

Berkeley County Schools

I'm in a Title 1 School, Now What? Prioritizing Title 1

- Reading and Math Specialists
- School Improvement Funding Spent on Data Based Needs
- Required Programming-Extended Day, Professional Development, & Parent Involvement

Overview

If your school has qualified for Title 1 services, a tremendous amount of resources accompanies that designation. This document is meant to help your school prioritize those resources and clarify the expectations of the program in as clear, non-abstract way as possible.

The first prioritized resource that comes with a Title 1 designation is the **placement and utilization of a Reading Specialist.**

“Being a reading specialist is one of the hardest jobs in any school. It calls for diplomacy, organization, zest, and commitment. Sometimes it is a lonely position, but the reward is teaching a child with reading difficulties to read and understand the printed word.”

–Mary C Kerr, Reading Specialist Teachers.Net Gazette

Reading & Math Specialists

Expectations of Reading and Math Specialists:

A Note to Reading and Math Specialists and Their Administrators

What does it mean to be a Federal Programs Specialist in Berkeley County?

It means a lot of things, but mostly it means holding in the palm of your hands a set of specialized tactics, and skills that can bring a child the world. You hold something every educator, parent or guardian, wants to share with their student—a key to locked doors—*Learning to Read and do Math*. By catching up a child who was struggling, you are giving them a statistical powerhouse for a great future.

So who should take the Tier 3 or highest need kids?

Well, you should. As a Specialist, you are the most equipped individual in the building to help that child—you have the best set of tools and training to get that child where they need to be.

But they aren't making progress as quickly as they should, which leads me to believe this student may be a child who qualifies for additional other services.

Every educator can share a memory of a child that they worked with continuously, that they felt they had exhausted all their options with. Then one day, like magic—that child made progress. The thing is, it wasn't magic. It was a continued approach to learning that helped the schema connect for that child. Some of the beauty of education lies in its difficulties---if it was easy to reach every child, people would swarm to the profession. Our job is simply to recognize that the difficulty is there, and keep using best practice for the sake of the child. And in terms of “qualifying for additional services,” if the child is lucky, a Specialist would be a great additional service.

But my schedule won't accommodate serving Tier 3 and pushing in and pulling out other groups.

Well then we have a paramount problem that this Central Office will deal directly with you and school administration to figure out. 95% of all the students in a school should remain in the classroom, and not be in the most educationally needy group of students.

Those percentages aren't reflective of what we are seeing in my school. What now?

If your school has more than 5% of the student population in Tier3 or the most intensive instruction, look at what is happening at the youngest grades in the building. Early intervention is the key. Are Specialists' services being used early to catch kids up before they get too far into an instructional gap?

So if there is more than one Specialist, do we serve by grade or by deficiency?

It depends. It depends on case load, deficiency areas, and level of need. For buildings with more than one Specialist, it is recommended that they serve by grade level. This creates a collaborative relationship between specialist and grade level teachers. In any situation **it is required that Specialists use the Diagnostic Decision Model (Exhibit 1)**, and be able to talk about where children on their caseload fall in the Model.

I'm not making significant growth with all my students and I'm afraid it will hurt my evaluation.

We will need to work together to look at it from a diagnostician's lens. Is it the assessment? Is it the instructional strategy? A Specialist works with students who need them most. Sometimes it is difficult to see growth from every student at all times, but overall growth with a group of children is certainly an expectation.

I'm spending all my time working on Title 1 school responsibilities like planning Parent Involvement and Extended Day.

You must not be in the right county. Perhaps you stumbled across this newsletter by accident? In Berkeley County, we know that Title 1 is a school wide program and every person in the building takes on some sort of role of those demands. Your primary role is to teach children how to read through a combination of push-in and pull out services. Then, like any teacher in the building, you can add another project or duty to your plate by your choice.

Some of this really prohibits my ability and time to co teach and model in the classroom.

Your first priority is concentrated (acceleration and remediation) services to kids. There are a variety of other avenues to share classroom instruction such as co teaching and modeling that comes next. Co-teaching in the Guided Reading and Math model of the BCS Literacy Model and Everyday Math stations is a place we want to see Specialists as soon as the building's concentrated instruction needs are met.

At what point do we begin gathering data points for Special Education?

Education is not about collecting data points. Remember that pulling kids out for the most intensive instruction only implies a level 3--First this is only temporary. Our intent is that the individual providing pull out services will help the student catch up and exit out of pull-out services. This type of question shouldn't even come up until it is determined through long term instruction (comprised of highly engaging general instruction, differentiation, concentrated and layered support, and frequent formative assessments, along with county required benchmarks...etc.) that a child isn't succeeding or catching up. Only after every possibility has been exhausted, and a child has made no or incremental and problematic progress, can a child be recommended for screening for special assistance. Only at that point, (which only affects 1% of students) should data points be "collected." At that time, guidance on what constitutes "points" should be reached through consensus by district and building administration and following the guidelines of Policy 2419.

How does my role and responsibilities compare to other teachers in the building?

You are a teacher just like the other teachers. You have to have equitable duties and responsibilities to other teachers. Rather than being responsible for one class of students, your instructional responsibility lies with our neediest students. You also support the county adopted lesson procedures. You also can have a role of modeling exemplar Reading and Math instructional techniques. Your schedule may change but like all teachers, you still have a schedule and lesson plans.



Expectations of Reading and Math Specialists

A Note to the Building Faculty and Staff

Building a Master Schedule

When building a Master Schedule, a school should be careful to keep Interventionists and Specialists in mind. First necessities like lunch, recess, and Unified Arts, are scheduled. Next, in looking at the whole building, Reading and Math should be scheduled at staggered times throughout the building, in order for the teachers who work with kids rigorously to do so with the most time dedicated to the kids' needs. Elementary Schools will have Master Schedules.

Creating Collaborative Environments

For buildings with more than one Reading/Math Specialist, it is recommended that the Reading Specialist serve by grade level. For schools with only one Reading Specialist, remember this creates a collaborative relationship between specialist and grade level teachers. This is to focus intervention early on. This is what is best for kids. Once serving by grade level, the Specialist and the team can determine the best way to group the kids who need pull out services. Grouping by deficiency certainly supports the kids in peer-learning, and collective impact.

<i>What a Specialist is and is Not</i>	
A Reading or Math Specialist is:	A Reading or Math Specialist is not:
An additional teacher in the building with a Master's degree specialized in Reading	A substitute
Used as a collaborative teacher in the Reading classroom when scheduling permits	A teacher's aide
A valuable team member for intervention meetings focused on children they are working with.	Required to be the SAT Chair, or intervention coordinator, or even present for all those meetings
A team member with equitable duties to a General Education teacher	Given more duties than other teachers in the building
A school team member with equitable resources---(ie: receives a Faculty Senate allocation)	Excluded from trainings and resources
Collaborates with teachers on student needs	An individual who does not collaborate
Get subs when absent (after Sept 1)	A position not requiring a substitute
A team member with a dynamic schedule based on student needs	A team member with a static schedule based on teacher preference.
A teacher who uses a combination of diagnostic tools (county approved) to assist kids in reading-meeting individual kids where they are.	A teacher who uses a limited or adversely limited number of instructional tools only.

Maximizing Collaboration

There should be a time early on for collaboration between Specialist Teacher and Classroom teacher. A Data Team delay day or PLC absence is a great way to accommodate this. Share the schedule being used to meet the kids' needs. Make certain the Reading or Math Specialist has time built into their schedule for travel. Then decide as professionals how you will collaborate to discuss students. The Reading Specialist and the Classroom Teacher should be discussing progress of children, needs, materials being used...etc regularly. Reading or Math Specialists should be pushing into the Guided Reading component of the Classroom teacher's day.

BCS Literacy Model

All K-5 employees are expected to be using the literacy model and collaborating through the guided reading process. Reading Specialists are an asset to the guided Reading Process and can be used as a station.

BCS Everyday Math

All K-5 employees are expected to be utilizing Everyday Math and work through the spiraled curriculum to support differentiated Math outcomes.

Diagnostic Decision Model

A great guide for collaborative conversations on students' reading needs is the Reading Diagnostic Decision Model. Please work as a team to review the model and determine the student's area of weakness. What instructional strategies are being used in the classroom to support this area. What instructional strategies are being used through intervention work?

Budgeting Based on Academic Needs

-All Title 1 spending must be based on academic need-

Every Title 1 School needs to have a budget designee that sits on the school's Leadership Team and is responsible for collecting filled out Requisitions and supplying them to the principal for a signature, then forwarding them on to the Central Office. The designee should keep a running register of all expenses and update the Leadership Team at each Leadership meeting-this includes requisitions, and timesheets.

Budget designees should use the Spring Meeting data sheet to guide their team's work and spending

Additional Components of Title 1 School Improvement

At a Glance

Title 1 Parent Involvement

- Schools will collect a parent-school compact from all children at the beginning of the year
- School will send home the “Parent’s Right to Know” literature every Fall
- Parent Involvement activities arranged through Title 1 should be academic in nature
- Schools must use a minimum of 2 county required Parent Involvement activities from the BCS *Title 1 Parent Involvement Kit*—one Literacy unit and one Mathematics unit
- All staff must be trained on how to work with parents
- All staff must be trained on the 40 Developmental Assets

Professional Development

- All schools must utilize the BCS Elementary PD Catalog by sending a minimum of 1/3 of their instructional staff to available sessions.
- All other PD must be instructionally focused on Reading and Math.
- Conference attendance is open to all building professional staff and must be offered in a fair and equitable way.

After School Tutoring

- Must be academic in nature—specifically focusing on Reading and/or Math
- Nonrestrictive structure—open to all interested students that we can be handled by a reasonable staff: student ratio.
- Minimum staff to student ratio of 10:1
- May target initial invitations to most academic or socially needy students
- Tutors do not have to be school based. The school may actively solicit other BCS employees and pay them 25/hr. on supplemental pay sheets for tutoring.
- Must pre and post assess
- Should be at least 6 weeks in duration