



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

**Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC)
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2018
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Iowa Center for Higher Education**

Members present: Lonna Anderson, Kate Connealy, Kara Dietrich, Katie Greving, Lolli Haws, Emily Hayden, Jaci Jarmes, Becky Miles-Polka, David Tilly, Sarah Vander Zanden, Corey Vorthmann, Ryan Wise, Lindsay Woodward.

Additional attendees: Deborah K. Reed, IRRC Director; Sean Thompson, IRRC Communications Specialist.

Guests: Amy Denney, Perry Creek Elementary School; Kathy Hanlon, Legislative Services Agency, State of Iowa

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by IRRC Advisory Council (AC) Vice Chair Sarah Vander Zanden.

2. Approval of agenda

On a motion by Kate Connealy and seconded by Lindsay Woodward, the agenda for the meeting was approved as amended, with zero “no” votes.

3. Approval of May 2018 meeting minutes

On a motion by Kate Connealy and seconded by Lindsay Woodward, the May 2018 meeting minutes were approved, with zero “no” votes.

4. Public comment

Vice Chair Vander Zanden allowed time for public comment. No comments were made by members of the public.

5. Introductions

All members of the council introduced themselves and stated their affiliations.

6. Director’s report (IRRC)

Dr. Reed reminded members of the change to the IRRC AC bylaws that were approved at the meeting in May of 2018. The change details that there will be three AC meetings per year.



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Dr. Reed sought input for disseminating information about the IRRC's web-based dyslexia training and FastBridge training to the state's 30 teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities. The dyslexia training is currently provided through purchased licenses from a third-party vendor. The IRRC is moving toward providing an original IRRC dyslexia training module that will also be part of the Early Literacy Blueprint Initiative (Blueprint).

Dr. Reed updated the AC on the results from the Effective Fluency Instruction for Fourth Graders Study. The results show fourth-grade students in the Varied Practice group (reading three different passages) achieved slightly more than an extra week's worth of improvement in reading fluency over the Repeated Reading group (reading the same passage three times). Students in both groups showed growth near the 90th percentile, which would be considered very ambitious growth. The Varied Practice passages have since been made available for free download and use in schools or in the home on the IRRC website.

IRRC is working on a survey of K-6 schools in Iowa to determine what literacy instructional programs they are using and how they have been or are being implemented. Dr. Reed said a survey like this was last done in 2013. AC members provided suggestions for how best to obtain a high survey participation rate among schools. The data obtained will help the IRRC support schools and develop future Blueprint modules based on schools' needs, Dr. Reed said.

The IRRC is gaining a reputation for excellence outside of the state, Dr. Reed reported. It was selected as an external evaluator for two school districts in Kansas as part of the Literacy Network of Kansas (LiNK). The IRRC also was approached by Reading Rockets to include selected blog posts on its website. The IRRC has been involved in overseeing filming of videos for the California Department of Education for professional development purposes. And the Minnesota Department of Education has expressed interest in adapting the Blueprint High-Priority Milestones for K-3 Reading Development for similar purposes in its state.

The first Blueprint training-of-trainers (TOT) event was held Aug. 6-8 in Des Moines. Dr. Reed reported 34 literacy leaders completed the training to become Certified Blueprint Trainers (CBTs).

Amy Denney, principal at Perry Creek Elementary School in the Sioux City Community School District (SSCSD), joined the meeting via videoconference and provided an update on literacy instruction in her school and district, and partnerships with the IRRC. Denney is a member of the Blueprint Advisory Group and was trained as a CBT at the TOT event in August. Several trainings on the Blueprint modules have already taken place at SSCSD, and more are scheduled to occur.

Denney also spoke about SSCSD's implementation of small-group, skills based literacy instruction, which began in the 2016-2017 school year, and the IRRC's involvement in providing professional development and fidelity monitoring tools.



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7. Professional learning time: High-priority literacy milestones (IRRC)

Dr. Reed reviewed the features of the Blueprint's High-Priority Milestones for K-3 Reading Development document. The milestones provide a starting point for evaluating literacy plans by explaining which literacy skills students need to master year-by-year. Members were asked to consider which elements of the Milestones they thought were critical to explain to others.

8. Iowa Department of Education update (Iowa Department of Education)

At this point, the IRRC portion of the meeting was temporarily ceded, and the Council was asked to serve in an advisory role to the Iowa Department of Education (DE).

DE Deputy Director David Tilly provided an overview of literacy initiatives and other literacy data since 2012. An emphasis has been placed on a coordinated effort to have school districts, AEAs, and the DE all on the same page.

The IRRC Advisory Council meeting then resumed.

9. Assignment of homework (IRRC)

In her absence, Dr. Reed described IRRC AC Chair Kara Dietrich's assignment for the next meeting in December of 2018 – share the Blueprint's High-Priority Milestones for K-3 Reading Development document with 2-3 other people or groups and gather feedback to share at the next meeting.

10. Adjourn

On a motion by Lindsay Woodward and seconded by David Tilly, the meeting was adjourned, with zero "no" votes.