

Summer 1996

Regrouping for Instruction in Reading: Effective Practices

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REGROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION IN READING:

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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July 23, 1996

Abstract

It is the intent of this project to create a handbook providing information about a plan for regrouping for instruction in reading at Long Beach Elementary School. It will be presented to parents, teachers and administrators at workshops concerning regrouping for instruction in reading. The handbook will provide practical applications of curricular adaptation and instructional techniques that may be used to facilitate improvement in reading for students. The policies and procedures described in the manual will provide the following information:

- Assessment
- Placement
- Transitions
- Pace and Skill Levels
- Curricular Adaptations
- Teacher Collaboration and Consultation
- Ongoing Student Evaluation
- Flexibility of Grouping
- Instructional Teaching Techniques

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Chapter I

Focus of the Project

Introduction

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report (1986) increasing numbers of workers in mainstream America have been found to be either totally illiterate or unable to read at the level presently required by their jobs (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986). In 1985, the NAEP evaluated the literacy skills of 21 to 25 year olds. The surveyors defined literacy as the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, achieve goals, and develop knowledge and potential (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986). Twelve percent of those responding to the survey stated they frequently needed help from family members or friends when filling out forms.

In society forty-four percent of all people who are classified as "functionally illiterate" by NAEP standards are living below the poverty level. Employers have serious concerns about the basic skills of workers. Significant numbers of adults are lacking the skills necessary to meet the rising technical demands of the

workplace (Berryman, 1994). In 1996 students from the Ocean Beach School District (OBSD) who applied for enlistment in the United States Army scored an average of thirty-four percent on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB is a requirement for eligibility) as compared to the national average of forty-five percent, reported Sgt. John Weber (personal communication, June 27, 1996) of the Longview, Washington, army recruiting station. Students from the OBSD achieve below-average scores on the ASVAB, as compared with other armed forces applicants nationwide. This conclusion can be derived by comparing the average score on the ASVAB by OBSD applicants to the armed forces national average communicated by Sgt. Weber.

Workers who were literate were more likely to be employed, earn higher wages, work more weeks per year, and more often hold professional, technical or managerial positions than respondents in the NAEP survey who were classified as "functionally illiterate" (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986). These authors define functionally illiterate as anyone who lacks the ability to perform daily reading and writing tasks as required to function independently in society.

Further they state that 21 to 25 year-olds are among the most recent entrants into the labor force and represent the second largest group of unemployed citizens in the country, with teenagers comprising the largest group. According to them, illiteracy is seen as one of the major causes of unemployment and poverty in the United States. If students do not learn to read, they may drop out of school and be unable to seek meaningful employment.

Of the more than 39 million students enrolled in public schools twenty to thirty percent (or approximately seven million students) are facing obstacles in acquiring academic skills and in making satisfactory school adjustment (Christenson, 1994). In the report entitled, "A Nation at Risk" (1983), thirteen percent of all 17 year-olds in the United States are classified as functionally illiterate. That number dramatically increased to forty percent among minority students. Of those who graduated from high school, approximately 750,000 students were functionally illiterate and another 500,000 students did not graduate from high school during the year prior to publication of the 1983 report.

Focus of the Project

Based on this review the project will prepare an instructional grouping strategy to improve reading skills of a group of children in a small rural elementary school in southwestern Washington State. It will explore whether instructional grouping strategies can improve literacy and raise performance levels on test scores. The site school includes approximately 200 students in Kindergarten through third grades. There are 11 teachers in this building. Within the school there are three second grade classes. Teachers of the second grade classes work collaboratively to plan instruction, integrated themes and groupings. Classes are regrouped for instruction in block reading groups during the afternoon. Block scheduling places each student in an instructional group for reading during a specific time each day. The reading teacher may be a different person than the instructor who works with the student during other times of the day. Other activities are planned around the reading block to leave that time undisturbed. This helps to increase the amount of time that students are engaged in reading activities during an average week. Students spend the remainder of

the school day with a core group teacher. Teachers then meet once a week to discuss learning progress and make adjustments to the program and placement of students.

A review of related literature will be used to create a handbook which outlines grouping procedures and policies used in second grade classrooms. Parents will have the opportunity to use it as an informative resource about the grouping structures being implemented with their children. Teachers will find the handbook useful when planning instructional grouping structures in their particular settings. Additionally, the manual will be useful to anyone interested in finding out what grouping is, how it works, why it is successful, and who it is targeted to benefit, since it can be used and adapted to individual situations and settings.

Problem

There are three elementary schools in the OBSD. They serve a total of 802 students according to 1994-95 statistics provided by the district office. Of those students, twenty-two percent are receiving Chapter One services. Long Beach Elementary School serves students in Kindergarten through third grades. There are 215

students enrolled in the school. Of those students, thirty-three percent are receiving Chapter One services. According to the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the dropout rate for the OBSD during the 1994-95 school year was nearly eight percent as compared to the statewide average of just under seven percent. Dropout is defined by OSPI as a student who leaves school for any reason other than death during the school year and does not transfer records to another school during that same year. The current OBSD student dropout rate exceeds that of the statewide average. The NAEP reports a high level of illiteracy among those who drop out of school. Since there appears to be a direct correlation between reading ability and the dropout rate OBSD would like to increase the reading abilities of its students. By augmenting reading abilities of students, high school graduation will increase, along with correspondingly expanded literacy rates.

First and second grades are critical in the development of reading skills. By using the recommended grouping strategies reading levels should increase, fewer students will be served in Chapter One programs and ultimately, more students may graduate from high

school. Entering the job market equipped with functional basic reading skill greatly enhances opportunities for gainful employment.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to review pertinent research literature to determine appropriate instructional grouping components that will improve reading abilities of second grade students at Long Beach Elementary School. The related literature will focus on studies that analyze different types of grouping plans for reading instruction. Consensus among sources will be determined regarding the most effective practices within grouping plans. In addition, a policies and procedures manual will be developed outlining the plan for instructional grouping of students. Lastly, teachers will use the manual to place students in effective grouping arrangements to increase reading achievement levels and improve classroom behavior.

Implementation of the plan will take place at a selected target school. The second grade team Long Beach Elementary School will develop a definition and title for their manual that will help parents understand the plan. The team will present a frame of reference

about grouping making clear the research-based foundation upon which the teachers set the manual plan. This will contain the title, definition, research-base, program structure and policies for implementation. It will be prepared for presentation to the school district superintendent and the district board of directors. A written request for approval will be made to the school board prior to implementation of the plan. At the site school open house the plan and manual will be presented to the parents. It will contain information that may eliminate concerns parents may have about the grouping design and an opportunity for discussion will be provided. In addition to providing the manual to parents, it can also provide a basis for discussion between education professionals. The guidebook may be used to formulate effective grouping structures at other schools using the review of related literature as a basis for planning.

Significance of the Project

This project is significant because it will clarify the apparent contradictions between local district perceptions of ability grouping and the research-base for this practice. Cocking's (1990)

interpretation of studies suggests that high levels of non-involvement in low ability classes may be the cause of low achievement levels in grouped classes. Intensive amounts of time necessary to actively engage students in the learning process impacts the actual learning time considered optimal for instruction of reading. Segregated classes without extensive curricular adjustment have not shown significant gains in learning over other classes. The rate of learning actually decreases if attention is not paid to vital curricular adaptations and adjustments (Kulik & Kulik, 1984). According to Slavin (1987a), students who do not succeed in group instruction encounter programs that are inflexible in placement. They also do not receive curricular adaptations and often are provided with teachers of low quality. Consequently these students do not actually experience reduced heterogeneity of abilities in grouped subject areas, nor do they receive varied levels of pacing and are not provided with alternative instructional techniques (Slavin, 1987a). The grouping practices being utilized by the team will be firmly based on research and meet individual and small group learning needs while impacting reading achievement.

Definition of Terms

The definitions of terms used in this project are very important because of the variety of labels that are applied to numerous other programs. Slavin (1988) defined the terms used in his meta-analytic study. Meta-analysis is a term coined by Glass (1976) and refers to a method of statistical analysis designed to organize and interpret research literature on a certain topic. The research team analyzes the related literature and performs statistical measures on the results to compare results of the various studies. The research team then draws conclusions about the results of the analysis and reports the findings in periodicals. For this project, Slavin definitions and terms derived through the meta-analytic process will be used to refer to various instructional grouping practices. His definitions were chosen because the methods used in meta-analytic studies include utilization of the related research and compiling it before analysis occurs. Slavin has taken all of the definitions found in his readings and determined the definitions most commonly used in the research literature.

Homogeneous groups: instructional groups comprised of similar ability students.

Heterogeneous groups: instructional groups comprised of differing ability students.

Between-class grouping: the practice of assigning students to same-grade core classes based upon academic ability.

Regrouping: the practice of grouping students in heterogeneously for the majority of the school day, but placing them in homogeneous groups for instruction during the block of time allotted to a curricular subject such as reading.

Ability grouping: places students in homogeneous groups for instruction throughout the entire day.

Multi-age groups: those in which students of various ages are grouped together for instruction.

Non-graded groups: classes in which students are grouped according to the individual instructional objectives and developmental levels. Students progress through the curriculum at their own pace.

Joplin plan: places students in heterogeneous classes for the majority of the school day and homogeneously groups for instruction in reading regardless of grade level or age. Groups are formed based on student performances in reading (Floyd, 1956).

Tracking: practices division of students into separate classes for high, average and low achievers. It lays out different curriculum paths for students headed to college and for those who are directly entering the workplace. In high school, students may be assigned to curriculum tracks that lay out sequences of courses for college preparation, vocational or general tracks. In addition, within curriculum tracks, schools may group students for a particular academic subject.

Within-class grouping: clusters students for instruction within the regular class. Grouping at the elementary level often is found within heterogeneous classes and forms smaller subgroups for instruction.

Mastery learning: forms groups within a class. Changes in student placement are based on the performance level of each student. Students work with the material or concept until a criterion-level

of mastery is achieved. The criterion-level for mastery is usually set by the teacher (Slavin, 1987b).

Cooperative learning groups: utilizes small heterogeneous cluster groups. Students collaborate to achieve group goals

Limitations of the Study

Regrouping plans for reading instruction will include only the second grade classes at Long Beach Elementary School. Optimally, it would be more successful to group for instruction in reading throughout the entire school. However, grouping of this magnitude would require support from the entire teaching and administrative staff. Also the scheduling of specialized classes such as physical education and music would become impractical due to the current number of specialists available and the physical space allotted for these activities. If grouping occurred throughout the entire school all of the reading classes would need to take place at the same time of day. There would need to be maximum flexibility of placement opportunities built into the plan. No physical education or music classes could take place during reading classes. This would force consolidation of several classes for physical education or music

instruction. This option is not considered beneficial to students. In review, grouping will occur only in second grade classes because of the exigency of full participation by staff and the necessity for additional specialists, space requirements and scheduling considerations.

The instructional plan will be tailored to meet the reading needs of students in second grade classes. Teachers are required to teach reading from the basal reader provided by the OBSD. It is expected by the team that students will achieve criterion-level mastery of seventy-five percent on the curriculum-based assessment tests. Teachers are permitted to use supplemental materials found and supplied by individual educators, and are given latitude to utilize alternative instructional techniques as deemed essential. Although teachers are given academic freedom for individual decision-making when choosing instructional techniques and supplemental materials, the basic requirement to test for mastery of skills in the basal reader remains clear. The project will reflect grouping strategies

for instruction in reading that researchers conclude are essential in effective grouping programs and will require utilization of the basal reader provided by the school district.

Chapter II

Review of Selected Literature

Introduction

In an attempt to meet the needs of students with a variety of skill levels and the difficulty some students have in acquiring skills, teachers have used grouping for instruction as a way to meet individual needs. Although some programs that group students by ability achieve small, positive effects, other grouping programs aide in the acquisition of reading skills significantly (Kulik, 1992). He determined the effect of a grouping program depends upon its features.

Historic Perspective

Grouping for instruction has long been a common component of public education. It was practiced as early as the turn of the century and continues to be utilized in thousands of American schools today. When teachers began organizing students into grade and age level groups, they were clearly deciding some students needed to study different content than others. Special education classes, gifted programs and Chapter One models all use grouping to

provide specialized instruction. Grouping programs that entail substantial adjustment to the curriculum have had positive effects on many students. Cross grade and within-class programs provide both grouping and curricular adjustment in reading for elementary school pupils. Students in such grouping programs outperform control group students from mixed-ability classes by two to three months on grade-equivalent scales (Kulik, 1992).

In reflection of his literature review and meta-analysis, Kulik determined that the first controlled experiments on instructional grouping were in Salt Lake City in 1927. Pupils in one group were separated by ability into homogeneous classes. The control group was assigned to mixed-ability classes. At the end of the school year it was discovered that children from the homogeneous classes outperformed those from the mixed-ability classes by about two months on grade equivalent scales (Kulik, 1992).

In the 1930's, John Dewey's philosophy of progressive education was influential in American schools (Kulik, 1992). As this movement gained acceptance enthusiasm for grouping began to fade. Educators of the time concurred with Dewey and viewed the social

spirit of the classroom to be as beneficial for students as formal instruction. Researchers then concluded that grouping led to better school outcomes only when utilizing methods and materials that suited the aptitude levels of the students. Grouping programs were determined to have little or no effect when groups at all levels used the same methods and materials. Reviewers focused on the negative effects of grouping for instruction. They reported that students learned less and suffered a decline in self-concept and leadership skills in grouped classes unless the curriculum was individualized. Instructional techniques were indicated by researchers to affect the achievement levels of the subjects in those studies (Kulik, 1992).

During the 1950's, the United States was involved in a cold war with Russia for scientific and technological supremacy. Reviewers again focused their attention on grouping in order to ascertain ways of improving academic achievement test scores. The reviewers of this decade reported that students with higher aptitudes made notable gains when taught in enriched and accelerated classes (Kulik, 1992).

The civil rights movement of the 1960's led reviewers to look at educational equity once again (Kulik, 1992). Oakes (1985) expressed the point of view that no substantial benefits could be derived from instructional grouping. Oakes determined that children in middle and low ability groups attained reduced levels of academic gains as compared to peers and students reported lowered motivational and self-esteem levels when grouped for instruction.

In reflection on the literature reviewed by Kulik (1992) it can be surmised that the philosophy of education most reflective of the culture and recent experience of a society may have a tangible effect upon research. It is conceivable that differing conclusions about grouping among researchers can be attributed to this effect.

Purpose of Grouping

It is the perception of some teachers that homogeneous groups are easier to instruct (Nevie, 1989). Oakes (1985) agrees with this statement. The author relates that grouping is one method of trying to improve the instructional setting for selected students or of searching for a better match between learner and instructional environment. Grouping is a common way of providing for individual

differences. Unless all students are taught concurrently grouping may be necessary. A grouping structure may be as elemental as placing some students into fourth grade and some into third grade. Another example of a common grouping structure is to determine the reading level of some students to be at the preprimer level while others are considered ready for trade books with chapters.

According to Oakes (1985) grouping is not applied as a method of creating differences; it is practiced as a way of accommodating them. Each student enters the learning environment with a variety of ability, aptitude and interest. Oakes (1985) states that some students have learning disabilities while others learn more quickly and others possess a broader or deeper range of experience. Schools do not create these differences but must accommodate them. Oakes writes that schools must concentrate on equalizing day-to-day educational experiences for all students. This implies that pedagogical frameworks for teaching students may need to be altered.

Important Meta-analytic Studies of Grouping Practices

Kulik's (1992) analysis of research on ability grouping used meta-analytic statistical methods to organize and interpret the research literature on grouping. In a 1976 address to the American Educational Research Association, Glass coined the term meta-analysis to describe a statistical approach to reviewing research literature. Kulik's meta-analytic reviewers at Michigan State University determined that the effects of grouping programs depend upon their features. Some grouping programs produce no significant effect on students while others cause moderate effects. Additional programs may propagate larger effects. The key distinctions are: (a) programs in which all ability groups follow the same curriculum; (b) programs in which all groups follow curricula adjusted to their ability, and; (c) programs that make curricular and other adjustments for the special needs of highly talented learners.

Slavin reports the findings of the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools at John's Hopkins University, published in his report, "Ability Grouping and Student Achievement in Elementary School: A Best Evidence Synthesis" (1987a). Using the

meta-analytic approach his team examined more than 100 studies of five different types of grouping plans. The grouping plans most apt to increase student achievement satisfy certain criteria. First, they place students together according to ability levels in the specific skill being taught. Secondly, they are flexible enough to allow teachers to reassign students to different ability groups if their academic performance changes and finally, they accommodate variation of the pace and level of instruction in response to student needs. Slavin concluded that regrouping for reading within a grade level can improve student achievement if teachers accommodate the three attributes of successful grouping plans.

Ability grouping has been cited as detrimental due to the attributed psychological effects of placing youngsters in low achieving classes. However, children placed in low achieving reading classes often experience positive feelings because they see it as a program designed to specifically help them (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988). This is especially true of their achievement in reading if students are reassigned as skill levels fluctuate. Continuous progress programs in which students complete different course

units at personal rates can be used to adapt individual learning styles to the student (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988).

Grouping for only one subject allows for low achievers to identify with the class as a whole while individualizing the learning process. Schrag (1993) states that approaches instructing students using identical techniques while ignoring differences can guarantee unequal educational opportunities for all. Teaching all students with an application of the same instructional technique is not a formula for equity or excellence in education. A meta-analysis of grouping in 52 studies of secondary students led researchers to the conclusion that students liked their school subjects more when they studied them with peers of similar ability (Schrag, 1993).

Mixed-ability groups do not allow varied pace or approach according to ability (Anderson & Barr, 1989). Heterogeneously grouped students can be prevented from achieving adequate skill acquisition rates because grade appropriate performers may be trained to learn at rates similar to those of slower learners. Even if students with grade level skills are placed in programs that are at their instructional level, the rate of learning progression can be

imposed on them by the presence of students who are not appropriately prepared for the lesson (Maddalena, 1993). Different strategies are used to disguise the discriminatory nature of heterogeneous grouping. The teacher sometimes presents different lessons to ability groups in the class. This can be discriminatory to everyone because the instructor teaches different lessons to each group, allotting one third of the available time to each group (Maddalena, 1993). During the time when a teacher is working with a particular group, the other children are expected to work independently on activities they are capable of completing on their own.

Other Research Into Grouping for Instruction

Goodlad and Oakes (1988) have reported that the assumption of grouping students simplifies teaching and encourages superior learning lacks validity. It is stated that although grouping placements often are based on statistical measures. This enables the school to place students into appropriate instructional groups, which eliminates the social stigma of being placed into a low achieving group and underestimates student abilities (Goodlad &

Oakes, 1988). Low groups may sometimes experience social stigma, but there is no strong evidence of a correspondent decrease in reading achievement of group members (Schell, 1989). Schell found no significant difference in social stigma between whole and grouped reading classes. Classmates could identify who stronger and poorer readers were by listening to them read aloud. Members of grouped classes showed less agreement on who the better readers were. The author felt that low ability students had a more positive self-concept in grouped classes because there was less evidence of a hierarchy (Schell, 1989).

Once pupils are grouped they often remain in the same group for the rest of their school years. Individualized effort, extra tutoring, peer coaching (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988) and parental encouragement are suggested to help increase achievement levels of students. There is a need for teachers to develop more effective teaching strategies and organize and deliver content in manageable steps with faultless pacing so all learners will be successful. Cooperative learning and mastery learning plans are viewed as appropriate options. Mastery learning programs are structures in

which students complete course units at individual rates. They can deliver extra help to students and provide opportunities for academic success to students within heterogeneous classes (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988). These programs can also be used to adapt individual learning styles to the student (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988).

Over time, large gaps may be formed between students in the top and bottom levels of instruction (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988). One reason for the disparity between high and low level groups is that in some cases, low ability groups are given little or no opportunity to learn higher level or critical thinking skills (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988). One solution offered involves deferment of grouping to a period of time as late in the grade span as possible. Elementary schools could feature within-class grouping in reading and mathematics and cooperative learning techniques that involve all students and cross-age regrouping approaches (Goodlad & Oakes, 1988). It has been suggested that grouping be limited to those basic academic subjects in which differing skill levels are clear detriments to whole class instruction. However, attempts to soften the detrimental effects of grouping are interpreted by researchers to indicate that reform may

come about through modifications to grouping rather than by its outright elimination (Braddock & McPartland, 1990). These more circumscribed approaches may have a better chance of success because they take into account concerns on both sides of the issue.

Create Better Placement Criteria

The practice of utilizing a single measure such as rank on a report card to determine grouping placement is erroneous (Braddock & McPartland, 1990). Methods of determining placement should be used to create a stronger learning environment more closely matching student needs. Students placed in a low-track for math but in honors English should not be unusual. Schools could experiment with new methods of placement, such as offering incentives for taking challenging courses. Interesting grading options (pass-fail or extra credit for certain offerings) could be provided (Braddock & McPartland, 1990) in order to encourage enrollment by all students.

Between-class Grouping

Slavin (1988) outlined several grouping plans that meet the needs of students in a variety of ways and with a variety of results.

Between-class ability groupings are those that involve the instructional placement of students according to ability or performance. Typical plans for between-class groupings involve one class of low ability, one of middle, and one of higher ability students. The classes are usually grouped together for all instruction with the same teacher for each subject.

Another type of between-class ability grouping is regrouping for instruction in reading model. This plan is one in which the teacher groups students in heterogeneous classes for the majority of the school day but reorganizes students into homogeneous instructional groups for reading. Students may have as many as three different teachers during the school day. Proponents indicate that grouping outside the core class may reduce the labeling effects associated with within-class grouping. Teachers who fail to adapt methods of instruction and provide supplemental materials to instructional groups find that grouping has little impact on student learning (Anderson, Brubaker, Alleman-Brooks, & Duffel, 1985). There are three important advantages to regrouping for selected subjects over ability-grouped class assignments. First, students are in a

heterogeneous setting for most of the day; second, students are grouped solely on the basis of their achievement in reading, instead of their general achievement or ability level, making it possible to achieve a significant reduction in heterogeneity, and third, regrouping plans tend to be more flexible than ability grouped class assignments. Reassignment of students in reading is less disruptive than changing a homeroom class. Errors in placement can easily be remedied and changes in student performance levels can be accommodated with regrouping. By reducing or eliminating the use of reading groups within the class the total time allotted for direct instruction is increased and equalized for all students. Students remain in heterogeneous classes for most of the day and are regrouped by performance level only in such subjects as reading. Group assignments are flexible and frequently reassessed. Teachers adapt the level and pace of instruction to acknowledge differing levels of readiness and learning rates (Slavin, 1987a).

Cross-grade and within-class grouping plans accommodate the use of alternate curricula for children at different ability levels.

Both group placement and curriculum vary with student aptitude in these programs.

The best known approach to cross-grade grouping is the Gosling plan. This plan was first used in the 1950's for reading instruction in the Joplin, Missouri, elementary schools. Children in grades four, five and six were regrouped into nine different reading classes regardless of regular grade placement. Each reading class included high achievers and low achievers (e.g., high second grade and low fifth grade students) and didn't develop the culture of alienation that has typically been observed in other types of grouping by ability classes (Featherstone, 1987). Students returned to their regular age-graded classrooms at the conclusion of reading classes. Almost all evaluations of cross-grade grouping involve the Gosling plan for reading instruction in elementary schools (Floyd, 1954; Featherstone, 1987; Schrag, 1993). According to Slavin (1993), Maxwell (1986) and Kulik (1992), interpretation of meta-analysis has supported implementation of the Gosling plan due to significant positive gains in reading levels by a majority of students.

An expanding number of researchers recommend the use of continuous progress, non-graded clusters in the primary grades. The term continuous progress is used to label the process of allowing students to proceed through the curriculum at individual rates. A synthesis of 27 studies was conducted and included studies from 1948 through 1981. Non-graded cluster programs had advantages over traditional classrooms for both academic achievement and social development. A current study (Tanner & Decotis, 1994) was conducted in a Fayed County, Georgia, elementary school and included all five and six year-olds in that county. Each participating school grouped a percentage of students in cluster classes and the balance were placed in traditional Kindergarten and first grade classes. Researchers detected no significantly different scores between clustered and nonclustered five year-olds during the treatment period. However, the six year-olds in the clustered classes showed significant gains over those students assigned to the heterogeneous first grade classes. It was concluded that the structure of an elementary school classroom and program can have a profound effect on student achievement levels.

Tanner and Decotis (1994) found that one advantage of non-graded clusters was student, parent, and teacher enthusiasm expressed for the project. Students were actively involved in developmentally appropriate learning activities. The structure and organization of each class was flexible and enhanced a continuous-progress approach to learning. Students, parents, and teachers indicated that the individualization afforded in non-graded clusters fostered high levels of success, motivation, and self-esteem.

Teachers observed that students benefitted from staying with the same group for more than one year. Relationships were formed during the first year and less time was spent adjusting to a new classroom in the subsequent year. Educators indicated increased levels of control over instructional decisions and the necessity for constant evaluation which often resulted in reassignment to new groups. Teachers were no longer limited to a sequential teaching approach since each student received individualized programming (Tanner & Decotis, 1994). Student self-esteem was raised through role modeling. Learners gained academic skills developed social skills when working with students of other ages. Children learned

to accept individual differences and progressed through a two-year continuum, alternative to experiencing the concomitant limitations of a one-year program. Students subsequently surpassed expectations on tests of cognitive performance. Teachers who use non-graded plans group students for the entire school day without respect to grade level and instruct students in flexible groups for academic subjects. If regrouping is done for reading alone, similarities to the Joplin plan may be discerned, but other plans involve complex structures in which many subjects are taught in flexible groups, provide individualized instruction, and team teaching options to students (Tanner & Decotis, 1994).

Within-class Grouping

Within-class grouping assigns students to homogeneous groups for instruction in reading within their regular classes (Grant & Rothenberg, 1986; Davis, 1991). Individuals are given small group instruction while the rest of the class is engaged in independent seat work. This plan groups students for specific skills and can be flexible because the amount of instruction each group receives can vary as the teacher deems necessary.

Within class grouping models were inspected in both the Johns Hopkins (Slavin, 1987a) and the Michigan State (Kulik, 1993) meta-analytic studies. Slavin (1987a) and Kulik (1993) concluded that cross-grade and within-class programs produced generally positive results. Both of the researchers reviewed grouping plans for students in both primary school and older grades. For the purpose of this project, the studies being discussed here reflect studies that were performed on elementary school students and in particular, on primary grade students. More than eighty percent of these studies produced significant positive results. Effects were similar with all ability levels when using these models and students improved reading skill levels two or three months beyond the improvements discovered in control groups. Cross-grade and within class ability grouping can positively effect reading skill gains because they provide alternate curricula for pupils with different aptitudes.

Slavin (1987c) reported that at least some seatwork assignments given to students are of questionable value and lack "holding power" in terms of retention. Pigford (1990) points out that the subdivision of students into groups is also a subdivision of instructional time.

Students in classrooms with multiple groups spend less time with teachers than those in non-grouped classrooms. Low ability groups commonly receive less teacher time than high ability groups.

Students in the low ability groups may be presented with material taught at a slower pace and the curriculum offered is sometimes uninteresting and non-challenging. Teachers often are observed to spend less time preparing for lessons taught to low ability groups than is commonly expended in planning for high ability groups (Pigford, 1990). Ability grouping within class provides insufficiently for adequate instructional time and for equality of learning opportunities.

Mastery learning is a form of within class grouping that changes student placement based on the variable performance levels of each student (Slavin, 1987b). Students receive lessons in a whole class setting and then receive a post-test. Those whose test scores do not meet the predetermined criterion continue to receive instruction until the skill is mastered. Students who advance to criterion level on a test are allowed to begin manipulating horizontal or enrichment activities before advancing to the next skill.

The last type of within class grouping for instruction model is the cooperative learning group (Schell, 1989; Slavin, 1987a).

Students come together in small heterogeneous groups and strive for group goal attainment. The significant difference between this type of grouping and other within-class grouping for instruction models is that group membership size is modest and comprised of students with heterogeneous ability levels. The teams are designed to engage in task-focused interaction. For example, the teacher might present a lesson and subsequently all members of the group work together to ensure that learning activities are completed collaboratively and that all members of the team comprehend the related concepts. Crucial components for successful cooperative grouping require communication guidelines be established and that role expectations be outlined prior to group function. This enables effective achievement of positive outcomes. In many cases, several weeks will be needed to prepare students for group involvement. This amount of time is necessary to fine tune communication and cooperation skills (Farivar & Web, 1994).

Tracking

Oakes (1985) defines tracking as the practice of dividing students into separate classes for high, average, and low achievers. Traditionally three separate curriculum paths are established. Tracks are provided to aide students in preparing for college. They assist those expecting to attend vocational or technical schools and facilitate students who plan to enter the workplace immediately following high school. Students are assigned to courses that provide sequences of study for college, vocational, or general education. In addition, within curriculum tracks schools may group students for a particular academic subject. These classes are directed toward different skill outcomes due to differing learning objectives assigned to students. Tracking can lower self esteem (Oakes, 1986), reduce career aspirations, and foster negative attitudes toward school. Tracking also can exaggerate the differences among students and placements often become rigid, making it difficult for students to move from one track and into another. Students placed in low ability groups in elementary school often continue to remain in these groups throughout high school. Minority and low socio-

economic group students are disproportionately placed in tracks for low ability or non-college bound students. Minority and socio-economically disadvantaged students are under-represented in top-level groups.

Oakes (1985) states the assumption that tracking makes teaching easier is false because groups are not truly homogeneous. The variability of student learning rates, cognitive styles, interest areas, effort, and aptitude for tasks is considerable. It is possible that some students may not benefit equally from unrestricted access to knowledge, but educators should not prohibit all students from encountering what Dewey called the "funded capital of civilization" (Oakes, 1985).

Oakes (1985) indicates that students in low tracked classes experienced less time set aside for learning and were more likely to be off-task during class activities. Low track classes were not perceived to be as enjoyable and instruction was less clear than instruction in high track classes. Classroom tasks were deficient of variety, learning environments lacked organization and grade relevancy to student learning required direct correlation. In high

track classes, students reported that their teachers cared more about them and were less punitive than student observations in low track classes. High track teachers commonly encouraged students more than educators in low track classes. Learning facilitators in low track classes spent more time on discipline and behavior than those in other tracks (Oakes, 1985).

The variety of grouping models makes it clear that some teachers find it difficult to determine the best method of accomplishing the goal of instruction in an effective and accountable manner. How does a teacher decide which plan will best fit the needs of students in the classroom? In planning effective groups teachers can incorporate the characteristics commonly found to be a part of effective grouping programs. The following section outlines these components.

Components of Effective Grouping Plans

Placement Based on Performance

One effective practice within grouping plans is the assignment of students to learning environments based upon performance and not IQ (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986; Hiebert,

1983; Slavin, 1987a; Segro, 1995). Davis (1991) reports that educators need to group according to multiple-criterion placement procedures. Davis determined that cloze tests, basal placement tests and, standardized reading tests were most effective in predicting reading performance levels. The number of placement performance procedures used determined the likelihood of achieving a truly homogeneous group. When students are grouped with other learners who have the same academic needs and capabilities they gain more knowledge (Lake, 1988). This type of placement allows for a student to be in a fast-moving group for one subject and a slower-moving group for another. The student can excel in one subject area and succeed in other academic areas.

Adjustments to the Curriculum

Another critical grouping for instruction practice that involves individualizing and adapting the curriculum (Kulik & Kulik, 1984; Connell, 1987; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986). Grouping systems that adjust the curriculum to address student needs are more effective (Gamoran, 1993). Adjustments to curriculum must be made to reflect individual student needs. This strategy is used in special

education classes and required by law when planning Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Many practices employed by special education teachers can be used effectively in regular education classes.

Grouping programs that entail substantial adjustment to the curriculum have clear, positive effects on children. Cross-grade and within-class programs provide both grouping and curricular adjustment in reading for elementary school pupils. Pupils in such grouping programs outperform equivalent control groups from mixed-ability classes by two to three months on a grade-equivalent scale (Slavin, 1987a).

Varied Pace and Level of Instruction

The next pivotal component of effective grouping programs is variation of pace and level of instruction to meet the needs of the individual (Hiebert, 1983; Slavin, 1987a; Connell, 1987; Oberlander, 1989; Elkind, 1989; Cocking, 1990; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986). Slavin (1988) reported that grouped classes are not always as homogeneous as intended. For that reason he felt teachers must vary the pace and level of instruction to correspond to student levels of

readiness and learning rates (Dreeben & Barr, 1988; Morgan & Stucker, 1960; Segro, 1995). Barr and Dreeben (1983) found that the quality of instruction primary students receive is strongly related to learning and that the allocation of instruction to reading groups entirely explained learning outcomes that varied by group level. Furthermore, they determined that grouping did not cause negative consequences for students in low groups (Gamoran, 1984). Research failing to consider the instructional material used by different groups is flawed (Schell, 1989).

Flexibility of Placement

Researchers concur that flexibility in placement is important because it considers individual differences (Hiebert, 1983; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986; Slavin, 1987a; Cuban, 1989; Winn & Wilson, 1983; Groff, 1962; Hawkins, 1966). As early as the 1920's, grouping flexibility was thought to be important because individuals were found not to be consistent in their abilities or rates of growth (Segro, 1995). The increased amount of individualization teachers provide for their students may be the most positive aspect of ability grouping. Educators maintain ability grouped classes allow teachers

to tailor the curriculum to students' needs (Wilson & Schmits, 1978). In addition, teachers can give more attention to individual needs when the total class ability span is not so great (Lake, 1988; Segro, 1995).

However, researchers conclude data supports an assumption that once groups are formed, they tend to be inflexible (Groff, 1962; Hawkins, 1966, 1967). These authors are commonly cited sources for examples of the inflexibility of reading groups, but no standards or guidelines recommend the optimal number of changes (Davis, 1991). According to Harris and Sipay (1980), changes should be made when it becomes obvious the reading needs of a student can be better met in a new group. Teachers should reassess group placement throughout the year to facilitate group changes. Emphasis should be placed upon trying to help poor readers move to at-level groups (Davis, 1991).

Learners should change groups as they give evidence of growth and as their interests develop. The needs of individuals should determine with which group or groups the student should work. In addition, the length of time each student should remain in one group

also is determined by individual needs. The needs of students dictate when they should work independently and when they would benefit most by working with an entire class in a common reading group. Whenever a pupil's reading behavior indicates clearly that he or she would make better progress in another group, the learner should be transferred to it (Hawkins, 1966, 1967).

Students may be given concept instruction, master the content and subsequently acquire alternate instructional objectives. Student rate of acquisition should not be determined by the progress rate of the rest of the group. Conversely, if a concept requires an extended amount of time to learn, a student is afforded the opportunity to remain involved with the material until proficiency-level mastery of the concept is achieved. Since flexibility is built into an effective grouping plan students will not suffer from self-esteem problems by being moved from group to group. Flexibility in grouping permits teachers to respond to misassignments and changes in performance level after initial assessment and placement.

Equal Access to Instructional Time

Another common component researchers agree should be a part of effective grouping practices is equal access to real learning time (Hiebert, E., 1983; Dreeben, & Barr, 1988; Marshall & Weinstein, 1984; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986). Allington (1983) states that students with high socio-economic status (SES) average 80 minutes of instructional time in reading per day and students with low SES receive only 60 minutes on the average. It is important that the teacher spend an equal amount of time preparing for and delivering instruction in all reading groups (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984; Grant & Rothenberg, 1986). All groups need to receive the same amount of time to practice reading and spend the same amount of time in individual, small group, and whole group instructional settings (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). Homogeneous classes facilitate the inflation of amounts of time spent in direct instruction, expand student-teacher interaction opportunities, and create egalitarian levels of actual learning time (Anderson & Barr, 1989).

The preceding paragraphs contain information about effective practices in grouping for instruction. The regrouping for instruction

in reading model contains all the effective components of grouping that have been described (Slavin, 1988). Students remain in heterogeneous group settings for the majority of the school day (Floyd, 1956; Slavin, 1988). They identify with the heterogeneous group rather than the reading instruction group and so the danger of labeling is reduced (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). Students are grouped based upon their achievement so relative homogeneity of the group is achieved (Hiebert, 1983). Regrouping plans tend to be flexible because moving students between reading classes is less disruptive than changing homeroom class assignments. Regrouping can be effective if the instructional level and pace are adapted to student performance levels and if regrouping is done for only one or two subjects so that students stay in heterogeneous placements during most of the day (Slavin, 1987a). In 1990, forty-four percent of teachers surveyed perceived ability grouping was the best plan for teaching reading (Flood, Lapp, Flood, & Nagel, 1992). Studies of regrouped classes for reading have been interpreted to indicate classes utilizing the effective components of grouping plans achieve success at all reading levels.

Chapter III

Procedures

Introduction

For the purpose of this project, related literature was reviewed regarding grouping plans for instruction of reading. Within the literature, several components of grouping were found to be important aspects for consideration when planning instructional groups. Further review of literature was conducted to determine a consensus among reviewers about successful grouping strategies in reading. This information was used to create a handbook for parents, teachers and administrators regarding regrouping for instruction in reading. It also addresses components of grouping which help to provide a valuable structure for successful learning environments.

The handbook provides parents, teachers and administrators with information about the history of grouping, different types of grouping plans, studies conducted on instructional groups, results of those studies and the recommended structure for grouping, based upon the recommendations of reviewers.

Grouping for instruction in reading interested teachers when twenty-five percent of the students in the second grade were tested at the initial acquisition stage of reading development at the site school. Testing was conducted and results reported by the Chapter One program and shared with teachers and parents. Students were in need of a full continuum of services ranging from readiness skills to learning letter sounds and sounding out consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. The remaining seventy-five percent of students were learning reading skills at second grade level and beyond.

Provision of services to students with such a wide range of skills in one classroom was considered to be an ineffective way of teaching reading because students were unable to make one year of growth during the first grade and consequently needed to make up more than a year of skill development during the second year of school. The way this was determined was through Chapter One testing. Students received reading skill instruction in the homeroom class which sometimes provided only 10-to-15 minutes of concentrated reading instruction per day. This situation was reported by all primary teachers at the site school. In some cases,

reported by all primary teachers at the site school. In some cases, reading groups were not meeting each and every day due to the number of reading groups in each class. Students who were acquiring beginning reading skills needed more instructional time. When a student was not working with a teacher in a reading group it was necessary for that student to complete seat work or workbook pages independently while the teacher worked with another group. Consequently, the work was not considered "challenging" by the teachers at the site school and was of questionable educational value as suggested by teachers at the site school.

Development and Support for the Project

The team became concerned that students in need of remedial reading would continue to fall behind on achievement levels as they came to the intermediate and secondary grades. Students had the potential to remain behind their peers in reading skill achievement and consequently, were considered at-risk for eventual school failure by the time they were in the second grade.

The team began meeting and discussing problems they were having in providing appropriate reading instruction to students. Each

grade-level readers and expressed concern about providing appropriate reading instruction to all students. This researcher suggested that one way of increasing reading skills and raising test scores would be to assess individual student needs and determine the reading levels of each student followed by between-class instructional regrouping for reading. One suggestion was students be placed in groups along the reading skill continuum. Placement could be based upon reading test scores and demonstrated ability to read and comprehend during an informal reading inventory.

Each teacher checked scores on curriculum-based assessments and found the reading level indicated by the first grade teacher. Curriculum-based assessment has been developed over the past ten years, under the leadership of Stanley L. Deno at the University of Minnesota (Fuchs, 1994). The purpose of curriculum-based assessment is to determine the general outcome measurements of student achievement. It provides teachers with reliable, valid, and efficient procedures for obtaining student performance information to evaluate their instructional programs and find out how effective the instructional techniques have been in producing growth over

the instructional techniques have been in producing growth over time and in comparison to other techniques that could be used with the student. Curriculum-based assessment utilizes standardized methods and provides information over a period of time (such as one school year). Testing methods remain constant during this time. Instead of measuring one skill at a time, as might be done with a mastery learning program, it tests target skills for that grade frequently throughout the year and provides information of growth over a long period of time. The data collected may be converted to a graph which conveys a visual record of the growth process (Fuchs, 1994). For the purpose of this handbook, the curriculum-based assessment being referred to is meant to include the test provided with the Scribner reading series which is used as the basic framework for instruction in the school district. It differs from the traditional definition of curriculum-based assessment in that it does not test the same continuum of skills over time, but assesses units of skills. It is called curriculum-based assessment in this context because it tests concept mastery of the curriculum that is taught in the school. For the purpose of this project the curriculum-

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Informal reading inventories were then conducted. Teachers planned to use this information to regroup students for instruction in reading. It was agreed if the initial placement was determined inappropriate for whatever reason the team then would discuss it at a subsequent meeting and reassess the placement.

The team's goals were to improve reading skills on curriculum-based assessment measures, increase achievement scores on standardized tests, and provide an environment designed to help students succeed and become enthusiastic about reading. Changes in student perceptions about success and improved levels of enthusiasm would be measured through the use of a five-point Likert

scale survey given at the beginning of the year, a month after grouping commenced and quarterly thereafter. The team concluded groupings should be as homogeneous as possible so that individual students would receive instruction at the correct level of difficulty. Placement itself would be part of the curricular and instructional adaptation for meeting individual student needs.

The team determined additional information about regrouping for instruction should be obtained. There was a concern the plan must be based upon effective instructional practices and research findings. In addition, they decided the study would provide some structure and additional ideas for planning.

It was considered desirable to provide the parents, the school district superintendent and other teachers with information about instructional grouping in reading. The school philosophy and climate required parents and administrators be involved in the process of education. When provided with knowledge about grouping the team planned parents, teachers, and administrators would be in a better position to take part in and be supportive of the development of more appropriate learning environments for students. To achieve

this goal a plan was developed to provide a policies and procedures manual for use at parent, school board, and staff meetings. The decision was made to begin the project in order to provide a research-based foundation for the grouping plan. The structure for the plan has been based on the research study conducted by this researcher.

The team decided the study should include types of grouping plans used by other educators during the twentieth century. A history of grouping plans and the educational philosophy of each decade was necessary to obtain views of grouping over time and determine which plans were considered effective and which were ineffective. Research revealed two major meta-analytic studies conducted in the last ten years. One was conducted by Slavin (1987) at Johns Hopkins University and the other by Kulik (1992) at Michigan State University. Each provided a similar account of the historical context of grouping, although Kulik's study provided more information on the topic.

The historical perspective presented conflicting opinions regarding the effectiveness of grouping. The outcome of studies

seemed dependent upon the variables used and the educational philosophy of the era. It was determined the variables of each study needed closer scrutiny. Reviewers of studies differed in conclusions about grouping, making it difficult to determine whether grouping was considered to be an effective strategy or one which impeded the reading achievement rate of students.

Many reviews conducted since Floyd (1956) included recommendations for inclusion of certain components in any grouping plan. These components included curricular adaptation, utilization of a variety of instructional techniques, adjustment of the pace of the instruction, equal time for instruction available to all students, and flexibility of grouping placement.

The team concluded for the instructional plan to work, it should include additional components that would facilitate effectiveness of the grouping plan in a practical way. They decided to meet at least once a week in order to discuss individual student progress, group progress, transitional issues centered around movement between classes, behavioral expectations for students, and collaborative planning for instruction. The team has a strong belief instruction

each person brings a particular talent to the group. The team consists of four teachers. One is a veteran of 25 years, while another has eight years of experience. The other two teachers are probationary first and second year teachers. Ideas are shared, suggestions about strategies for working with students are noted, and daily progress is tracked in an effective manner.

A collaborative consultation model was developed and utilized. Each meeting began with an agenda and a secretary was employed to keep notes. Anecdotal records were kept on students and plans for working with them remained available in the notes. There was a record of what was planned at meetings and was available for reference.

The groupings should remain flexible, individual curricular adaptations were necessary, alternative curriculum should be provided, and teaching techniques should remain varied. This information provided the team with a structure for developing the grouping plan. The team added their own particular goals for collaborative planning, turning their attention to satisfying the school district guidelines, and policies for curriculum and

school district guidelines, and policies for curriculum and instruction. The site school culture and the physical space available for instruction were also considered when planning the structure of the program.

Planned Implementation of the Project

The handbook will be used by the researcher as a framework for seminar presentation of the grouping plan and the seminar will be made available to parents, teachers, and administrators during the 1996-97 academic year. The manual will be provided to seminar participants during instruction and may be used as a resource guide following the presentation. Revisions of the manual are anticipated for 1997-1998 academic year.

REGROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION
IN READING:
EFFECTIVE PRACTICES:
A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS
AND ADMINISTRATORS

A plan for regrouping for instruction in reading

Leslie Jane Rogers

July 23, 1996

P-1

WHAT IS REGROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION IN READING?

Regrouping for instruction in reading is a method of grouping students to better meet their instructional needs following the assessment process. It individualizes instruction for students through appropriate grouping placement, adaptation of the reading curriculum, and provision of enhanced curriculum and instruction at the correct level of difficulty. It also allows for adequate instructional time and helps develop successful reading skills for students in an environment designed to meet individual needs in a non-threatening, nurturing environment. Students are grouped for reading instruction dependent upon individual needs, and skill levels.

WHY IS REGROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION IN READING PRACTICED IN THIS SCHOOL DISTRICT?

Regrouping for instruction in reading became a goal for educators in the Ocean Beach School District (OBSD) after it became apparent reading skill development in the primary grades was becoming increasingly challenging for students. This was made

evident by low standardized test scores, below-grade-level performances in the basal reading series and high numbers of students enrolled in the Chapter One reading assistance program. In the spring of 1991, twenty-five percent of the elementary students were receiving academic assistance in reading. Average standardized test scores for the second grade were under forty percent. Teachers decided to develop a plan for instruction, reflecting effective practices based on research and that met the unique requirements of Long Beach Elementary School. A research about grouping began in 1994 and has been concluded with the development of this manual.

WHAT IS THE REGROUPING PLAN FOR READING INSTRUCTION?

Assessment

File Review

In the fall of each academic year, teachers receive work files for every student they will work with during the school year. Contents include past report cards, progress reports, and curriculum-based scores. The student's previous year teacher typically places a note

on the outside of the folder, indicating the primer that the student was reading, and the general reading performance level. This information is used to initially place each student into a reading group.

Analysis of Test Scores on Curriculum-Based Assessments

Curriculum-based assessment has been developed over the past ten years, under the leadership of Stanley L. Deno at the University of Minnesota (Fuchs, 1994). The purpose of curriculum-based assessment is to determine the general outcome measurements of student achievement. It provides teachers with reliable, valid, and, efficient procedures for obtaining student performance information to evaluate their instructional programs and find out how effective the instructional techniques have been in producing growth over time and in comparison to other techniques that could be used with the student. Curriculum-based assessment utilizes standardized methods and provides information over a period of time (such as one school year). Testing methods remain constant during this time. Instead of measuring one skill at a time, as might be done with a

mastery learning program, it tests target skills for that grade frequently throughout the year and provides information of growth over a long period of time. The data collected may be converted to a graph which conveys a visual record of the growth process (Fuchs, 1994). For the purpose of this handbook, the curriculum-based assessment being referred to is meant to include the test provided with the Scribner reading series which is used as the basic framework for instruction in the school district. It differs from the traditional definition of curriculum-based assessment in that it does not test the same continuum of skills over time, but assesses units of skills. It is called curriculum-based assessment in this context because it tests concept mastery of the curriculum that is taught in the school.

The school district utilizes the Scribner reading series. Each teacher is required by school district policy to evaluate students' mastery of concepts presented in the basal. Teachers determine appropriate methods and materials necessary to teach the goals and objectives of the reading curriculum. However, students are

required to achieve seventy-five percent mastery on the curriculum-based assessment tests provided with the basal series. Testing results are placed into the student work file and used for documentation of concept mastery. The teaching team will review the curriculum-based assessment measures contained in the work files to facilitate initial student reading group placement.

Informal Reading Assessment

As with curriculum-based assessment, there are formal versions of informal reading assessments. For the purpose of this policies and procedures manual, the informal reading assessment strategy referred to is one developed by the team and adapted from a number of strategies we have researched. The following paragraphs describe the process utilized by the team.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers meet with students and conduct an informal reading assessment. After having reviewed work file notes and curriculum-based assessment records, a teacher determines which reader to use in assessment. Students are asked to read the first and last pages of the basal selection. If a pupil can

perform the reading task with fewer than five miscues, teachers ask the student questions designed to ascertain the literal and inferential reading comprehension of the text. It is noted that oral reading fluency and comprehension, when assessed alone, do not always indicate the reading ability or performance level of students. For this reason, both oral fluency and comprehension are monitored. However, reading fluency data is not collected, only reading comprehension. Anecdotal records may be kept with respect to comments about oral fluency, however. If students can perform this task to criterion-level, then readers are asked to follow the same procedure with successive stories until frustration level is achieved. If students are not successful at the initial reading level they work until the correct independent reading level is reached. At this time, teachers record the kinds of miscues and keep a written account of any other pertinent information that may help instruct the student.

Anecdotal Records

Reading teachers keep an anecdotal record for each student during the academic year. Record cards are taped to a clipboard for easy portability and for access to a hard surface on which to write. The card contains miscue information, notes about reading fluency, informal assessment results, criterion level of mastery on each basal learning objective, and individual learning objectives based on the informal assessment results. Other information deemed necessary will also be kept on the record cards (e.g., notes a teacher might make to remember to check a skill or to have a student's hearing tested). When record cards are full teachers transfer them to a notebook kept by the team who refer to the notes during collaborative planning. Information regarding student performance may also be required by the homeroom teacher, administrators, or parents. Cards will remain confidential and personnel not directly responsible for the student in the learning environment will not have direct access to the records. If parents request information about specific learning objectives or progress toward a goal, the cards

may be used by for reference when preparing a written progress report or when conducting a telephone conference. Cards are not retained in the student work file and will not be used for assessment during the next school year. Information needed by the next teacher are obtained by reading the note on the outside of the folder or by reading the report cards and progress reports.

Placement

After review of the work files, curriculum-based assessments and reading inventories, the team plans initial placement of students. Each teacher utilizes a class list of homeroom students and begins placing them in groups with other students working on the same skills in basal readers. As placement procedures continue, it then becomes clear which groupings need to be made.

Each teacher volunteers to teach a group needing their particular area of strength and experience. For example, if a group of students need to review letter sounds, the teacher who is best qualified in both experience and aptitude to teach the skill will work with the

group. A more appropriate match between student need and teacher ability will be a strength of the regrouping for instruction system.

Students are notified to which reading group they are assigned. No designation of skill level is made in the presence of students. They are told this is an initial placement and they may remain with the same reading group throughout the year or change groups when the situation warrants such a move. They are made aware if their learning needs require a change in placement, adjustment will be made to help them achieve the goal of improved reading skills.

Students know that each learner works on specific skills necessary to improve reading levels. All students are encouraged and praised for learning gains. Pupils are told they are valued and the team expects them to learn and knows they can learn. Individual strengths are emphasized and valued. Learning goals are ultimately viewed as opportunities for success.

Transition

It is important students are taught behavioral expectations, the purpose of activities and schedules when entering a new learning

implementation. In this way, students are given control over the environment and are given the opportunity to behave appropriately. Teachers and students plan individual responsibilities and develop procedures to facilitate nurturing, learning environments.

Students often have questions about new learning groups, teachers they will have, where the class will be held, and when the class will be conducted. It is important to plan a time when they can openly discuss the details of classes prior to implementation. For this reason the team will notify students and parents about the change at least a week before grouping commences.

Teachers plan activities for the entire second grade community before reading classes begin. This gives the opportunity to meet other students in the second grade and to meet and observe other teachers. Activities are intended to be enjoyable and maintain the focus on meeting new people rather than on learning new instructional objectives. The team has determined community activity plans have significantly reduced numbers of students who experience anxiety or fear about new groups. Fewer questions are

asked, a decrease in the number students who cry or show feelings of being overwhelmed are seen, and behavioral expectations are retaught less often. Second grade classrooms are used as sites of community activities in order for everyone to learn where the classrooms are and become accustomed to the surroundings.

After students become acquainted with other learners, teachers, and classrooms, homeroom teachers spend time teaching behavioral expectations for preparing to transition and for actual transition between classrooms. Teachers use several teaching methods including role-play and guided practice to communicate expectations to students. The following are basic routines for transition periods:

Preparing to Transition

- Clear off desk top.
- Get out pencil box.
- Check to see that the pencil box contains:
 - two sharpened pencils with erasers
 - scissors
 - crayons

Behavioral Expectations for Transition

- Hold the pencil box with each thumb on top and all fingers on the bottom (this will help prevent spilled contents).
- Walk under the roof overhang around the outside of the courtyard (this avoids getting wet on rainy days).
- Use the designated route for getting from one classroom to another.
- Use a level one voice in the halls (whispering).
- Wait to use the restroom or fountains until after arriving at the reading class.

Skill Levels

Teachers perform assessments to determine learning styles, organizational skills, and student interests. They determine assessment needs in the context of the skills and instructional objectives of the student. Basal readers are used as a resource for instructional materials and lesson plans. Teachers determine the pace with which students are instructed based upon learning styles and individual levels of mastery. The basal curriculum will form a

framework for learning objectives inherent within the series. Therefore, if basals are not the sole curriculum utilized in instruction, learning objectives are similar and curriculum-based assessment tools still assess learned skills.

Achievement of complete homogeneity in a learning group is unlikely to ever occur. However, it is the attempt of the team to group students in such a way peers are more likely to need the same skills. If most students need similar skills individual instructional times are extended. The allotted learning time is one hour long. During this time there is little independent seat work. If a student has a question, the teacher can provide the information in a different way or provide additional information because the teacher is not involved with another group when help is needed. Each student will receive instruction at the correct level of difficulty and perform tasks that are challenging and aimed at deepening the understanding of new concepts. If additional help is needed, the teacher is available to provide instruction on an individual basis.

Instructional Pace

To maintain student motivation and increase performance levels, it is important the teacher recognizes the point at which mastery of a skill is achieved and help students to move to another skill level. Teachers present material quickly without rushing or frustrating them. Teachers prepare lessons for smooth, concise delivery of instruction.

Instructional Techniques

Students need a variety of instructional techniques. Teachers may elect to use the following strategies described by Bigge (1988):

- traditional instruction
- task analysis (delineation of steps taken to complete a task)
- content and application-centered instruction
 - finding patterns in resources
 - finding longitudinal progressions
 - noting key vocabularies
 - analyzing concept

- using appropriate complexity levels
- selecting and using appropriate student materials
- direct instruction
- academic learning time modification
- increasing the amount of time allotted for experience
- cooperative learning groups
- metacognitive strategy instruction (provision of efficient strategies and the application of those strategies to learners)

Curricular Adaptations

If the student needs academic intervention, the following strategies may be considered for adaptation of curriculum. These strategies are described by Sprick, Sprick and Garrison, (1993):

- Retype or summarize portions of the text that provide critical information.
- Provide study guides with the curriculum to help students identify important information in the text.

- Require completion of the most critical course content and skills in assignments, leaving the remainder of the items to finish later as time allows.
- Provide alternative options for "showing what you know." Students choose a method most suited to their interests and learning style. Such options could include drawing pictures, orally relating information, or recording answers into a tape recorder.
- Reduce the number of questions per page.
- Allow more space between problems.
- Enlarge the print.
- Allow more time for completion of the activity.
- Administer tests in more than one session.
- Provide more breaks in the testing session.
- Build the test or test items into the teaching program.
- Administer tests individually or in small groups.
- Read the directions aloud. Rephrase directions until the student indicates understanding.

- Give extra practice or sample items.
- Provide a task analysis for completion of the activity.

Flexibility of Group Placement

Flexibility of group placement is achieved through ongoing evaluation of students and collaborative consultation at weekly team meetings. Anecdotal records and curriculum-based assessments are contained in the centrally-located notebook. Teachers schedule discussions about particular students and the team routinely reviews the records to spot needs for placement changes or opportunities for additional practice.

Discussions ensue and attention is given to further adaptations and interventions for enabling success of students in current group placements. After a determination is made adaptations and interventions have not been successful, the team may choose to make a change in placement.

Placement decisions are made by the collaborative group. Changes are provisional and subject to revision after a trial period has been completed. Students are made aware of the status of the

change and are given feedback about behavioral expectations so opportunities for success are maximized. After a probative period is concluded the team re-evaluates the effectiveness of grouping placement and determines whether placement will continue or should be altered. Placement changes do not occur without curricular and instructional adaptations to learning environments allowing the maximum achievement potential of students.

Ongoing Student Evaluation

The OBSD requires students be given the curriculum-based assessment measure provided with the basal series. Teachers administer these tests at regular intervals, commensurate with the learning rate of students. Criteria for mastery of curriculum-based assessment tools is seventy-five percent. Teachers may choose to adapt requirements for test administration, select sections of the test to administer, and set alternate standards for rates of skill acquisition. Curriculum-based assessment score sheets are kept in centrally-located record notebooks and are used in lesson planning,

making arrangements for adaptation of curriculum, and forming placement decisions.

Teachers maintain anecdotal record cards on clipboards throughout the time they work with students. The record contains information about learning style and rate, sight word lists, informal reading assessment results, and miscue types needed to remain familiar with learning progress of students. The record is not retained in the work file from year-to-year.

Informal reading assessments are performed monthly at a minimum. Evaluation of student progress is ongoing and occurs during reporting periods and between reporting periods. Teachers perform informal reading inventories and keep records of miscues and instructional needs. Students should be able to read a story with a minimum of five miscues per page to be considered competent at that reading level. If this does not occur the teacher determines which skills are needed to be successful at the present level. Teachers record data and make instructional planning decisions based upon information obtained. If a student reaches

mastery level, a record is made. Teachers evaluate whether the reading level is appropriate or whether curricular adaptations and expectations should be changed. In cases where instructional and curricular interventions have been utilized and further intervention is necessary, the team will schedule a time for discussion of student needs at a team meeting.

Teacher Collaboration and Consultation Structure

Collaboration between team members is considered to essential for effective facilitation of educational goals and provision of environments conducive to learning. The goals are described by Sugai and Tindal (1993):

- to develop communications between staff
- to build trust
- to increase team involvement in information sharing and decision making
- to collaboratively identify and solve problems
- to analyze and improve policies and procedures utilized in development of regrouping for instruction in reading structures

Any change in curriculum and instructional strategy implies a change in school culture and climate. All members of the team are involved in providing necessary input for making informed decisions. Active involvement of team members helps to ensure appropriate problem-solving strategies are utilized in decision-making about student programs and placements. Group agreements are made regarding curricular and instructional changes implemented by a teacher.

In this setting, the team defines the collaboration model as a joint effort used to provide support or service to educators and students with an aim at improving outcomes of student-related educational problems. Teachers use their diverse experience and particular talents in generating creative solutions to problems that are defined by the group.

The process for collaboration the team uses is comprised of four components Sugai and Tindal (1993):

- Problem identification
- Problem analysis

- Plan implementation
- Evaluation of goal or plan

Problem Identification

Teachers identify a need for intervention in student learning plans through the process of interviews, observation, informal assessment, and curriculum-based assessment. Issues are scheduled for discussion at the next team meeting. In preparation the teacher collects assessment and observational data that are used to describe behaviors and outcomes relevant to the problem. This information is brought to the meeting and presented for consideration by the team. With specific behavioral descriptions and learning outcomes documented an efficient way of communicating the nature of the problem is attained.

Problem Analysis

The team evaluates the data to determine a plan for solving problems. To determine the strategy used in each circumstance, the team asks itself the following questions:

- What is the problem?

- Is the problem related to the student or the learning environment?
 - If the problem is related to the student, how will the skill be taught? The team believes that learning problems are teaching problems.
 - If the problem is related to the learning environment, can adaptations to the curriculum be made? Does a grouping placement change need to occur?
- If the problem is unrelated to either the student or the learning environment, does an adjustment to the system need to be made?

Plan Implementation

Once answers to these questions are ascertained, the team discusses possible interventions and develops guidelines for implementation. The parents are notified if the intervention involves a major change in learning environment or goals and objectives. The student is informed of progress and intervention plans and is prepared for any transitional adjustments necessary.

Input from students is taken into consideration when implementing the plan. It is expected that students take some responsibility for learning and it is necessary for them to be involved in implementation of plans and procedures.

Evaluation of Plan

During intervention planning it is necessary to establish a structure for the evaluation of strategy effectiveness. Timelines for implementation and evaluation of interventions are established as part of the plan. Several methods of establishing effectiveness of interventions are used. Observations of student behavior are made and data recorded on anecdotal record cards. Curriculum-based assessment measures are used to determine mastery level of skills being taught. Informal reading inventories are conducted to determine rates and levels of skill acquisition. The team meets to discuss and evaluate data and make decisions about the effectiveness of interventions and whether they should continue.

In Conclusion

Student reading levels are improved through instructional grouping, curricular adaptation, variation of instructional technique, provision of the correct level of difficulty, use of appropriate pacing, and continued flexibility of placement. The team would welcome parents to participate in development and implementation of the learning program. Parents are encouraged to observe classes, to ask questions about student learning progress, and to assist student in making reading growth by providing tutoring services. Through support of the reading program the team expects many positive learning outcomes for students. It is necessary for parents and teachers to collaborate in the process of educating students and in the task creating the concept of literacy as an achievable and necessary goal in the learning environment. We look forward to working with you in the coming school year.

USEFUL FORMS

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30 Opening and Roll Call _____

8:35-8:55 P. E. _____

8:45-9:15 Remedial Math _____

8:55-9:30 Reading and Writing Workshop _____

9:30-9:45 Flag Salute, Calendar, Patriotic Songs _____

9:40-10:25 M and R, Music and Math practice _____

9:40-10:25 T, W and F, Science or Social Studies _____

10:20-10:35 Recess _____

10:35-11:20 Language Arts _____

11:20-12:05 Lunch and Recess _____

12:05 Preparation for and Transition to Reading Group _____

12:10 Reading Group _____

1:10 Transition back to Homeroom _____

1:15 Math _____

1:50 Recess _____

2:05 Art, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, or Social Skills _____

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Date _____

Dear _____,

The second grade team has assessed your child's reading performance. Teachers reviewed comments by the first grade teacher, the curriculum-based assessment test scores located in the student work file and results of an informal reading inventory to determine the best grouping placement for your child.

Each placement is considered provisional and progress evaluation is conducted by the reading teacher to determine interventions and adaptations to help students achieve success. Following a probative period, the team determines the suitability of placement and attempts further interventions before making a change in placement decision.

Your child has been placed in a reading group with _____.

Sincerely,

Your child's homeroom teacher

**SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR TEACHING BEHAVIORAL
AND TRANSITIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

To: All Staff

From: Second grade team

In an effort to keep you informed about student expectations for transition to reading group, the team would like to provide you with the schedule for teaching transition skills. As you meet the second grade students in the halls, you have the right to expect that by the date shown, students have been taught the skill mentioned on the schedule. Please assist us in providing feedback to students about accomplishment of the behavioral objectives. If you have any questions or would like to give feedback to the team, please contact any one of us.

Monday morning: Teachers preteach expectations for holding pencil boxes during transition and for supplies expected to be in the pencil box during preparation for transition. Students should put thumbs on the top and fingers on the bottom of the box to avoid spills.

Monday afternoon: Students practice preparing for transition and holding the pencil boxes the right way.

Tuesday morning: Students learn how to walk under the overhang around the courtyard to avoid getting wet. Students carry pencil boxes correctly.

Tuesday afternoon: Students practice walking under the overhang around the courtyard. Students carry pencil boxes correctly.

Wednesday morning: Teachers teach routes to and from each reading group class. Students bring supplies.

Wednesday afternoon: Students practice transition using the correct routes. Students bring supplies.

Thursday morning and afternoon: Students use the skills for transition on the way to _____'s class to participate in a community activity. Students bring supplies.

Friday morning and afternoon: Students use the skills for transition on the way to _____'s class to participate in a community activity. Students bring supplies.

TEAM MEETING PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Prior to the Team Meeting:

- Verify meeting date/time with team members.
- Gather relevant information.

During the Team Meeting:

- Introduce and engage invited personnel.
- Paraphrase explanations; seek verification of key issues.
- Prioritize the key issues.
- Brainstorm possible interventions/strategies.
- Choose the most likely intervention.
- Design an intervention plan and record on anecdotal record card...
- Summarize the session.
- Retain minutes of the meeting in the team notebook.

After the Team Meeting:

- Conduct follow-up activities.
- Provide encouragement and support as members implement the plan.

SAMPLE TEAM INTERVENTION PLAN

Reading Group _____

Date _____

PRESENTING CONCERNS	CONSIDERATIONS
INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE

RELATED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

JUST A NOTE...

Dear Parents,

In an effort to keep you better informed about your child's progress, this note is being sent home. Please read it, sign at the bottom and return to class with your child. In this way, we will know you received the information. There is room on the back for comments or questions.

Sincerely,

The Reading Teacher

Name _____
Parent Signature

Date _____

STUDENT SURVEY

Name _____ Date _____

I feel good when I am reading:

I like what I am reading:

Reading class is fun:

My teacher helps me when I want it:

I like the students in reading class:

I feel safe in reading class:

I like to learn new things:

WEEKLY REVIEW

What I did this week:

Three things I learned:



Skills I'm working on:

Books I've been reading:

Goals for next week:

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Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

In development of the handbook a review of literature was conducted. Consensus among researchers was discerned and components of effective grouping plans were used in development of the plan for regrouping for instruction in reading. The first necessary component of an effective reading plan is placement in a reading group is based upon performance and not IQ. Assessment of student reading level is achieved in a variety of ways are directly related to skills taught the student. Some examples of effective measures are: informal reading inventories, curriculum-based assessment and observation.

Another component of effective reading groups is students receive adequate curricular adaptation appropriate for learning style and reading level. Requirements for assessment are modified, students receive extra help with organizational skills, identification of key concepts is provided and allotted learning time

is extended. Expectations for student achievement remains high while respecting individual differences and strengths.

Along with appropriate curricular adaptations, a student requires a variety of instructional techniques. Student learning styles, rates of acquisition, interest levels, and organizational skills all coalesce to create the individual profile. These profiles must be assessed and used during instructional planning and establishment of lesson structures. Teaching techniques include cooperative learning plans, metacognitive learning procedures, traditional instructional techniques, task analysis, content and application-centered instruction, direct instruction, and academic learning time modification. A variety of instructional techniques improve skill development in reading.

Determination of the correct level of difficulty in reading means that students use materials within the comfort level of that student. Material is learned without achieving frustration which lowers self-esteem and decreases interest level and motivation for reading. When a student is comfortable with the skill level it is possible to add new skills to the repertoire and actively seek new

information. An environment of comfort and trust is developed when there is nothing to fear or feel threatened by, in the environment.

Pacing is an important component of effective regrouping for instruction in reading plans because interest level and motivation remains high and availability of new material is present. When mastery of a concept is achieved it is necessary to begin working on a new concept rather than continuing to practice the same skill. Although regular review is usually recommended to maintain skill levels, large amounts of practice are not necessary.

Lastly, flexibility of placement is considered to be an important facet of regrouping for instruction and is necessary for instruction at the correct level of difficulty and appropriate pacing to occur. Flexibility of placement ensures requirements are met and students are allowed to make growth or receive extra practice.

The purpose of the project was to develop a handbook for use by parents, teachers, and administrators. The handbook explains the effective components of regrouping for instruction in reading and explains the structure for the grouping plan developed for the Long Beach Elementary School. Educators may gain an understanding of

the research-base for instructional grouping and use the plan to adapt to the needs of their educational setting. Administrators may gain an understanding of the plan utilized in the school district and be provided with the research-base for the program. Parents will better understand the research-base for the plan and be informed about the program structure which their children are being provided. The handbook will be given to parents, educators, and administrators at workshops about instructional regrouping for reading. The appendix contains the outline and visual aides used during the presentation.

The structure of the plan incorporates all of the components of effective programs described in the research. It provides students with extra time with the teacher in reading instruction. Each teacher works with one group, for an hour each day. The relative homogeneity of the groups allows for curricular adaptations and a variety of instructional techniques. The team is pleased to present a plan that is research-based and designed with the best interest of the students. Reading achievement will increase for all groups and this success will be reflected in the number of students who test

out of Chapter One programs and the increased rate of skill development in contrast to the previous rate of acquisition exhibited in first grade.

Conclusions

A review of literature about instructional grouping plans indicated a need for further study of the planning necessary for implementation of a regrouping for instruction in reading plan. There were no explanations of the ways in which the plans were structured or the techniques and adaptations used with students. In addition, studies of collaborative planning structures and record keeping procedures were conspicuously absent from the studies. These variables would add a great deal of information to the reviews conducted by teachers interested in implementing regrouping plans.

The affective domain of regrouping for instruction also needs to be represented in the literature. School climates and cultures affect the learning rate of students. Implications of the affective domain for effective regrouping for instruction and the collaborative aspect of planning for effective instruction are two areas in need of further investigation and study.

Recommendations

As a result of this project, it is recommended that future use of regrouping for instruction be examined and research conducted to reflect current practices and procedures. As the historic review of regrouping for instruction revealed it is evident that educational philosophy, school climate, world events, and economic variables contribute to research outcomes. Future variables will effect the outcomes of studies and these variables are recommended to be fully described and documented in statistical analysis of data. It is concluded that variables effecting results of surveys have not always been adequately identified or considered.

Regular education teachers were often unfamiliar with curricular adaptations and instructional techniques necessary for effective classroom instruction. A recommendation is made all elementary school teachers be required to obtain an endorsement in special education. Acquisition of a special education endorsement implies the teacher has obtained instruction in curricular adaptations and instructional techniques likely to be helpful to students. It is observed regular educators are sometimes unaware of adaptive

services and expect special educators to perform these services. This paradigm is most likely created by a lack of information. Teachers should be empowered to make effective educational decisions and be confident in the ability to assist students toward learning goals.

Finally, it is indicated that collaboration and consultation among teachers is an effective way of problem-solving and accomplishing objectives in the learning environment. Educator training should include instruction in collaborative consultation. Acquisition of these skills will facilitate communication and cooperation at the staff level and enable teachers to work effectively with parents in developing plans for students.

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APPENDIX 1**SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE**

8:30 Opening and Roll Call_____

8:35-8:55 P. E. _____

8:45-9:15 Remedial Math_____

8:55-9:30 Reading and Writing Workshop_____

9:30-9:45 Flag Salute, Calendar, Patriotic Songs_____

9:40-10:25 M and R, Music and Math practice_____

9:40-10:25 T, W and F, Science or Social Studies_____

10:20-10:35 Recess_____

10:35-11:20 Language Arts_____

11:20-12:05 Lunch and Recess_____

12:05 Preparation for and Transition to Reading Group_____

12:10 Reading Group_____

1:10 Transition back to Homeroom_____

1:15 Math_____

1:50 Recess_____

2:05 Art, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, or Social Skills____

APPENDIX 2**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS**

Date _____

Dear _____,

The second grade team has assessed your child's reading performance. Teachers reviewed comments by the first grade teacher, the curriculum-based assessment test scores located in the student work file and results of an informal reading inventory to determine the best grouping placement for your child.

Each placement is considered provisional and progress evaluation is conducted by the reading teacher to determine interventions and adaptations to help students achieve success. Following a probative period, the team determines the suitability of placement and attempts further interventions before making a change in placement decision.

Your child has been placed in a reading group with _____.

Sincerely,

Your child's homeroom teacher

APPENDIX 3

**SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR TEACHING BEHAVIORAL
AND TRANSITIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

To: All Staff

From: Second grade Team

In an effort to keep you informed about student expectations for transition to reading group, the team would like to provide you with the schedule for teaching transition skills. As you meet the second grade students in the halls, you have the right to expect that by the date shown, students have been taught the skill mentioned on the schedule. Please assist us in providing feedback to students about accomplishment of the behavioral objectives. If you have any questions or would like to give feedback to the team, please contact any one of us.

Monday morning: Teachers preteach expectations for holding pencil boxes during transition and for supplies expected to be in the pencil box during preparation for transition. Students should put thumbs on the top and fingers on the bottom of the box to avoid spills.

Monday afternoon: Students practice preparing for transition and holding the pencil boxes the right way.

Tuesday morning: Students learn how to walk under the overhang around the courtyard to avoid getting wet. Students carry pencil boxes correctly.

Tuesday afternoon: Students practice walking under the overhang around the courtyard. Students carry pencil boxes correctly.

Wednesday morning: Teachers teach routes to and from each reading group class. Students bring supplies.

Wednesday afternoon: Students practice transition using the correct routes. Students bring supplies.

Thursday morning and afternoon: Students use the skills for transition on the way to _____'s class to participate in a community activity. Students bring supplies.

Friday morning and afternoon: Students use the skills for transition on the way to _____'s class to participate in a community activity. Students bring supplies.

APPENDIX 5**TEAM MEETING PREPARATION CHECKLIST****Prior to the Team Meeting:**

- Verify meeting date/time with team members.
- Gather relevant information.

During the Team Meeting:

- Introduce and engage invited personnel.
- Paraphrase explanations; seek verification of key issues.
- Prioritize the key issues.
- Brainstorm possible interventions/strategies.
- Choose the most likely intervention.
- Design an intervention plan and record on anecdotal record card...
- Summarize the session.
- Retain minutes of the meeting in the team notebook.

After the Team Meeting:

- Conduct follow-up activities.
- Provide encouragement and support as members implement the plan.

APPENDIX 6

SAMPLE TEAM INTERVENTION PLAN

Reading

Group _____ Date _____

PRESENTING CONCERNS	CONSIDERATIONS
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INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE
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RELATED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

APPENDIX 7
JUST A NOTE...

Dear Parents,

In an effort to keep you better informed about your child's progress, this note is being sent home. Please read it, sign at the bottom, and return to class with your student. In this way, we will know you received the information. There is room on the back for comments or questions.

Sincerely,

The Reading Teacher

NAME _____

DATE _____

APPENDIX 8
STUDENT SURVEY

Name _____ Date _____

I feel good when I am reading:

I like what I am reading:

Reading class is fun:

My teacher helps me when I want it:

I like the students in reading class:

I feel safe in reading class:

I like to learn new things:

WEEKLY REVIEW**What I did this week:****Three things I learned:**

Wow!
Really?

Skills I'm working on:**Books I've been reading:****Goals for next week:**

