Materials and Instruction
A.1. USING GRADE LEVEL COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAM (A.1.a-e)

Sufficient Teaching of Critical Skills.
π Is there daily teaching of critical skills related to reading words?
 o Critical skills related to reading words include: letter-sound correspondences, prefixes and
 suffixes, applying knowledge of phonics elements in reading multisyllabic words, and text
 reading in decodable text aligned with the comprehensive reading program’s phonics sequence.

Systematic Introduction and Review.
π Is there systematic introduction, practice and review of important content?
 o Instruction on new content is sufficient to foster student success in initial learning.
 o Review is cumulative with review including previously-taught content along with new content in
 practice exercises.
 o New content is reviewed sufficiently to facilitate mastery of the skill and then reviewed
 intermittently to facilitate retention and development of needed fluency.

Explicit Teaching.
π Is the teaching delivered with sufficient explicitness?
 o Strategies are explicitly modeled and followed with guided practice.

Interactive Teaching to Facilitate Mastery.
π Is the teaching delivered in a manner to foster high levels of student engagement and
 correct responding?
 o Unison responding and strategic use of individual turns is incorporated into exercises in which
 answers to questions have just one correct answer.
 o Text reading is done in a manner to foster high level of student engagement and accuracy and
 to provide immediate correction.
 o Teachers monitor student performance and provide immediate corrections when needed.

Pacing Guides.
π Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff that sets goals to facilitate completion of
 the grade level program by the end of the school year?
 o Progress through the lesson materials is planned so that students will finish grade level
 comprehensive reading program by the end of school year.
 o Clear guidance is provided to teachers regarding how students should be performing in order to
 consider a lesson having been adequately taught.

Preteaching/Reteaching.
π Is there specific guidance to teachers regarding which children are to receive extra small
 group teaching on grade level content and what content to include during these sessions?
 o The extra teaching is systematic and explicit and focuses on content that needs extra work.
 The extra work is sufficient to enable the students to master the content.
 o Extra small group work on accurate reading of decodable text aligned with the program’s
 phonics sequence is often needed.
A.4. INTERVENTION INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS IN GRADE LEVEL COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAM (A.4.a-e)

Intervention Materials: Phonics

Note: For students who enter second or third grade with major gaps in their knowledge of phonics skills taught in earlier grades, schools often rely on highly systematic intervention materials to teach these phonics skills in addition to the grade level comprehensive reading program. The use of the intervention materials should not replace preteaching/reteaching of skills taught in the comprehensive reading program.

Considerations if a phonics intervention program is used:

- Is the teaching of phonics skills and word reading aligned, highly explicit and systematic?
- Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff to set goals to facilitate completion of content from earlier grades in an accelerated manner?
- Is there clear guidance to teachers regarding how students should be performing in order to consider a lesson having been adequately taught?

Intervention Materials - Fluency

Note: For students who enter second/third grade with fluency rates below the desired rate for their grade, schools provide fluency instruction and practice on text at students’ independent level. Often a commercial fluency program is used. Work on fluency in extra materials should not begin until students are at least at a mid-first grade level in reading so that accuracy can be initially stressed.

Below are factors to consider regarding extra fluency instruction:

- Is fluency work done on materials at the students’ independent level?
- Is there a motivation/record-keeping system in place?
- Is fluency practice done enough to provide needed gains?

INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS IN AN INTERVENTION CORE PROGRAM (A.4.d)

Note: For students who enter second/third grade with little knowledge of phonics skills taught in earlier grades and not able to read grade level text, some schools use highly systematic intervention core programs instead of the grade level comprehensive reading program. Below are factors to consider if an intervention core program is used:

- Is sufficient time for teaching the intervention core provided in order to make accelerated progress?
  - Time should be allotted to facilitate students making accelerated progress to reach grade-level performance. Accelerated progress is possible if use of the intervention core begins early in the school year. At least two 30- to 45-minute periods daily are needed for instruction in the intervention core program. Lower-performing students may need additional instruction.
  - If two or more periods a day are scheduled, there needs to be clear guidance regarding what is to be done during each period. For example, if a group is being accelerated, a new lesson might be taught during each period; if a group is struggling, the second daily period might be devoted to reteaching the same lesson as was taught in the first period. Guidance needs to be clearly communicated to each person teaching the group.
Is comprehension and vocabulary instruction provided?
- Most intervention core programs include comprehension and vocabulary.
- If the students have sufficient language skills to benefit, the comprehension and vocabulary from the comprehensive reading program continues to be provided.

Is the overall implementation sufficiently supported to provide for success?
- The factors include: sufficient time allocation, training for teachers, coordination between staff members teaching program, careful grouping and placement, administration of program specific assessments, weekly meetings to review data and making grouping or firming adjustments.

Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff to set goals to facilitate accelerated progress, covering at least a year and a half of content within a school year and, ideally, completion of grade level materials by end of the year?

Is there clear guidance to teachers regarding how students should be performing in order to consider a lesson having been adequately taught?

B. TIME AND GROUPING

TIME AND GROUPING FOR TEACHING GRADE LEVEL COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAM (B.1)

Time for Initial Presentation of Grade Level Comprehensive Reading Program.
- Is sufficient time allowed for initial presentation of grade level content and for needed extra work for struggling students on the important content from grade level lessons?
  - Generally, about 90 minutes are needed for the initial presentation of content from the grade level comprehensive reading program. For classes in which many children are struggling, a good deal of small group instruction will be needed. Scheduling significantly more than a 90-minute total period and/or providing extra staff to present instruction during small group can provide time for the needed instruction. The fewer staff available to provide small group instruction, the longer the overall initial period of instruction.

Small Group Preteaching/Reteaching of Content from Grade Level Comprehensive Reading Program.
- Is sufficient time allotted for small group preteaching/reteaching instruction?
  - A period of at least 15-30 minutes for preteaching/reteaching of grade level skills to all students who are struggling needs to be provided. The content taught and time provided is driven by student data on daily performance and assessments. If needed, each group receives instruction each day.
  - The number of children in a small group is dependent on the children and teacher’s skill level; groups can vary from 3-10 students.
TIME AND GROUPING - INTERVENTION MATERIALS (B.2 and B.3)

Time: Intervention Materials. (B.2)
π Is sufficient time provided for students to make needed progress in the intervention materials?
- If intervention materials are teaching skills from below the current grade level, the time provided needs to be sufficient to significantly accelerate progress through the materials.

Grouping: Intervention Materials. (B.4)
π Are students grouped for intervention materials in small flexible groups?
- Students are grouped for instruction in an intervention program using placement procedures of the program.
- Number of students in a group is consistent with program requirements.
- Procedures are in place to regroup students in a timely manner based on their performance.

TIME AND GROUPING FOR STUDENTS IN INTERVENTION CORE PROGRAM (B.2)

Time: Intervention Core Program.
π Is sufficient time allotted for students to make the needed accelerated progress?
- At least two 30- to 45-minute periods daily are needed for instruction in the intervention core.
- The earlier students begin the intervention core program, the more likely they are to finish the first grade level.
- A third daily period is likely to be needed for students further behind.

Grouping: Intervention Core as Replacement Program B.3
π Are students grouped for intervention programs in small flexible groups?
- Students are grouped homogeneously for instruction in the intervention core program.
- Number of students in a group is consistent with recommendations for grouping in manual for program.
- Procedures are in place to regroup students in a timely manner based on their performance.
- Procedures are in place to ensure that timely adjustments occur when students are not at their instructional level.

C. ASSESSMENT AND DATA UTILIZATION

Beginning-of-Year Assessment (C.2)
π Are assessments administered to identify students with gaps in learning very early in the school year (first week)?
- Administer RF oral reading fluency assessment during the first days of school to identify children who are not at benchmark levels.
- Administer a phonics screener that tests phonics skills from previous grades to students who are below benchmark level in oral reading fluency. Use the information from this assessment in planning intervention instruction.
Progress-Monitoring During the School Year (C.3)

Reading First Progress Monitoring Assessment

**Are RF assessments frequent enough?**
- Benchmark testing at least three times a year for all students.
- More frequent assessment for students at some risk and at high risk. Students scoring at high risk ideally are monitored weekly or each second week. Students scoring at bottom of some risk category can be monitored with same frequency as students at high risk. Students scoring at some risk are assessed each 2-4 weeks. Low benchmark performance can be monitored at same frequency as students at some risk.
- Coordination with program-specific assessment to ensure that there is not excessive time spent on progress monitoring assessments.

Grade Level Comprehensive Reading Program - Program Specific Assessments.

**Is there an assessment plan to determine if students are learning content taught in the comprehensive reading program?**
- Assessments need to clearly indicate if students are learning word reading, text reading, vocabulary and comprehension content. If comprehensive reading program does not have clear testing of word reading, make informal assessments by making list of multisyllabic words from earlier lessons and have students individually read lists.
- For students below benchmark levels, periodically have students read an excerpt from recently read text to determine if students can read with a high accuracy level.

Intervention Materials - Intervention Specific Assessments.

**Is there an assessment plan to determine if students are learning content taught in intervention materials?**
- Assessments incorporated into the intervention materials are administered as designed.
- Remedies specified in the intervention materials are being implemented as designed.
- If there are no assessments in the intervention materials, informal assessments are constructed to determine if students are mastering the content.
- Phonics Screener can be administered several times a year to assess students with phonics gaps.

Intervention Core Program - Program Specific Assessments.

**Is there an assessment plan to determine if students are learning content taught in intervention-core program?**
- Assessments incorporated into the intervention program are being reliably administered.
- Remedies specified in the program are implemented.

DATA UTILIZATION PRACTICES (D.1-4)

Grade Level Meetings.

**Is there a grade level team meeting process that is likely to result in timely and effective adjustments in instructional plans when students are not making adequate progress?**
- Grade-level meetings are held frequently to examine data and make adjustments, ideally at least each second week early in the school year.
- Informal meetings are held weekly between coach and teacher to monitor performance and progress of high-risk students.
- Grade level meetings begin with examination of progress monitoring assessments to identify individuals and groups that are not making adequate gains in performance on critical skills.
Program specific assessment reports and content coverage reports are examined to determine cause of inadequate student performance. A system is in place to identify groups that are not making adequate content coverage progress and groups in which too many children are struggling.

- A procedure is in place to make written plans to remedy problems for groups and individuals.
- A system is in place to follow up on effectiveness of plans.

E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (E.1-3)

Inservice Training.

Is there a professional development plan that is likely to result in all teaching staff receiving sufficient professional development training to become highly prepared to deliver instruction with all materials they are using?

- There is an initial inservice that fully prepares staff to present programs effectively at beginning of school year. Several days of training by grade level is provided from person knowledgeable of how to teach program.
- There are ongoing professional development sessions throughout the school year to prepare staff for upcoming lessons, particularly on more difficult content to teach.
- Grade level comprehensive reading program professional development fully prepares teachers to present the tasks from comprehensive reading program, incorporating any adjustments school has committed to implementing.
- Intervention program professional development sessions are held for any staff member who is teaching the program, including non-classroom certified staff and non-certified staff. This training is intensive and comprehensive.
- If a consultant is used, a check is made to ensure that the consultant has worked successfully in schools similar to the school.

In-class coaching.

Is there a plan that will result in all teaching staff receiving the needed in-class coaching to become very effective in delivering instruction with all materials they are using?

- The person(s) providing in-class coaching ideally is highly familiar with the particular program and be able to demonstrate with children.
- On-going coaching over a period of days is available to help teaches learn new behaviors and correct problems.
- In-class coaching is important for all staff members on all programs, including the comprehensive reading program, and intervention materials and programs.
- In-class coaching is particularly important with intervention materials and intervention core programs because these are being taught to children performing below grade level.
- Paraprofessionals as well as teachers need to receive coaching.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals having difficulty receive extra help very early in school year. Help is intensive and continuous.
F. SCHOOL WIDE ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

Staff Allocation. (F.1.)
π Is there a plan to utilize staff resources to adequately support the implementation of Reading First?
   o Use of staff time is prioritized to ensure that all students needing small group instruction receive
     adequate amounts of instruction to produce needed progress.
   o Title I staff, reading specialists, special education staff, ELL staff, and bilingual staff are part of
     the Reading First plan.
   o Special education staff teaches groups that contain special education and non-special
     education students when the latter are performing at the same level as special education
     students. (Dependent on state policy)

Maximizing Time Available For Reading Instruction. (F.3.)
π Is there a plan for maximizing time available for reading instruction over the school year?
   o Use of comprehensive reading program and intervention materials and programs begins during
     first week of school.
   o Reading instruction occurs on all available school days.
   o Substitutes trained in programs are available for teachers and aides.

Special Education Students. (F.5)
π Does the implementation plan provide instruction aligned with Reading First and capable of
  making accelerated progress for special education students?
   o Special education students receive reading instruction aligned with the Reading First program
     during all reading periods throughout the day.
   o Students receive sufficient instruction in RF intervention or intervention core programs to make
     adequate progress.

English Language Learners. (F.5)
π Does the implementation plan provide instruction aligned with Reading First and capable of
  making accelerated progress for English Language Learners?
   o English Language Learners receive reading instruction aligned with the Reading First program.
   o English Language Learners receive additional highly systematic and explicit instruction in
     English language skills.