from Regional Reading Coach in classroom
<b>Vocabulary Instruction</b>	We will continue the best practices learned from REC 9, current book studies and Solution Tree trainings.	Regional reading coach will provide follow-up in classroom setting.
<b>Writing Instruction</b>	<u>The Common Core Writing Book, K-5</u> by Gretchen Owocki	Regional Reading Coach will provide follow-up support during classroom visits and PLC meetings
<b>Writing Instruction</b>	<u>Units of Study- Lucy Calkins</u>	Regional Reading Coach will provide follow-up support during classroom visits and PLC meetings

Professional development for all teachers, coaches and administrators must be provided to ensure that all educators in the district/charter school are grounded in the essential components of reading instruction including **oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency**. Providers of professional development (internal and external) must base training in reading instruction on evidence-based reading research in alignment with the Common Core Language Arts and Literacy Standards. Professional development options must be provided to address the following:

- A. Fidelity of implementation of all instructional materials, all reading programs, and strategies based on evidence-based reading research, including early intervention, classroom reading materials, and accelerated programs. Intensive intervention should also be addressed.
- B. Instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based progress monitoring assessments, as well as other procedures that effectively identify students who may be at risk of reading failure or who are experiencing reading difficulties.
- C. A body of knowledge grounded in evidence-based reading research and must be in alignment with the guidelines from the Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council). Professional development must be individualized based on student performance data—rather than a “one size fits all” model.

All teachers, paraprofessionals and substitutes, and even mentors can benefit from differentiated professional development—providing more information for less experienced teachers and advanced activities for those who are at a mentor level.

1. Describe the district/charter school K–3 reading professional development that will be provided for the 2014–2015 school year. **Include a description of how follow-up to the professional development will be provided to teachers.**

#### **IV. Curriculum and Instruction**

##### **1. Research-based Instructional Materials**

###### **a. Core Basal Reading Program (CRP)**

Des Moines Elementary adopted Scott-Foresman Reading Street as the core reading program. Reading Street will be implemented in every classroom daily addressing the six essential components of reading. All instruction will be aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Instruction will be differentiated (taught differently) according to student instructional need.

b. Intervention Reading Programs

The district utilizes Saxon Phonics as the primary reading intervention program in grades K-2. It is a research-based phonics program that supports teachers in providing explicit based instruction with high-frequency words, phonics and phonemic awareness, spelling, alphabetizing, handwriting, fluency instruction and fluency readers.

Students not mastering grade level proficiency according to teacher observation and data will be provided additional intervention support utilizing the intervention activities provided by the Florida Center for Reading Research.

Higher quartile students will be provided a higher level text complexity during small group instruction at grades K-2 and moving into literature circles at grades 2-3 as deemed appropriate.

c. Educational Technology

Education technology is a critical component of student learning. Des Moines Elementary utilizes Renaissance Learning Accelerated Reader Program to encourage students to read. Students utilize SpellingCity.com to practice spelling, phonics and vocabulary skills. Students also plan to utilize I-Pads for digital reading utilizing Reading Rainbow i-books. Teachers utilized smart boards in multiple ways from building background knowledge and vocabulary by showing quick video clips, to interactive word building and phonics acquisition. Teachers utilize the document cameras to share text and student written products. Students also use technology to publish writing pieces to share with peers and parents.

**2. Diagnosing Specific Reading Difficulties**

- a. The core reading program providing high-quality, explicit, and systematic reading instruction according to student needs during the 180 minute reading block will be taught to all students (Tier I) through the use of Scott-Foresman Pearson Reading Street, based on instructional practices that are supported by research. Although staff has worked over the course of the previous school year to align instruction to Common Core State Standards they will continue to develop unit plan designs to support them in ensuring all standards are met. Students will receive 30 minutes

of phonics instruction daily at grades K-2. The remaining 90 minutes will be utilized to incorporate the basal materials within the structure of the Daily Five. Students will participate in 3 whole group mini-lessons and 3 breakout sessions where each student will receive approximately 20-30 minutes of small group or one-to-one teacher support. Students will be trained to work independently over the first five to six weeks of school. They will build the stamina necessary for them to work independently at Read to Self, Read to Someone, Word Work, Work on Writing and Listen to Reading. This will provide the classroom teacher a doable structure with which she can provide differentiated instruction. Research indicates student increase reading skills by spending time in text – this framework will support them in practicing their reading skills for a large portion of the 90 minute block.

- b. Students targeted for intensive intervention will receive support by the individual most qualified to provide them support – their classroom teacher. This person will typically have more knowledge of struggling student’s needs than any other individual within the school setting. Title I services will be utilized to move higher performing students forward by supporting them through higher level text. Special Education students with an IEP will be provided services by both the classroom teacher and the Special Education instructor in compliance with their IEPs. Students with a Student Assistance Team (SAT) plan will also be supported according to the requirements of their individual SAT plan. All intervention instruction will be based on specific skills indicated by data and teacher observation.
- c. Reading instruction will be designed to intrinsically motivate students by:  
1) providing students choice in what they read independently, 2) placing them in good fit books they are able to understand, 3) modeling good literary practices by sharing literature through read alouds (*more than once a day in primary grades*), 4) conferencing with students about their reading weekly, and 5) setting attainable, yet challenging goals that will support and encourage them to become stronger readers.

### **3. Classroom Libraries**

- a. Teachers are working toward building classroom libraries of leveled text at appropriate levels of complexity which will be how a portion of the grant monies will be utilized.

- b. A component of the Daily Five and CAFÉ requires students to have personal book boxes that will have at least five books in them at all times. These are “I-PICK” books that allow students to choose (with guidance) appropriate ‘good-fit’ books at their interest level. They will be allotted time daily to read these books during Read to Self and Read to Someone. The books will include leveled text they have read from the Reading Street series, AR books from the library, and books they have selected from the classroom library.

#### 4. **Writing**

- a. Writing will be incorporated daily across the content area. One of the whole group mini-lessons will be dedicated to language arts each day. The teacher will use a read-aloud story to prompt the language arts lesson aligned to CCSS. Students will develop trained behaviors and stamina to support them in becoming lifelong writers by strong teacher modeling and a gradual release of responsibility. Modeling of writing will be utilized to support students to learn to think and solidify their understanding of text using the three text types.
- b. Teachers will utilize the Lucy Calkins informational, narrative and opinion writing curriculum and trade books to enhance instruction, feedback and grading of written work.

### **V. Assessment System**

1. DIBELS Next Assessment will be utilized in grades K-6. All students will be benchmarked at fall, winter and spring benchmarks according to dates set by the NM PED. Data driven instruction is the key to increased instructional outcomes. DIBELS Next will be utilized in grades K-6 to determine next steps in increasing reading outcomes for all students. Students will be benchmarked at fall, winter and spring during the test window indicated by the NM PED. After each benchmark data will be analyzed by composite and individual subtests. Information gleaned will be utilized to determine next instructional steps overall and individual interventions. Students indicating intensive in any area will be progress monitored every 6<sup>th</sup> day of instruction and students indicating strategic in any area will be progress monitored every 10<sup>th</sup> day of instruction to determine success of intervention/s provided. Students indicating growth at progress monitoring will continue with the interventions being provided. Interventions for students not progressing or indicating slow progress will be reviewed and possibly revamped in order to better meet their learning needs.

2. Discovery Education Assessment will be given four times a year. Test A is given at the beginning of the school year as a baseline test. Test B is given in early November, Test C in early February and Test D in May. Discovery is aligned to the CCSS and teachers utilize the data from each Discovery Assessment to drive instruction following the assessment. This data is used to form small group instructional groups to reteach concepts not yet mastered. Teachers use the CCSS Discovery probes to assess student mastery on specific standards between benchmark tests. Discovery Ed data is used in conjunction with DIBELS data and teacher observation to triangulate data in order to see the full picture of student performance and mastery of concepts.
3. DRA Assessments for 4-6 grade students will begin the Spring of 2015. A DRA kit will be purchased with a portion of the reading grant monies to support higher level readers in the third grade and beyond.