

**PROMOTING INCLUSION AND EQUITY
THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY
SCREENING AND STRUCTURED LITERACY**

Thrive Together Summit

Ron Cadez
October 19th, 2023



About me

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Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)
Right to Read Inquiry Report
Recommendation #19

School boards' acknowledgements of Indigenous peoples and territories should recognize each of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and territories as appropriate.



Land Acknowledgement

I want to acknowledge that I work in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), which brings together a community of schools on the traditional land of the Anishinaabek, Ininewak, and Dakota. Our division is located on the homeland of the Red River Métis. We recognize that Manitoba is also the traditional land of the Anishininwak and Dene.

We respect the treaties made on this land and acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and present. We dedicate ourselves to authentic alliances with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation.

Agenda

- Learning Disabilities
- Early Screening
- Systemic Data Collection and Application
- Early Intervention
- Instruction and Ongoing Assessment
- Next Steps

Goals for Today

Understand:

- certain instructional practices are more inclusive because they support students with learning disabilities;
- the importance of early screening and some possible tools that you can use;
- why systemic data collection is essential;
- why early intervention is important.

Know:

- how ongoing assessment continues to identify risk and impact of instruction;
- how data should impact programming;
- how to assess the impact of your current practices.

Do

- Develop one concrete action to begin to implement or to enhance an early screening or instructional practice.

OHRC Report

- Reading is a right (<https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/12680/index.do>)
- Current practices are not inclusive.
- Research is relatively conclusive with advances in neuroscience.
- There is wide acceptance on how reading skills develop.
- There are signs early on that can be detected through screening.
- Effects of dyslexia can be minimized with systematic, evidence-based instruction and intervention.

<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report>

OHRC Recommendations

157 recommendations for:

- Schools
- Ministry of Education
- Faculties of Education

<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report/appendix-1-list-recommendations>

Manitoba Human Rights Commission

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission is undertaking a

[Special Project](#) on the Human Rights Issues affecting Students

with Reading Disabilities in Manitoba's Education system.

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

The SHRC released its Equitable Education for Students with Reading Disabilities [report](#) in September 2023.

While not as detailed as the OHRC, findings follow a very similar pattern. We need to pay attention to the research and change our practices.

Implementation of the OHRC Recommendations

System-wide implementation of the OHRC recommendations:

- early screening,
- structured literacy instruction,
- early intervention,
- ongoing monitoring, and
- systemic data collection

...are essential and possible.

OHRC Recommendation #46

School boards should draw on internal expertise, educators, administrators, speech-language pathologists and psychology staff who are knowledgeable about the science of reading, for systematic and direct instruction in foundational reading skills/structured literacy approaches.

THANKS TO OUR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Dr. Becky Chen

- Professor and Head of Multilingualism and Literacy Lab (OISE)

Dr. Fred Genesee

- Professor Emeritus (McGill)

Krystina Raymond

- PhD Student (OISE)

Dr. Kathleen Hipfner-Boucher

- Researcher (OISE)

Dr. Caroline Erdos (SLP)

- Speech and Language Pathologist (Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board)

Dr. David Kilpatrick

- Professor (State University of New York College at Cortland)

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- Professor (Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia)

Government of Alberta

- Alberta Education

Kristy Dunn

- University of Alberta

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- Clinical Supervisor of Developmental Supports (LRSD)

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- Student Services Teacher (LRSD)

Michelle Follows

- Student Services Teacher (LRSD)

Karla Gutierrez (SLP)

- Speech and Language Pathologist (LRSD)

Dallas Henson

- Student Services Teacher (LRSD)

Kathy Klenk

- Student Services Teacher (LRSD)

Marnie Wilson

- Divisional Vice-Principal of Data Literacy (LRSD)

Dolores Stupak

- Manager of Administrative Services & Support (LRSD)

Dulce Creighton

- Teacher – School and Classroom Support Team (LRSD)

Geneviève Shyiak

- Teacher – School and Classroom Support Team (LRSD)

Kristen McDowell

- Teacher – School and Classroom Support Team (LRSD)

Discussion 1

- Who are your experts?
- Who else could you consult with to inform your planning?

LEARNING DISABILITIES

OHRC Recommendation #145

Bchool boards' census questions about disability should ask about all disabilities. Boards should break down learning disabilities by subtype and include an option to identify that the student has a reading disability/dyslexia, or may be at risk for or have a suspected reading disability/dyslexia.

Evidence of Learning Disabilities in Society

- Of all the children with disabilities in this country, **more than half** (59.8%) have a learning disability.
- Statistics Canada reports that as children make the **transition from home to school**, the number diagnosed with a learning disability **grows by nearly 25%**. These **transition years are a key** time during which we need to assess children and begin accommodating those with learning disabilities so they can reach their full potential.
- More than **half a million adults** in this country live with a learning disability, making it more challenging for them to learn in universities and colleges, and on the job.
- Learning disabilities are one of the **fastest growing** types of disabilities in Canada that isn't related to aging.

Source Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

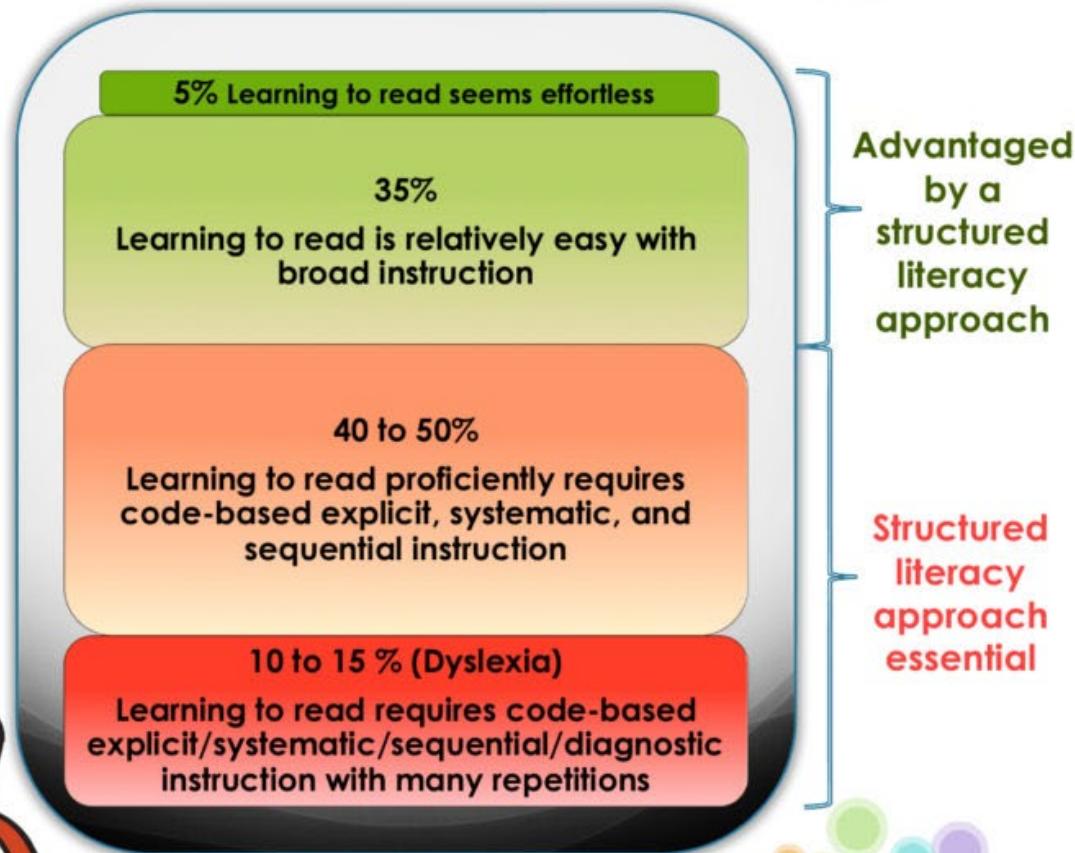
The Ladder of Reading



© N. Young, 2012 (updated 2017)

Artwork by Dean Stanton

(Lyon, 1998; NRP, 2000; IDA, 2015; Hempenstall, 2016)



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Taken from <https://dyslexiaida.org/ladder-of-reading-infographic-structured-literacy-helps-all-students/>

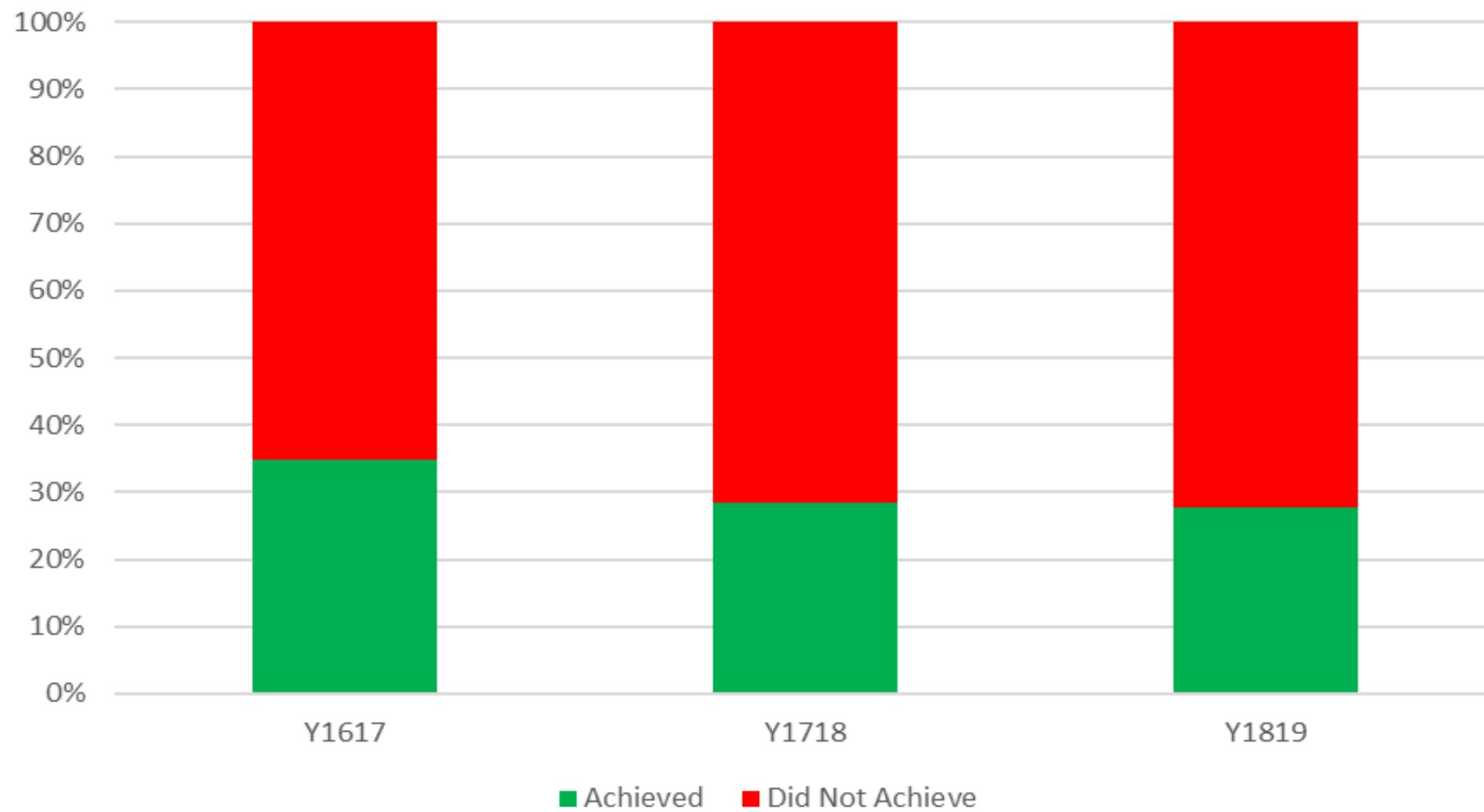
Evidence of Learning Disabilities in One School

- 3-6% of students continued to struggle after K-1 interventions and IPL.
- Most plateaued in Grade 3 or 4 and required adaptations or targeted assessments.
- Interventions were ineffective, very slow and frustrating for SS teacher, classroom teacher and student.
- Diagnosis was often a SLD (Dyslexia). The frequency and profile of these students led us to realize that what we were doing did not work for these students.

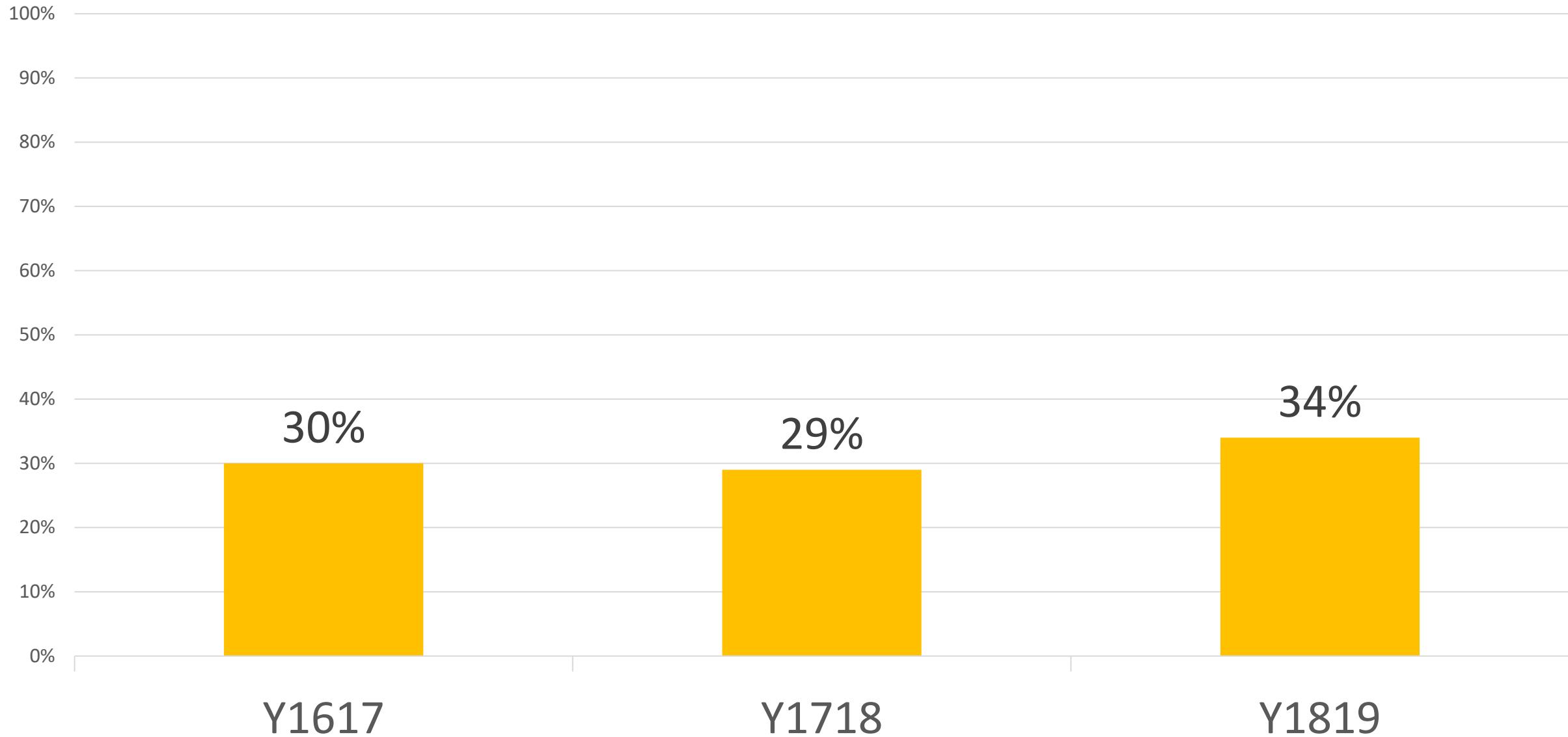
Evidence of the Impact of Past Practices in One Division

LRSD's Data
2016-2019

Achievement Rate of Students who Met Program Criteria: ERI & IPL



Proportion of Population Served



Discussion 2

What do you know about the short and long term effectiveness of your school's/division's early literacy instruction and intervention models?

Questions for Follow-up

- What percentage of students receive direct support from a prescribed intervention model?
- What percentage of students are discontinued?
- What percentage of students are recommended?
- What percentage of students are carried over?
- What percentage of students are recommended but do not receive service?

RESEARCH ON EARLY SCREENING

OHRC Recommendation #59

Mandate early, evidence-based universal screening:

The Ministry of Education should provide stable,
enveloped yearly funding for evidence-based screening
of all students in Kindergarten Year 1 to Grade 2 in
word-reading accuracy and fluency.

It is possible to identify students with signs of dyslexia even before they learn to read?

Yes!

Why is screening essential?

- Purpose of screening is not to diagnose but to allow for early identification of students who demonstrate known risk markers.
- Screening also allows for early team involvement and monitoring, engages conversations with support teachers and Clinicians.

“Implementing screening procedures which are conducted early on in Kindergarten, even if there is risk of over-identification, is seen as an effective, preventative model” (Vellutino et al. 2008)

What Research Says About Effective Targets for Screeners

- These variables not only correlated with later literacy as shown by data drawn from multiple studies with large numbers of children, but also maintained their predictive power even when the role of other variables, such as IQ or socioeconomic status (SES), were accounted for
 - Knowledge of names and sounds of written letters,
 - Phonological and phonemic awareness,
 - Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN) of letters or digits,
 - Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN) of colours or images of objects,
 - Writing letters in isolation or writing one's own name,
 - Ability to repeat spoken information for a short period of time.

Report of the National Early Literacy Panel, 2008

Screening in French Immersion Guided by Research

Study of French Immersion students in Montreal findings:

- “. . . it is possible to identify risk for difficulty in L2 reading development in immersion students as early as the beginning of K using L1 predictor measures.” (p. 20)
- “. . . important early intervention opportunities will be missed if it is assumed that the identification of immersion students who may be at-risk for reading difficulties should be delayed until they have acquired competence in oral French.” (p.20)
- “The present results also argue for additional support for immersion students who are risk for difficulty acquiring reading skills in French that emphasize the same kinds of skills as are called for in L1 readers with difficulty; namely, letter sound knowledge and phonological awareness.” (p.22)

Erdos, Genesee, et. al., 2010

EARLY YEARS SCREENING TOOLS

OHRC Recommendation #60b

The Ministry should:

Determine the appropriate screening measures to be

used based on the specific grade and time in the year

with reference to the recommendations in the IES report

that have moderate to strong evidentiary support.

OHRC Report (page 239)

The panel cited three specific screening tools and the corresponding studies that show they include measures that accurately predict future student performance. These tools are DIBELS, Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP), and the Texas Primary Reading Inventory. The Rapid Naming Subtests of the CTOPP could also be included as these predict later word-reading accuracy and fluency difficulties.

Choose Methods and Measures for Screening That Are Most Reliable

When to screen?

- Beginning and end of K and mid-Grade 1.

Which test(s)?

- 4-5 subtests of CTOPP-2 used as a screening tool.

Who administers the screening?

- Select methods that allow for many to participate.

Phonological Awareness

Blending and Elision are the strongest Phonological awareness predictors.

RAN & Memory Are Powerful Indicators

Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN)

- Measures a form of processing speed unique to literacy development

Memory for Digits

- Measures short term and working memory

**Both measures can impact learning
in all areas, not just in literacy.*

OHRC Recommendation #148

Boards should cross-tabulate and analyze data on students with disabilities (including with suspected reading disabilities/dyslexia or who are at risk for reading disabilities/dyslexia), along with other demographic data (including race, ethnicity, creed (religion), disability, gender identity, sexual orientation and socio-economic status against student success indicators.

Intersectionality between all identity characteristics and student success indicators should be analyzed.

Parent Questionnaire

Questionnaire for all Kindergarten families.

Learn about the family to inform decisions about the student.

- Fluency in English
- Amount of English and other languages spoken at home
- Existing diagnoses or pending assessments
- Amount of exposure to language and literature in early childhood
- Caregiver level of education

Discussion 3

- What early literacy screening tools do you currently have in your schools?
- Are they evidence-based?
- Do they inform programming?
- Are they accurate?
- How could you:
 - enhance your current early screening process or
 - start school-wide/system-wide screening in your school/division?
- What do you need to learn or understand before considering changes?
- Who could support you in this change process?

COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA

OHRC Recommendation #141

To the extent possible, boards should use common, centralized, student information management systems.

Where this is not possible, boards should be able

to generate the same consistent data from their

student information management systems.

Considerations for Data Collection and Analysis

Which tool(s) will you use to:

- Collect data centrally?
 - Student Information System
- Make the data visual and user friendly?
 - Power BI

Considerations for Data Collection and Analysis

How will you:

- Analyse data?
 - With a multi-disciplined team
- Set a cut-off point to identify risk?
 - 16th percentile or bottom 20% or your population's results if norms are not available.

Considerations for Data Collection and Analysis

- Consider all screening data as a starting point.
 - What other sources of data should you consider?
 - How can you explain the results?
- Deeper inquiry often results in more targeted and impactful support.

Discussion 4

- What thoughts or questions comes to mind about your school's/division's early literacy data collection?

REASEARCH ON EARLY INTERVENTION

OHRC Report (page 275)

Classroom instruction and early interventions (Kindergarten and Grade 1) are key to preventing future word-reading difficulties. . .

When children with weak reading skills do not receive effective early interventions, there is a high likelihood they will remain poor readers throughout their school years.

Early Intervention is Crucial

- Once the cycle of frustration sets in and children begin to struggle, remediation efforts may be less impactful and the risk for mental health issues and disengagement rises.
- We need to allow for a greater awareness of comorbid conditions/variables earlier on (e.g., Fine Motor, Anxiety, ADHD, Language, etc.)

Changes to Intervention and Instruction

- Early intervention most impactful (K-3) with largest SS gains seen in K-1.
- We need to shift thinking from a deficit driven (reactive approach) to a preventative model based on early screening and evidence-based tier 1 instruction.
- SLD in Reading accounts for the largest group among the 5 - 10% LD learners.

The Evidence In Favour of Early Intervention

Intensive intervention

- Without early, intervention, struggling readers do not catch up to their average-performing peers. In fact, the gap between good and poor widens over time (Adams, 1990; Good et al., 2001; National Research Council, 1998; Stanovich, 1986).

The Evidence In Favour of Early Intervention

Early intervention

- The later the onset of intervention, the poorer the odds that struggling readers will become proficient readers (Torgesen, 2000, 2001).

RTI and MTSS

Response to intervention (RTI) and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) are built on research of prevention and early intervention. They are designed to help educators implement strong literacy systems. The screening and progress-monitoring data they provide enable educators to design instruction and intervention that prevent difficulty and close skill gaps for students.

Reading Trajectories

Reading trajectories are established early in a student's academic career and are stable across time (Good, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 2001; Morgan et al., 2016; Shaywitz, Escobar, Shaywitz, Fletcher, & Makuch, 1992).

Using Early Predictors and Early Interventions

We need to intervene ASAP:

“Despite the importance of early identification, French immersion students in Senior Kindergarten or Grade 1 in Ontario are generally not assessed for potential reading problems until Grade 2 or 3, once they have acquired listening and speaking skills in French. As a result of this delay, many young readers typically do not receive timely instructional interventions.”

Wise & Chen, 2009

In French Immersion Intervene in English as Needed

An effective intervention can be initiated in English when children's French oral proficiency is low. With appropriate support, these students can become proficient readers in French and English.

In French Immersion Intervene in English as Needed

To make a difference, early immersion educators should consider identifying at-risk students and intervening as early as possible. Once the cycle of frustration sets in and children begin to struggle, remediation efforts may be inadequate.

Our young readers in French immersion programs need early reading instruction as much as our young readers in English-language programs. Efforts to identify these children at an earlier stage in their literacy development and to implement interventions would reduce the number of children referred for Special Education support, as well as the number who ultimately transfer to the regular English program.

Wise & Chen, 2009

INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

The Myths

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2023/02/23/gaps-in-provinces-literacy-education-probed>

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/2023/10/07/fight-for-the-right-to-read>

- There is a reading war (whole language vs phonics).
- Structured literacy is a back to basics movement.
- The science of reading is based on *drill and kill*.
- The provincial curriculum does not promote a single approach.
- Reading Recovery is effective and evidence-based.

The Responses

- There is no more a reading war than there is a climate change argument.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25GI3-kiLdo>)
- No comprehensive literacy program is so simplistic to say it only teaches skills outside of authentic and meaningful experiences.
- Drill and kill is being interchanged quite loosely and incorrectly with explicit instruction, which is a part of every good pedagogy model in all curricular areas.

The Responses

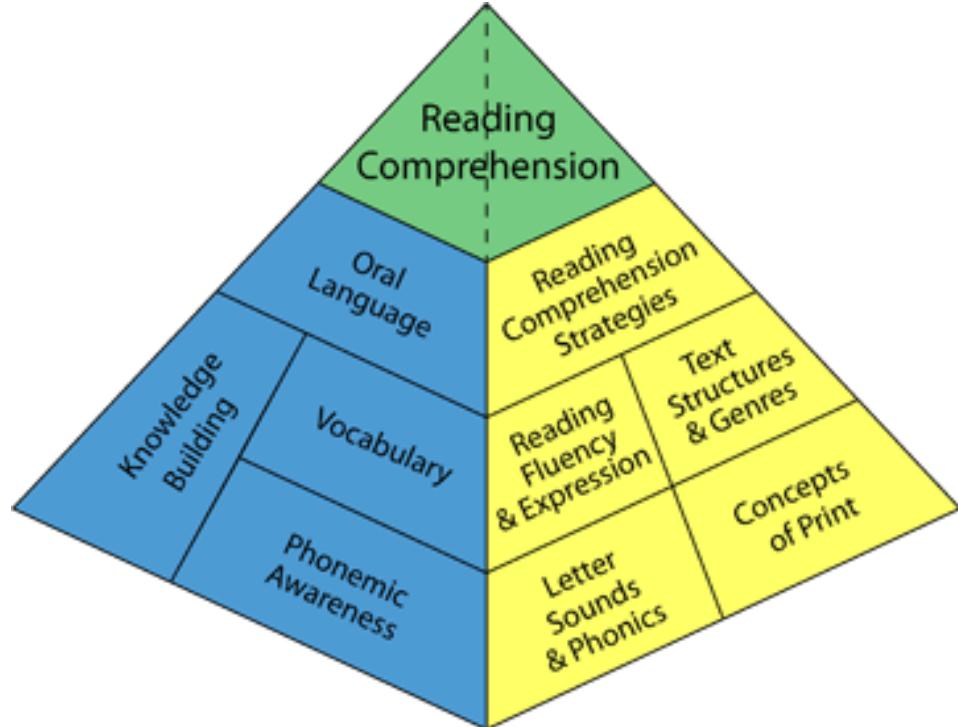
- The provincial curriculum does lean heavily on a whole language approach with little to no emphasis on a sequential instruction model that looks at the elements of instruction required to become a fluent reader/writer (*i.e. as illustrated by [Scarborough's Reading Rope](#)*)
- Reading Recovery® is not proven to be effective and when it is, the positive effects are typically temporary. (<https://features.apmreports.org/sold-a-story/>)

Most Common Practices

Some of the most widely used interventions reported by the inquiry school boards are not shown to be effective for any tiers within RTI/MTSS. For example, there is little to no scientific evidence supporting Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) or Reading Recovery®.

<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report/reading-interventions#:~:text=It%20is%20an%20intervention%20program,they%20are%20learning%20the%20curriculum.>

Science of Reading



The Science of Reading is a comprehensive body of research that encompasses years of scientific knowledge, spans across many languages, and shares the contributions of experts from relevant disciplines. SoR has evolved from a wide span of research designs, experimental methods, participants, and statistical analyses. This conclusive, empirically supported research provides us with the information we need to gain a deeper understanding of how we learn to read, what skills are involved, how they work together, and which parts of the brain are responsible for reading development. From this research, we can identify an evidence-based best practice approach for teaching foundational literacy skills called Structured Literacy.

The Science of Reading Is Not a Kit or a Program!

There is no single kit or model that will provide everything.

Teachers need to understand:

- how the brain develops reading and writing skills,
- how to identify specific literacy learning challenges, and
- why it is important to teach explicit concepts sequentially.

Once they know this, they need time and resources to do it!

Discussion 5

- Where do you feel your learning community is currently in terms of its understanding of the research that supports early screening and a structured literacy instruction model?
- Where are you at with all of this right now?

OHRC Recommendation #28

The Ministry should specify that all critical elements of explicit, systematic and direct instruction in foundational word-reading skills in the revised Kindergarten Program and Grades 1–8 Language curriculum are mandatory and not optional. The Ministry should provide specific and scaffolded grade-level expectations for each foundational word-reading skill. The Ministry should clarify that early literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, knowledge of letter names and sounds and how to print letters, and decoding simple words are all expected in Kindergarten.

Louis Riel School Division

Scope and Sequence

April 2022

(Revised February 2023)



Progression des
apprentissages en
français (FL2)

Maternelle à la 2e année



OHRC Recommendation #40

School boards should immediately begin implementing measures/resources/programs/guides/training to provide mandatory explicit, systematic and direct instruction in foundational word-reading skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding and word study, while awaiting a revised Kindergarten Program and Grades 1–8 Language curriculum. These measures/resources/guides/training can continue to be used to support delivery of a revised Kindergarten Program and Grades 1–8 Language curriculum once they are released.

Instruction and Assessment Model

- Staff Development
- Scope and Sequence
- Co-teaching
- Fluency Measures – phonological awareness, letter naming with sounds, nonsense words, sight words, text (in both languages for FI students)
- Resources that align with structured literacy
- What to do with GB+/PM/F&P?

OHRC Recommendation #81b

(The Ministry should:) Develop valid and reliable progress monitoring and outcome measures to inform programming decisions for individual students, and to inform boards' efforts to evaluate program effectiveness. Progress monitoring measures should include word-reading accuracy, non-word-reading accuracy, reading comprehension, word-reading efficiency (fluency) and text-reading fluency measures. For early reading interventions, standardized measures should include phonemic awareness, sound-letter fluency, and reading and decoding accuracy and fluency.

Development of Evidence-Based Fluency Measures

- Develop with researchers
- Teacher administered (two or three times/year)
- Phonological Awareness
- Alphabet (sound/letter name)
- Word reading
- Pseudo-word reading
- Text fluency
- Comprehension measure

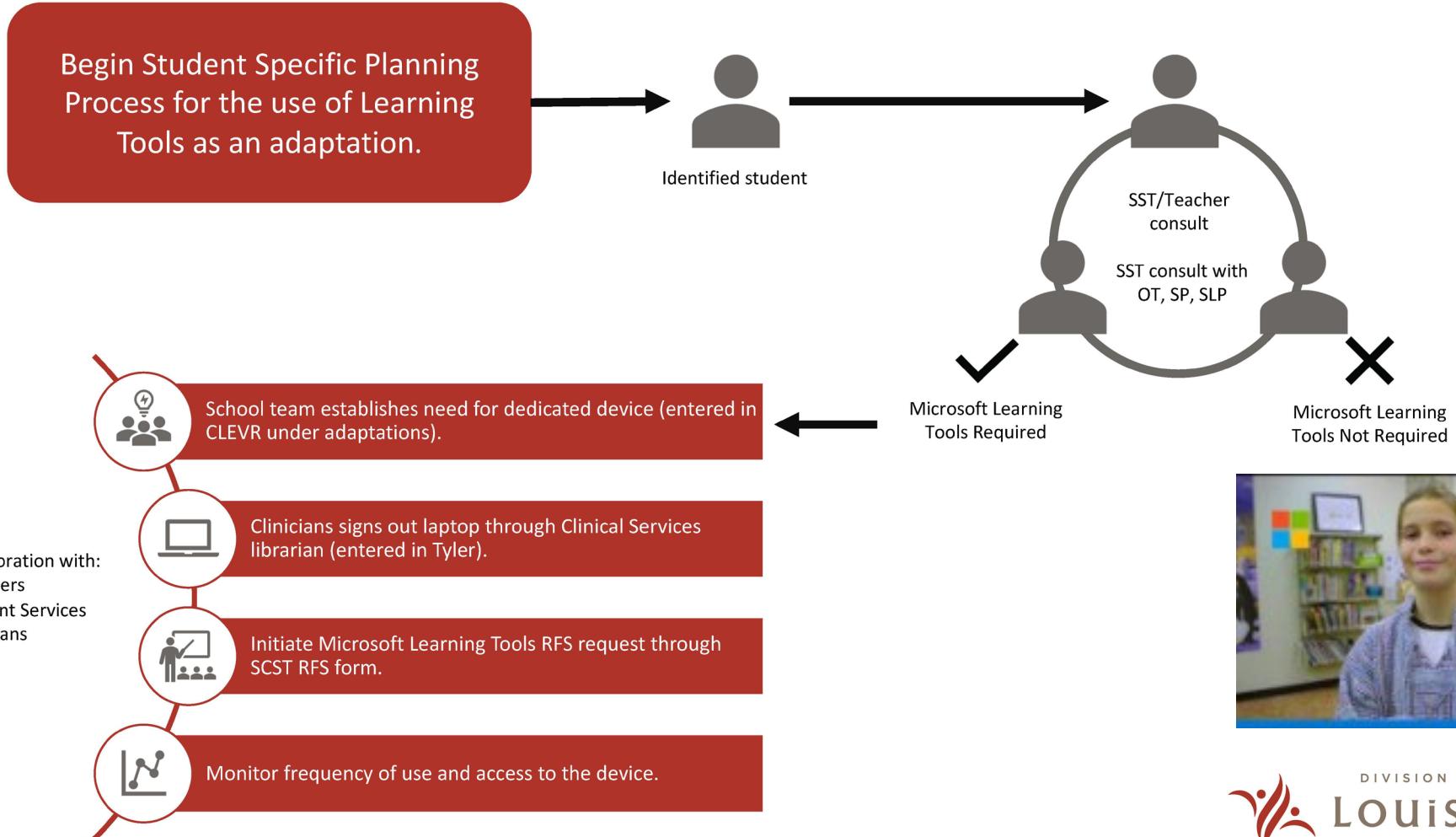
Using Fluency Measures

- Central data collection
- Develop district norms
- Continue to monitor for:
- Students who are at-risk
- Impact of instruction
- Efficacy of interventions
- Target instructional planning

OHRC Recommendation #86b

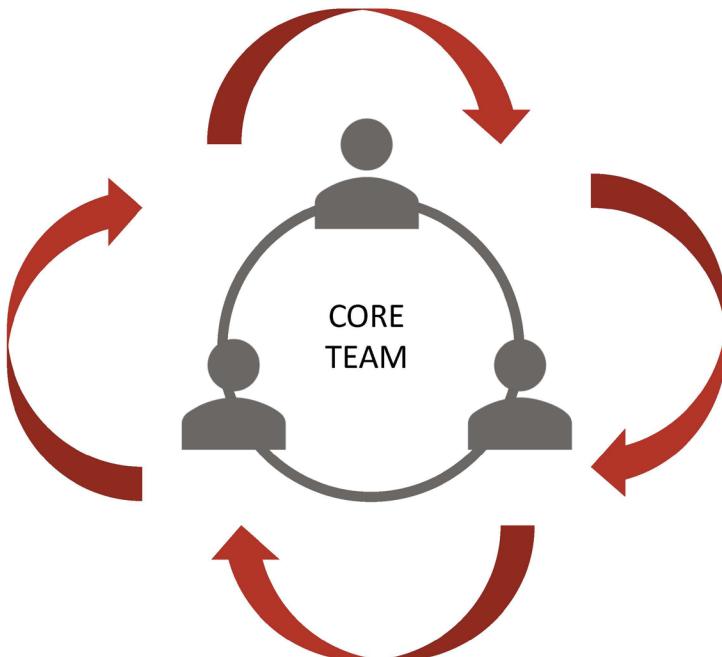
The Ministry of Education (Ministry) should work with external expert(s) to revise its program planning and professional development policy documents to address . . .

assistive technology (AT) and non-AT accommodations that support students with reading difficulties and situations where each may be appropriate.



Microsoft Learning Tools for all Students in the Louis Riel School Division

Planning model for using Microsoft Learning tools in the inclusive classroom; planning for all students (Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Differentiated Assessment) and using Learning Tools as an Adaptation (identified through Student Specific Planning). Parent consultation will occur throughout the process.



UNIVERSAL

- Read Aloud: Editing and refining for richer content
- Dictate: Enhancing written expression and idea generation by capturing oral expression
- Translation: Supports new language acquisition at multiple points of entry
- Background & Font: Personalized reading experience with visual preferences
- Syllables: Provides multi-modal learning opportunities

TARGETED

- Read Aloud: Access to content for students with impairments and LDs
- Dictate: Opportunity for written expression for students with LDs and fine motor delays
- Translation: Support EAL programming
- Background & Font: Support visual needs for identified students
- Syllables: Supports targeted language instruction



Planning model developed by Robert George and Lisa Reis-Tymchuk

NEXT STEPS

OHRC Report Page 11

A comprehensive approach to early literacy recognizes that instruction that focuses on word-reading skills, oral language development, vocabulary and knowledge development, and writing are all important components of literacy.

Future Considerations

- Increase Vocabulary screening, exposure and development
- Graphomotor screening and intervention
- Writing continuum and authentic writing instruction
- Middle years scope and sequence
- Specialized Tier 3 Interventions
- DEIA considerations (language, culture, etc.)
- Integrated Mental Health supports for identified students
- High School Transition supports to empower students

Elementary Student Services Teacher Sharing Feedback From a Parent

Their son had been identified in the kindergarten screeners. We implemented interventions with him. In grade 1 we continued to work with him as he was still having challenges in literacy. When he was in grade 2, I was his classroom teacher. We continued targeting the skills he needed to further develop.

In grade 3, assessments were done by the divisional psychologist. He has a learning disability. We continue to work with him at a Tier 1 and Tier 2 level. He has made enormous progress. He is confident, self-reflective and a reader and writer.

When speaking with his parents, they said: *“If he had not received the extra support from kindergarten on and been diagnosed in grade 3, we know that the outcome for him would be much different. When we read about adults with a learning disability that did not get the support they needed until adulthood, they share the enormous burden they suffered, both mentally and socially. We are infinitely grateful that our son will not have the same outcome.”*

Review Goals for Today

Understand:

- certain instructional practices are more inclusive because they support students with learning disabilities;
- the importance of early screening and some possible tools that you can use;
- why systemic data collection is essential;
- why early intervention is important.

Know:

- how ongoing assessment continues to identify risk and impact of instruction;
- how data should impact programming;
- how to assess the impact of your current practices.

Do

- Develop one concrete action to begin to implement or to enhance an early screening or instructional practice.

Questions



Resources

- Description of First Phase of Project:
https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/oise/News/2021/Disarming_Dyslexia_OISE_researchers_help_revive_improve_intervention_program_in_Winnipeg.html
 - Episode 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_PwAfG6ZQz8
- Assistive Technology in LRSO: <https://customers.microsoft.com/en-us/story/772344-lrsd-windows10-microsoft365-teams-education-canada-en>
- Key Articles:
 - Wise and Chen (2009) <https://www.idaontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Wise-Chen-2009-Early-identification-and-intervention-for-at-risk-readers-in-French-immersion.pdf>
 - Erdos and Genesee, Savage and Haigh (2010)
<https://www.psych.mcgill.ca/perpg/fac/genesee/18.pdf>
 - National Early Literacy Panel (2008) <https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf>
 - National Reading Panel (2000)
<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pubs/nrp/Documents/report.pdf>

Resources

- Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read Inquiry Report <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report>
- Learning Disabilities Association of Canada: <https://www.ldac-acta.ca/>
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