

Secondary Reading Teachers and the Implementation of Scientifically Based Reading Research Instruction



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Building and Supporting Teacher Expertise in Literacy

- Scientifically Based Reading Research
- No Child Left Behind
- Reading First
- Just Read Florida
- Professional Development= Highly Qualified

Professional Development Success using SBRR

- This study focused on teacher professional development and implementation success.
- Results can be used to further standards and success for all on a thoughtful, researched basis.
- Gaps in professional development theory to practice identified by NRP

Research

The research was conducted over two semesters and an intervening summer during the 2005-2006 school years:

- Eight secondary teachers of reading
- Inside Teacher Classrooms
- Qualitative Study: Observations, Interviews, Surveys
- Professional Development: Participant focus groups

Theoretical Perspectives: NRP Gaps

- Scientifically Based Reading Research Reform and its implementation effects on Florida secondary teachers
- Professional Development
 - The Florida Reading Endorsement
 - 6 Competencies
 - Theory to Practice: Does it happen?
 - Teacher Voices

Research Questions

- Will secondary teachers of reading implement scientifically based reading research in their classrooms?
- What would participants reactions be to the professional development?
- What happened as they tried to implement strategies they learned?

Why Qualitative Research?



- Qualitative research provides the best means of gathering data from teachers themselves as they implement a new policy (Merriam, 1988).
- Qualitative research lets teacher voices be heard.
- Qualitative research allows for on site, real time, ontological awareness.
- Qualitative research is very similar to planning a vacation, but knowing that prior assumptions and expectations may or may not “pan out.”

Participant Characteristics

- The study took place over two semesters and an intervening summer.
- Each participant was enrolled in professional development for completion of the Florida Reading Endorsement at the beginning of the study.
- By the end of the study 7 of the 8 had completed all 6 competencies including the FOR-PD (Competency 2).

Participant Characteristics

- Five teachers taught in high school. All but one taught reading all day.
 - Certifications: Social Studies, Business, Journalism, Social Work, Physical Education
- Three teachers taught in middle school. All taught reading all day.
 - Certifications: ESE, Science, Language Arts
- Three teachers had been teaching less than 2 years.

Data Collection

- Types of Data
 - Running Records
 - Field Notes
 - Audio Tapes (3 Participants)
 - Interview Transcripts
 - Professional Development Records
 - Post Observation Interviews

Robust Findings

- All participants enjoyed collaboration.
- All participants enjoyed peer mentoring.
- All participants were using the meta-language of reading.
- All participants were effecting implementation.
- All participants felt pressured by time and policy mandates.
- All participants did not like the amount of research they were required to read throughout the six competencies.
- All participants mentioned some form of administrator neglect.

Collaboration and Coursing

- Teachers particularly enjoyed the collegiality of working on the professional development together: coursing.
- Teachers felt empowered by acquired knowledge.
- Teachers began to use the meta-language of reading among themselves.
- Teachers will try to implement.



Administrator Neglect

- SBRR reading reform is an outside directed mandate of policy implementation. Participant perceptions:
- Teachers began to know more about reading than some of their administrators.
- Administrators perceived them to be responsible and held accountable for school FCAT Reading scores.
- Administrators were more concerned about meeting endorsement criteria than interested in teacher's professional development needs.
- Room placement in building.

Favorite Strategies: Implementation

- Teachers began to use strategies they could effect immediately and those that they understood might work quickly to improve student skills.
 - Fluency
 - Assessment
 - Guided Reading
 - Sustained Silent Reading
 - Shared Inquiry
 - Literature Circles
 - Reader's Theater

Graphic Organizers

- Five participants had been using graphic organizers before the beginning of their training.
- Participants did not report any startling discoveries about graphic organizers but rather stated they appreciated having a greater selection.
- This may have contributed to cognitive awareness of research to implementation (understanding did or did not increase or expand per participant).

Guskey (2000)

- Evaluating Professional Development
- Leveled rubrics to measure teacher Stages of Implementation and Levels of Concern during training.
- 0 to 6 (Six highest)
- 0=Little Use, No Awareness
- 6=Reflection, Collaboration, Refinement



Implementation Success Levels of Use (Guskey, 2000)

- The professional development was becoming routine, teachers were refining its use and integrating resources and strategies into the classroom.
- Five participants scored 4 or higher on Guskey's Levels of Use.
- Three teachers scored 6, highest, renewal by constantly reevaluating, reflexively, quality of use.
- One teacher remained below 3: little use, orientation faulty, little preparation.

Implementation

Stages of Concern (Guskey, 2000)

- Seven teachers had mastered management, level 3.
- Five teachers scored 4 or higher on Stages of Concern: Consequences, Collaboration and trying to integrate professional development as part of classroom routine.
- 2 Teachers scored 6, highest: Refocusing by looking at the broadest possible benefits from the professional development.
- One teacher scored below 3 and was still in little concern, non-awareness, trying to get information about professional development.

New Questions and Concerns

- Defining standards for Reading teachers.
- What characteristics should you look for in choosing a reading teacher? Endorsement may not be enough.
- Assign teachers based on subject area/reading endorsement
- Three teachers struggled with implementation (2 years or less teaching, no language arts background).

Time and SBBR Policy Mandates

- Florida teachers to be “Reading Endorsed” by June 2006 to be highly qualified.
- FCAT responsibilities: Teachers felt they were primarily responsible for their students’ FCAT scores.
- Participants questioned the need for so much research.



Leadership Roles

- Six participants wanted to be recognized for their professional development initiatives.
- Coach, Chairperson, District Trainer
- Administrator Recognition/Support



Coursing Collaboration

- All participants appreciated coursing through professional development together:
- Talking with peers
- Sharing experiences
- Asking for strategies
- Asking for modeling
- Asking for peer assistance

Implications, Discussions, Plans Reflection, Research

- Reflection on school site and how and where reading teachers are assigned.
 - Strong personal support, ability to work together.
 - Time for reflection, research, collaboration.
- Administrators may be able to use reading teachers more effectively to implement policy.
 - Are administrators knowledgeable about the reading endorsement? Is a leadership team enough? Use reading teacher acquired knowledge effectively.
- More research on standards for defining job specifications of reading teachers: specialists, coaches, teachers, coordinators.

Can any secondary teacher be a reading teacher?

- Ingersoll(2003) says teachers should be closely matched to the degree earned. Highly qualified teachers should come from language arts or closely related fields.
- We should look closely at this assumption as we assign reading teachers from content areas outside language arts.
- Can any secondary teacher be a reading teacher?



Notes



References

- Guskey, T. (2000). Evaluating professional development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
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- Merriam, S. (1988). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

