

Schools for All Children

Summer 2004

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Roy Romer, *Superintendent*

Maria Ott, *Senior Deputy Superintendent*
Educational Services

Donnalyn Jaque-Antón, *Associate Superintendent*
Division of Special Education

The Los Angeles Unified School District Position Paper Early Intervention and Prevention For Academically At-Risk Students

BACKGROUND

The research from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development found that children most at risk for reading failure are those who enter school with limited exposure to English language or those who have little prior understanding of concepts related to phonemic sensitivity, oral language or print awareness. The National Reading Panel's December 2000 report indicated that students with disabilities and low achieving students, respond equally well to instructional programs and techniques in phonemic awareness and phonics.

The requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the District's Single Plan for Student Achievement emphasize the importance of addressing the academic needs of at-risk learners as a means of meeting the performance standards established by NCLB and narrowing the district's student achievement gap.

The current Federal and State special education regulations require school districts, as part of the special education eligibility determination, to assure that the suspected disability is not due primarily to lack of instruction or second language acquisition. The forthcoming reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will likely include a provision that will allow school districts to require the implementation of research based interventions prior to considering a student disabled under the category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this position paper is to describe an academic intervention framework that will identify students academically at-risk before they have failed, diagnose areas of reading weakness, and provide targeted intervention to address those areas of weakness. In addition, the utilization of this framework will better assure that the district is identifying the appropriate students for special education and providing the proper services.

POSITION

The Division of Special Education proposes:

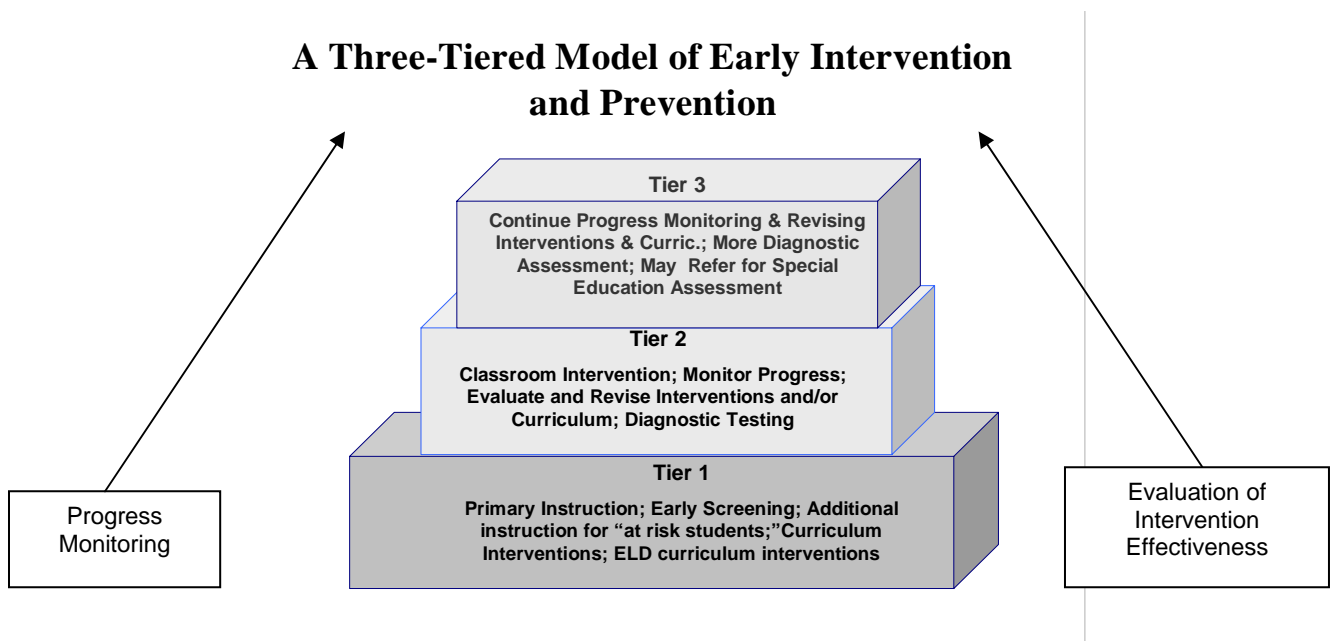
1. That all academically at-risk students be provided with structured, systematic academic intervention programs.
2. That the academic needs of this group of students be addressed early; in kindergarten, first and second grades, and early in their English literacy development.
3. That students with reading difficulties will be referred for special education evaluation only after they have had the opportunity to:
 - participate in the district's intervention program for a specified period of time;
 - have their progress assessed and monitored; and
 - have their response to the provided interventions evaluated.

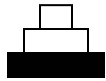
PREVENTION/ INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

Academic intervention is a systematic, focused and individualized approach for providing additional instruction and practice enabling students at risk to attain greater literacy skills. This approach provides additional help that a student might need before, rather than after, they have failed.

The intent of this approach is to provide targeted interventions that supplement and support the district's base literacy program, Open Court Reading (OCR).

This prevention/intervention framework has as its foundation a three-tier model of instructional intervention.





TIER 1

The first stage of the intervention process is to identify students whose overall academic performance is below the expected levels of achievement. Schools will identify their at-risk population by reviewing and evaluating reading assessment data available through OCR and identifying all students who fall within the **intensive** score band level.

For students who fall within the **intensive** score band, there are two levels of response that are to be considered:

Level I: Prevention: “good first teaching” is provided for all students in the form of highly effective teaching which introduces and reinforces concepts and skills from the district’s core literacy program. Periodic reading assessment will indicate which students are successful in meeting the grade level content standards and which students require intermediate or intensive interventions.

Effective first teaching strategies may include but are not limited to the following:

- Daily/weekly phonics routines
- Read alouds
- Shared reading
- Teacher-directed interactive reading
- Structured independent reading
- Higher level questioning
- Conversations/ discussion

Level II: Intermediate Intervention is provided to students who have not responded to the good first teaching strategies. For these students the Open Court intervention curriculum should be utilized. Independent Work Time (IWT) is to be utilized for the introduction of the OCR intervention materials. The skills areas in need of intervention will be identified through the use of six weeks assessment data.

The interventions are to be provided for the period of time recommended in OCR curriculum guides. The major OCR intervention curriculums and supplements available and recommended for students’ grades Pre-kindergarten through third grades are:

- Leap to Phonics (PK-1)
- Open Court Phonics Kit (K-3)
- Open Court 2000 Intervention Kit (2-6)
- Open Court ESL Supplement (when using OCR 2000 for Grade 1)
- Open Court 2002 Intervention Kit (1-6)

Each student’s progress is monitored through the use of assessment tools provided in each of the intervention programs noted above.



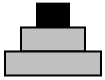
TIER 2

Intensive Intervention is to be provided for students who continue to score with the intensive instructional band based on OCR assessments. The intensive intervention curriculum is to focus on the specific processing skills required for literacy.

Any intensive intervention approach, strategy, curriculum or program should be selected based on the following criteria:

1. It is research-based.
2. Pre/post screenings or academic probes can be administered with ease.
3. It includes the ability to screen whole classrooms, small groups or individual students.
4. The primary focus is on reading and writing interventions.
5. Systemic instruction in phoneme awareness, phonics, and sight vocabulary is embedded.
6. Alignment of interventions to content standards and district curriculum is evident.
7. Instructional interventions are targeted to the student/s identified processing skills gaps.
8. Interventions are provided within a realistic time period.
9. It includes a process for monitoring effectiveness of intervention and student progress.

The matrix (Attachment A) provides schools with intervention programs that meet the above criteria.



TIER 3

Tier 3 students consist of those who have not successfully responded to Tier 1 and 2 interventions and continue in the intensive OCR band. School problem-solving teams are to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the previous interventions, taking into account the level of student participation, the integrity level of implementation and other factors that may be impeding achievement. Based on diagnostic testing results and data from progress monitoring, school teams may need to consider additional modification of the interventions.

Some students may display the characteristics of a student with a specific learning disability. These students should be referred for a comprehensive evaluation to determine if the student has a disability that requires special education services.

The comprehensive evaluation will use all progress monitoring data and diagnostic testing previously collected as well as supplementary assessment materials as a basis for establishing the disability, eligibility, and the need for special education services.

Evidence Based Intervention Supplements (Tier 2 and Tier 3)

Intervention Program	Grade Levels	Intervention Approach	Instructional Settings	Contact information
Compass Learning: Odyssey	K-12	Web-based/ computerized assessment and instructional intervention program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Centers • Reading Labs • After school/ • Inter-session programs 	Compass Learning Teeter Longtrain, Senior Account Executive 1109 Contraband Lane Lake Charles, LA 70605 333-477-4172 voice mail: 800-221-7927 x4496
Scott Foresman Early Reading Intervention	K-2	Curriculum Kit includes: Teacher guide, Assessment Handbook, Instructional Intervention Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Classroom intervention 	Scott Foresman Youshi Berry 772 Lassen Drive Corona, CA 92879 909-279-6820
Kaplan K12 Learning Services: Academy of Reading	K-12	Computerized assessment and instructional intervention program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Center • Reading Labs • After school programs • Summer school/Inter-session programs 	KAPLAN K12 Learning Service Royce Mitchell, Director Educational Partnerships 20702 Queens Park Lane Huntington Beach, CA 92646 714-963-8445
Psychological Corporation Process Assessment of the Learner	K-2	Curriculum Kit includes: Teacher Guide, Assessment Guide, Intervention Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Classroom Intervention • After School Programs • Summer school/Inter-session programs 	Psychological Corporation Kathy Edwards 6709 La Tijera Blvd. #854 Los Angeles, CA 90045 310-216-0026
Voyager: Passport to Reading System	K-3	Web-based application for initial assessment, monitoring & analyzing student progress. Includes: Teacher Guide and instructional intervention materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-classroom intervention • Learning Centers • After school programs • Summer school/Inter-session programs 	Voyager Randi Suppe, Executive Director 19412 Harding Lane Huntington Beach, CA 92646 (714) 968-7008 Office (714) 335-8857 Cell
Pearson Digital Learning Waterford: Early Reading Program	K-1	Computer-based assessment, monitoring & instructional intervention program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-classroom intervention • Learning Centers • After-School • Summer/ • Inter-session programs • Special Education 	
Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness and Sight Words	K-3	Systematic decodable text program that develops word recognition strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-classroom intervention • Learning Centers • After school programs • Summer school/inter-session programs 	Scholastic (510) 533-0213

