

Best Practice Site
Teaching Reading/Writing to Students with Disabilities

Region	Region 7	
Schools	Avery County Schools	
Coordinator and Central Office	Brenda C Reese, Principal Crossnore Elementary School 1000 Walt Clark Road Crossnore, NC 28616-0056 828.737.7204 828.737.7209 fax BrendaCReese@averyschools.net	
Exceptional Children/Literacy Programs, Director	Jim Ciociola, EC Director Avery County Board of Education 775 Cranberry Street PO Box 1360 Newland, NC 28657-1360 828.733.6006 828.733.8943 fax JimCiociola@averyschools.net	
Instructional Location(s)	Original One Year New New New	Crossnore Elementary School Newland Elementary School Banner Elk Elementary School Freedom Trail Elementary School Riverside Elementary School
Purpose and Goals	The purpose of the NC SIP II grant is to deliver researched based reading instruction to appropriate students in conjunction with our Response to Intervention or Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) Model. In 2009-2010 all elementary schools in the system are implementing RtI and various components of the NC SIP II	

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reading program. Our focus is to help children become better readers and to close the gap between our struggling readers and their grade level expectations before they reach middle school, preferably before they reach third grade.

Description Of Students

All students benefit from the professional development provided to both classroom and exceptional children's teachers. Currently all students involved in NC SIP II activities are at the elementary level. They are identified through a variety of assessments including DIBELS, ClassScape, Informal Reading Inventories, Running Records, STAR Reader, ERSI, K-2 assessments, End of Grade Tests, and--for those with the greatest needs--individual achievement and intelligence tests. Not all assessments are used with every child. Some are utilized only on a case-by-case basis. Students in the RtI process and those identified as Exceptional Children receive the most intensive interventions.

Description of Instructional Model

Reading Committee

During the first years of NC SIP II at Crossnore, most of the decisions regarding reading were made by the principal, the Title I teacher, and the Exceptional Children's teacher. This year the committee has been expanded to include classroom teachers. Three have masters' degrees in reading, two are becoming Reading Foundations trainers, two are Nationally Board Certified teachers, one is working on a masters' degree, and one is a fourth year Beginning Teacher. This committee assists in the formation and re-formation of the groups for our Direct Reading Intervention (DRI) block from 1:45-2:45 and addresses the reading needs of all students.

Assessments

Our system implements DIBELS countywide, using the new mClass hand held devices to streamline the process and to supply immediate, detailed feedback. ClassScape is used for formative assessments and, soon, benchmark assessments in reading across

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the system. The ERSI is used only for struggling students entering first grade. Crossnore is completing Individual Reading Inventories on all identified Exceptional Children and others on a case-by-case basis. Crossnore recommends this process to the other elementary schools as it is consulted about RtI and reading instruction. The other assessments mentioned in the above section are standard for all schools in Avery County.

Crossnore's Exceptional Children's teacher (Anna Jarrell) and the teacher of the 1-2 combination class (Nancy Christensen—who is working on a masters' degree in curriculum and technology) along with Crossnore's principal represent Crossnore on the newly formed county committee on Data Disaggregation. Participants receive in-depth training not only on disaggregation of the data but also in its usage for determining appropriate instructional activities and groupings.

Initiatives:

RtI

All elementary schools in Avery County are trained in and are implementing Response to Intervention or Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) this year.

Reading Foundations

Crossnore's and Newland's faculty and staff members are trained in Reading Foundations. Crossnore will have two teachers (Loretta Sluder and Heather Furr) become trainers this fall after they complete two more days of professional development. Crossnore's teachers who have not yet received training in Reading Foundations are being included in the initial group the new trainers train. Newland is encouraged to also train at least one teacher as a Reading Foundations trainer. The other elementary schools have requested their schools to be trained in Reading Foundations, preferably by Crossnore's two, soon to be, Reading Foundations trainers.

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Kennewick, Washington...Catch Up Growth

Crossnore is adapting an additional reading period for all students, Monday through Thursday, which is based on the Kennewick, Washington, model for students to “catch up” in reading by the end of third grade. However, Crossnore’s model provides systematic, explicit, multi-sensory reading instruction for students of all ability levels. While providing additional instruction for the average and gifted student as well, this provides Crossnore with the vehicle for customizing instruction for at risk readers (EC, Title I, 504, RTI) by providing researched based programs and smaller group sizes. Referred to as DRI for Direct Reading Intervention, this block of time will allow Foundations, Reading Mastery, and Language! to be taught to fidelity to identified RtI students and exceptional children. Avery County administrators will study the Kennewick model at their Curriculum Forum meetings during the 2009-2010 school year. It is anticipated that other schools will also wish to implement components of this model.

Early Intervention

Crossnore recognizes the importance of early intervention and, while continuing to provide resources for grades 3-5, understands the need to blitz ALL the early grades. Letterland and Foundations play vital roles at these grade levels. All new Letterland materials are here for Crossnore (and the entire system) except some of the second grade materials which are not yet available for purchase.

Crossnore’s pre-kindergarten teacher is included in professional development activities and K-2 team meetings. Also, within the pre-kindergarten to second grade organization, Crossnore has: two teachers with masters’ degrees in reading, two Nationally Board Certified teachers, one teacher working on a masters in curriculum and technology, one who is adding a new area of certification, two teachers who are mentors, two teachers who will soon be Reading Foundations trainers, five teachers who have

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previously taught at more than one grade level and, therefore, are familiar with more than one grade level of the NCSCOS. These are all teacher leaders with a strong commitment to both their students and their profession.

Full time instructional assistants are placed in each Pre-kindergarten through straight first grade class. The first-second combination class receives additional assistance through a combination of personnel resources instead of a full time assistant. One second grade class with high needs students also has a full time teacher assistant. Title I and EC monies pay for two part-time tutors who are also certified teachers. These tutors are used across grade levels and in the 1:45-2:30 DRI classes for at risk students.

For the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year K-2 teachers have chosen to do reading rotation groups within their classrooms rather than within or across grade levels. This is to be re-evaluated as the year progresses.

Researched Based Programs:

Letterland

This fall all K-2 and EC teachers receive training in the new American version of Letterland as the lead reading program. During the 2009-2010 school year at least one EC teacher per school will train in Wilson to reach the most needy students. Crossnore's new Exceptional Children's teacher (Anna Jarrell) will train to become a Wilson trainer.

Foundations

Crossnore is the only school currently trained and implementing Foundations. Foundations is used as a first or second tier intervention, depending on the student and amount of time devoted to it. It is used across the board for all kindergarten students Monday through Thursday as the focus of thirty minute Power Groups—consisting of approximately five students per

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group. Classroom teachers, teacher assistants, tutors who are also certified teachers, and the speech and language therapist conduct these sessions.

Wilson

Previously, Crossnore had two teachers trained in Wilson—one Exceptional Children’s teacher (Lisa Wright) and one Title I teacher (Margaret Robbins). The previous Exceptional Teacher is now a Lead Teacher for our system. The new Exceptional Children’s teacher (Anna Jarrell) has agreed to become a Wilson trainer and receives training this year to become a trainer as quickly as possible. Crossnore’s Title I teacher will continue to offer Wilson. Many of the original EC teachers trained in Wilson are no longer with the system or in their original teaching positions. The goal this year is to have at least one EC teacher per school trained in Wilson.

Early Steps

Early Steps is offered on a case by case basis to first grade students.

Language!

Language! is offered to appropriate third, fourth, and fifth grade students at Crossnore this year. Language! is taught by the a second grade teacher (Allison Vines) who taught Language! last year to selected third grade students, by a classroom teacher who has taught Language! for two years (Sonia Beach) to selected fourth grade students, and by a classroom teacher who received on the job training by the Title I teacher (Martha Hicks) in an inclusive classroom setting to selected fifth grade students. Other schools have purchased some Language! materials but have not implemented the program.

Crossnore is using the materials specifically designed for each program: Letterland, Foundations, Wilson, and Language! Text Talk is being used for vocabulary. Houghton Mifflin reading materials are being used for comprehension, and assorted

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materials, including Great Leaps, are being used for fluency. In addition, literature circles are utilized by fourth and fifth grade English/Language Arts and Social Studies teachers. The Florida Center for Reading Research is constantly accessed for additional ideas. The Joe Witt materials are accessed for comprehension.

Reading Mastery Plus

Crossnore is teaching Reading Mastery Plus for the first time this year. Reading Mastery is highly recommended by teachers Crossnore's team talks with at the spring NC SIP II meeting in Asheville. A small group of students in the DRI block—one from third grade, one from fourth grade, and one from fifth grade—as well as a small instructional group in the resource room are being taught with Reading Mastery. This is in addition to the primary, second, and sometimes third reading class each has per day.

Designated Teachers

Crossnore	
Pre-kindergarten	Cheltsea Duncan
Kindergarten	Candi Buchanan
Kindergarten	Wendy Farthing
K-1 Combination	Loretta Sluder
First Grade	Heather Furr
1-2 Combination	Nancy Christensen
Second Grade	Tabitha Nance
Second Grade	Allison Vines
Third Grade	Julia Johnson
Third Grade	Bryan Watson
Fourth Grade	Sonia Beach
Fourth Grade	Jessica Jones
Fifth Grade	Martha Hicks
Fifth Grade	Leona McFee
Media	Erin Painter
ExceptionalChildren	Anna Jarrell
Speech and Language	Ron Talley
Title I	Margaret Robbins
Principal	Brenda Reese

North Carolina State Improvement Project (NC SIP II)
The UNC Center for School Leadership Development
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<http://www.ncsip.org>

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Teacher Assistants

Susan Webb

Tangie King

Patricia Shook

Amy Wright

Violet Smith

Thelma Laws

Tutors

Michelle Franklin

Monica Daniels

Teachers at Other Schools:

To Be Determined