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, oral blending and segmenting, reading regular words and reading irregular words.

Systematic Introduction and Review.
π Is there systematic introduction, practice and review of critical content related to reading words?
  o Introduction of new material is realistic for children, e.g., students who enter kindergarten with no knowledge of sounds or letter names need slower introduction of new content than students who enter school with more knowledge. For example, in introducing letter names or letter sound correspondences, approximately one new letter each 3-4 days is realistic.
  o Review is cumulative with review including previously-taught content along with new content in practice exercises. New content is practiced 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 Teacher explanations use only words students know.
  o Teacher models clearly how to perform new tasks.
  o Teacher provides guided practice in applying new skills.

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 teaching tasks that have just one correct answer such as: letter-sound correspondence, phonemic awareness instruction and word reading work.
  o Text reading is done in kindergarten in a manner to foster high level of student engagement and provide immediate correction.
  o Teachers monitor students’ performance and provide immediate corrections on phonemic awareness and phonics exercises.

Pacing Guides.
π Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff that sets goals to facilitate completion of kindergarten level by end of kindergarten year?
  o Goals for lesson progress through the materials are planned so that students will finish kindergarten 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 critical 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 is aligned with comprehensive reading program's phonics sequence.

A.4. INTERVENTION INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS IN GRADE-LEVEL COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAM (A.4.a-e)

Intervention Materials: Phonics and Phonemic Awareness
Note: For students who enter kindergarten with low literacy levels, some schools use highly systematic and explicit intervention materials to teach critical phonics and phonemic awareness skills in addition to the grade level comprehensive reading program. These intervention materials are often used when staff other than classroom teachers is available to help with the extra teaching. The use of the intervention materials should not replace preteaching/reteaching of skills taught in the comprehensive reading program.

Factors to consider if intervention materials are used:
π  Is the intervention instruction highly explicit, systematic and interactive?
π  Is the teaching of phonemic awareness skills and phonics skills aligned?
π  Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff to set goals to facilitate completion of the appropriate amount of intervention material by end of kindergarten?
π  Is there clear guidance to teachers regarding how students should be performing in order to consider a lesson having been adequately taught?

USE OF AN INTERVENTION CORE PROGRAM (A.4.d)
Note: For students who enter kindergarten with very low literacy and language levels, some schools rely on highly systematic intervention core programs instead of using the grade level comprehensive reading program. These intervention programs are often used when staff other than classroom teachers does the extra teaching. Also, some schools use an intervention core program in addition to the comprehensive reading program in kindergarten.

Considerations if an intervention core program is used:
π  Is sufficient time for teaching the intervention core provided to complete the kindergarten level?
   o  Use of an intervention core is most likely to bring children to grade level performance if its use begins early in the school year.
   o  If use of a program is begun later in school year, two daily sessions are likely to be needed in order to complete the kindergarten level.
   o  If two or more periods a day are scheduled, there needs to be clear guidance regarding what is to be done during each period.

π  Is comprehension and vocabulary instruction provided?
   o  Most intervention core programs include comprehension and vocabulary.
   o  If the students have sufficient language skills to benefit, the comprehension and vocabulary from the comprehensive reading program can continue to be taught.
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 that sets goals to facilitate completion of kindergarten level by end of kindergarten year?

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

Intervention Materials - Language and Vocabulary

Note: For students who enter kindergarten with very low language development, some schools rely on highly systematic intervention materials to teach critical foundational language and vocabulary skills in addition to the grade level comprehensive reading program. In schools with many children with language deficits, the language intervention materials are sometimes used with all students.

Factors to consider if an intervention program is used to teach language skills:

- If foundational language skills are taught in intervention materials, is there a priority on language content that students need to understand classroom directions and teacher explanations during instruction?
- Is the teaching highly explicit and systematic and highly interactive?
- Is a pacing guide prepared and distributed to staff to set goals to facilitate completion of kindergarten level by end of kindergarten 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

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

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 initial presentation of content from a 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 small group instruction can provide time for the needed instruction. The fewer staff available to provide small group instruction, the longer the overall initial period needed.

Small-Group Initial Instruction

- Is sufficient small group instruction allotted?
  - If a kindergarten class contains children who are not attentive in a whole-class instructional setting, approximately 30 minutes will need to be allotted for initial teaching of phonics and phonemic awareness and text-reading for each small group of these students. Note that there may need to be several small groups if there are many students who are not likely to learn well in whole class instruction.
An additional period of at least 15-30 minutes daily for small group preteaching/reteaching of skills to all students who are struggling can help students be more successful and progress at the needed rate to reach end-of-year goals. The content taught and time provided is dependent on student performance. Groups with more children who struggle receive more instruction. There may be a need for several small groups if there are numerous children struggling.

- The number of children in a small group is dependent on the children and teacher’s skill level. Groups can vary from 3-8 students.
- Small group instruction is often facilitated by extra staff teaching groups in the classroom.

**TIME AND GROUPING - INTERVENTION MATERIALS (B.2 and B.4)**

**Time: Intervention Materials. (B.2)**

- *Is sufficient time provided for students to make needed progress in the intervention materials?*
  - Generally, the time provided needs to be sufficient to complete the kindergarten program by the end of kindergarten, or, if it is intervention materials that teach just prerequisites, much earlier in the school year.
  - More time needs to be provided if more than a lesson a day needs to be completed to finish the kindergarten level by the end of kindergarten.

**Grouping: Intervention Materials. (B.4)**

- *Are students grouped for intervention materials in small flexible groups?*
  - Students are grouped for instruction intervention materials using designated placement procedures.
  - Number of students in a group is based on program recommendations.
  - 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.**

- *Is sufficient time allotted for students to complete the kindergarten level?*
  - Daily time allotment is based on developer’s guidelines of time needed to present a lesson and to finish lessons in program by end of school year.
  - For more at-risk students, a daily firm up of 15-30 minutes is often needed to make needed progress.
  - If students begin program late in year, a second full period daily is likely to be needed so that students can finish the kindergarten program.

**Grouping: Intervention Core Program**

- *Are students grouped for intervention program in small flexible groups?*
  - Students are grouped homogeneously for instruction in 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 very early on in the school year (first week of school) to identify at-risk students?
  o Administer RF literacy-related screening assessment during the first days of school (or during summer when students register) to identify children who have deficits in literacy-related skills.
  o Administer a language screener of basic concepts to students who score at high risk on literacy skill screener.
  o Students with significant literacy and language-related delays need highly explicit and systematic instruction.

π Are assessments administered early in school year to determine if students are learning the content of lessons taught during first weeks?
  o At the end of the third or fourth week of school, assess students to determine the extent to which students have learned the critical content presented in the first weeks of instruction. Critical content includes: letter names, phonemic awareness tasks, letter-sound correspondences that have been taught, and reading phonetically regular words and irregular words that have been taught. Some core programs do not have clear assessments. If necessary, construct and administer informal assessments to test critical skills.
  o For students who are struggling, incorporate procedures to make instruction very systematic and explicit and ensure adequate extra time and/or immediately use an intervention or intervention core program with these students.

PROGRESS MONITORING DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR (C.3)

Reading First Progress Monitoring Assessment
π Are RF assessments administered frequently enough?
  o Benchmark testing at least three times a year for all students.
  o More frequent assessment is in place 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 two weeks. Low benchmark performance can be monitored at same frequency as students at some risk.
  o Coordination with program specific assessments to ensure that there is not excessive time spent on progress monitoring assessments.

Grade-Level Comprehensive Reading Program - Program Specific Assessments.
π Is there an assessment plan to determine if students are learning critical content taught in the comprehensive reading program?
  o Assessments in kindergarten need to clearly indicate if students are learning critical skills: letter names, letter sound correspondences, oral blending and segmenting and word reading skills.
  o School staffs may need to prepare informal tests since the assessments in many programs are language laden and may not provide clear information. Test letter names, letter-sound correspondence, oral blending and reading regular and irregular words each second week.

Intervention Program - Program Specific Assessments.
π Is there an assessment plan to determine if students are learning content taught in intervention materials?
  o Assessments incorporated into the intervention materials are administered with fidelity.
  o Remedies specified in the intervention materials are implemented as designed.
If there are no assessments within the intervention materials, informal assessments are constructed to determine if students are mastering the content.

**Intervention Core Program - Program Specific Assessments.**

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

### D. 1-4. DATA UTILIZATION PRACTICES

**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 individual teachers to monitor performance and progress of high-risk students.
  - Grade level meeting begins 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. 1-3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Inservice Training**

- *Is there a professional development plan that will result in all teaching staff receiving sufficient training to be highly prepared to deliver instruction with all materials?*
  - There is an initial inservice that fully prepares staff to present instruction effectively at the beginning of the school year. Several days inservice with sessions arranged by grade level presented by persons knowledgeable of how to teach materials that staff will be using.
  - There are ongoing professional development sessions throughout the school year to prepare staff for upcoming lessons, particularly on more difficult content to teach.
  - In-depth professional development is provided for any staff member who is teaching an intervention program, including non-classroom certified staff and non-certified staff.
  - If a consultant is used to present inservice, verify person’s experience to ensure that the consultant has worked successfully in similar schools.

**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 is highly familiar with the particular program and able to demonstrate with children.
  - On-going coaching over a period of days is available to help teachers learn new behaviors and correct problems.
In-class coaching is provided for all staff members on all programs, including 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/Paraprofessionals having difficulty receive extra help very early in school year. Help is intensive and continuous.

F. SCHOOLWIDE ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

STAFF ALLOCATION (F.1.)

Are staffing resources used to adequately support Reading First?

- Use of staff time is prioritized to ensure that all students needing small group instruction receive needed amount of instruction to produce desired results.
- Title I staff, reading specialists, special education staff, ELL staff, and bilingual staff are part of RF plan.
- 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.)

Is there a plan for maximizing time available for reading instruction over the school year?

- Use of the comprehensive reading program, intervention materials and core intervention reading program begins during first week of school.
- Reading instruction occurs on all available school days.
- Substitutes trained in programs are available for teachers and aides.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS. (F.5)

Does the RF implementation plan for special education students provide reading instruction aligned with Reading First, and is it capable of making accelerated progress?

- Special education students receive reading instruction aligned with the Reading First program in all reading periods throughout the day.
- Students receive sufficient instruction in Reading First intervention materials or intervention programs to make needed progress.

English Language Learners. (F.5)

- Does the implementation plan provide instruction aligned with Reading First and is it capable of making accelerated progress for English Language Learners?
- English Language Learners receive reading instruction aligned with the Reading First program.
- Students receive sufficient instruction in RF intervention or intervention programs to make adequate progress.
- English Language Learners receive additional highly systematic and explicit instruction in English language skills.