

2023

## **Educators' Perspectives of How to Support the Reading Needs of Grade 3 through Grade 6 Students with Low SES Resources**

Antoinette Laura Matthews  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Education

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Antoinette Laura Matthews

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

## Review Committee

Dr. Cathryn Walker, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Debera Balthazar, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Kenneth McGrew, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2022

Abstract

Educators' Perspectives of How to Support the Reading Needs of Grade 3 through

Grade 6 Students with Low SES Resources

by

Antoinette Laura Matthews

MS, Walden University, 2018

BS, Paul Quinn College, 2001

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2023

## Abstract

In an urban school district in a southwestern state, the problem investigated was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of Grade 3 through Grade 6 students from families having limited access to economic resources. Students with higher socioeconomic status (SES) outperform students with low SES backgrounds. Students with proficient reading skills demonstrate higher overall academic performance and more post-secondary opportunities. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for Grade 3 through Grade 6 students at the target site. Using Bandura's social learning theory, this study aimed to investigate educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for Grade 3 through Grade 6 students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district. Data were collected via semistructured interviews from 10 participants who met the criteria of having experience as a reading teacher and in delivering reading interventions to Grade 3 through Grade 6 students. Data analysis included using a priori and open coding to identify codes, categories and themes. Themes emerged on (a) professional development (PD), (b) foundational reading skills, and (c) assessment-driven reading interventions. Findings indicated the need for reading PD and interventions based on assessment data. The resultant PD project contributes to social change by developing educators' skills to implement reading interventions resulting in improved student reading performance.

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## Dedication

This study is dedicated to several individuals: To my husband, Craig “Babycakes” Matthews, my protector, provider, best friend, and gift from God. You are the strong wind beneath my weak wings. I could **not** have completed this *secret*, 4-years long endeavor without your love, support, and prayers. Through the ups and downs of this doctoral journey, your commitment to help me finish strong never diminished. To my mother, Janice D. Brown, many years ago, you showed me how to pursue my academic dreams with tenacity and grit as you pursued your own. Thank you for not giving up. You started, so I started; you finished, so I finished too! To my sons, George Holloway and John L. Owens. I will always be eternally grateful that *God chose me* to be your mother. To my 14 grandchildren: Honor God in all you do, and He will bless you beyond your wildest dreams. In memory of my godmother, Georgia M. Barnes. She was my example of unconditional love. I would give *anything* to have her here to celebrate this accomplishment with me; she would be so proud. In memory of my birth father, Rudy R. Bougere, Sr., godfather, Curtis Barnes, Jr. and grandfather, Arnold L. Brown. I loved each of them, but I was especially close to my godfather and my grandfather. My fondest memories are of Sunday morning church services with my godfather, Sabbath worship services with my grandfather, and receiving wise counsel from both. To my closest friends, Marzette, Rena, Sylvia, and Terrie: Thank you for being my faithful sisters in Christ and in life. You’ve been with me through my highs and lows, and I sincerely love each of you for it. My final word is this: God is real, His Son, Jesus, is my Savior, and because of my God’s grace, I am living an Ephesians 3:20 life. Amen! (It is so.)

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **The Local Problem**

The urban study district, Big City ISD (a pseudonym), is located in a southwestern state. The problem investigated was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. According to an administrator at the target site, a primary concern shared during the 2018-2019 back-to-school staff meeting was that students' low scores in reading for students as measured by the state assessment (administrator, personal communication, August 23, 2018). Similarly, during a professional learning community (PLC) meeting, the third-grade teachers discussed their concerns about having the instructional time, materials, and strategies necessary to prepare rising third grade students to demonstrate improvement in reading performance on the state assessment compared to the previous year's scores (Third-grade teachers, personal communication, August 23, 2018). Despite daily campus-based interventions at the target site, a Title I campus, third through sixth grade students' scores have remained below the state standards from 2016 to 2021 (Texas Education Agency, 2020a).

According to reading teachers at the target site, administrators required teachers to implement several interventions to address the poor reading performance of students (Third-grade teachers' PLC meeting, personal communication, August 23, 2018) as demonstrated on state assessments from 2016 to 2021 (Texas Education Agency, 2020a). The interventions included before- and after-school supplemental small group tutoring, a research-based reading program, Read 180, which offers a blend of computer-based and

direct instruction, and small group re-teaching using explicit instruction with no more than six students per group. Despite these many interventions, most students in third through sixth grade continued to perform below the proficiency level required for meeting grade level performance.

The consistent low scores are the reason campus administrators followed the protocol of Big City ISD to add weekly, on-campus grade-level PLC meetings (Third-grade teachers' PLC meeting, personal communication, August 23, 2018.) In the required PLC meetings, educators conducted professional development (PD) that included a focus on reading instruction and intervention. Additionally, each grade-level PLC meeting included a critical review of reading assessment data for all students and open discussions regarding best practices for delivering whole group and small group intervention lessons to students from families having limited access to economic resources and also identified as having difficulties in their reading abilities (Third-grade teachers' PLC meeting, personal communication, August 23, 2018). This study sought to close the gap in practice of teachers struggling to support the reading intervention needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

The population of students from families having limited access to economic resources at the target site has comprised a significant portion of the total enrollment from academic years 2016 to 2021. During this time, the percentage of students from families having limited access to economic resources enrolled totaled 94.6%, 92.5%, and 93.8% respectively (Texas Education Agency, 2020a). Noneducators might argue against socioeconomic status (SES) having any connection to academic performance, but



researchers have documented a connection between low SES and academic performance. Prescott et al. (2018) reported a negative relationship between SES status and reading achievement levels. Katz and Shah (2017) noted that students of higher SES backgrounds have generally outperformed their peers from lower SES backgrounds on prefrontal cortex abilities such as focusing attention where necessary and managing emotions. Tavassolie and Winsler (2019) explained students from families having limited access to economic resources are more likely to fail the annual state assessment. These researchers' findings suggest a possible relationship between SES status and reading achievement. In this study, I applied a qualitative lens to examine educators' perspectives of this potential relationship and reading achievement.

### **Rationale**

Reading is a necessary skill in every K-12 subject area. Additionally, reading is essential to everyday life (Barnard-Brak et al., 2017; Gorzycki et al., 2020; Iruvuri, 2020; Merga & Mat Roni, 2018; Soto et al., 2019; Tanner-Anderson, 2020). Students who struggle with reading at the elementary level may also experience a low annual income, an absence of healthcare insurance, and un- or underemployment (Kuhfeld et al., 2018). The local problem of elementary educators struggling to support the reading needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources and the evidence of students' repeated underperformance despite their engagement in specific reading interventions was justification for inquiry. Additional campus interventions provided evidence of campus administrators' and teachers' intention to address this identified problem.

Educators reported concerns regarding the reading progress for this student population during the 2018 – 2019 back-to-school staff meeting. In a vertical PLC meeting, teachers discussed how even with the daily implementation of intervention lessons and activities, they still struggled to successfully meet students' academic needs in reading (Vertical PLC meeting, personal communication, August 23, 2018). This discussion of struggling to support students' success in reading interventions continued in the grade-level PLC meetings of reading teachers (Third grade reading teachers' PLC meeting, personal communication, August 23, 2018).

The evidence presented in Table 1 reveals the target site's population of students from families having limited access to economic resources, that was more than 90% from 2017 to 2021 (Texas Education Agency, 2020a). Table 1 also shows that of the 10 elementary schools within the same geographical area as the target site, there were three campuses that are comparable to the target site, having SES population percentages with an average greater than 90% from 2017 to 2021 (Texas Education Agency, 2020a) (Table 1). While *Meets Standard* performance scores in reading for third through sixth grade students enrolled at the target site averaged 27%, the average *Meets Standard* performance scores for Campus A, B, and C were 26.3%, 28%, and 34.6%, respectively. The comparison of the four elementary campuses by percent of students from families having limited access to economic resources and percent of students demonstrating *Meets Standard* on the state's annual reading assessment for third through sixth grade students revealed a similar pattern as the target site in terms of a high percentage of students identified as low SES and low reading achievement. Though similar demographics

regarding reading academic performance for third through sixth grade students and the percentage of students identified as low SES are reflected in Table 1 for other elementary sites in the study district, the gap in performance at the elementary target site regarding reading achievement reflected that only 18% of the students passed the state reading assessment in performance in the 2020-2021 school year, compared to 28% in 2017-2018. Table 1 data reflect the overarching context for the reading performance of the elementary target site and provide further justification for why the elementary target site was selected as the focus of this project study.

**Table 1**

*Percentage of Third Through Sixth Grade Students From Families with Low SES Resources and Percentage Demonstrating Reading Proficiency for Target Site and Comparable Elementary Campuses for 2017-2021*

School Years	Target Site	Low SES	Met Standard
2017-2018	Target Site	92.5%	28%
	Campus A	89.2%	28%
	Campus B	87.7%	32%
	Campus C	88.4%	34%
2019-2020	Target Site	93.8%	25%
	Campus A	95.8%	26%
	Campus B	93.6%	27%
	Campus C	93.6%	35%
2019-2020	Target Site	90.0%	*
	Campus A	91.6%	*
	Campus B	97.3%	*
	Campus C	95.0%	*
2020-2021	Target Site	90.6%	18%
	Campus A	94.7%	26%
	Campus B	91.2%	18%
	Campus C	90.6%	21%

*Note.* Data adapted from Texas Education Agency (2020a); \*denotes the cancellation of spring 2020 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Texas Education Agency, 2020e)

Table 2 presents a comparison of the percentage of all third through sixth grade elementary students, district-wide and statewide, whose reading performance was found to have *Met Standard* on the annual state assessment compared to the percentage of students in third through sixth grade at the target site. The overall student state reading proficiency data were 46%, 48%, and 45% for 2017- 2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 respectively. The overall student district reading proficiency data were 42%, 43%, and 47% for 2017- 2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 respectively. Proficiency data were not obtained for 2019-2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The overall student target site reading proficiency data were 28%, 25%, and 18% for 2017- 2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 respectively. These data represent a gap in performance when comparing proficiency scores of students who attended the target site compared to students throughout the same district and across the state. The gap in reading proficiency scores ranged from -18% in 2017-2018 to -27% in 2020-2021.

**Table 2**

*Comparison of Meets Grade Level Standard Category of Reading Scores of Third Through Sixth Grade Students From 2017 to 2021 by Target Site, by Overall District, and by State Scores*

School Years	Target Site (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> grades combined, <i>Meets Standard</i> )	District (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> grades combined, <i>Meets Standard</i> )	Net Difference (Target Site Campus v District)	State (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> grades combined, <i>Meets Standard</i> )	Net Difference (Target Site Campus v State)
2017-2018	28%	42%	-14%	46%	-18%
2018-2019	25%	43%	-18%	48%	-23%
2019-2020	*	*	*	*	*
2020-2021	18%	37%	-19%	45%	-27%

*Note.* Data adapted from Texas Education Agency (2020a) \*denotes the cancellation of spring 2020 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Texas Education Agency, 2020e)

According to Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2020b, 2020c), the state assessment has four performance categories: (a) masters grade level performance, (b) meets grade level performance, (c) approaches grade level performance, and (d) did not meet grade level performance. A pass or fail on the assessment is determined by each student's scale score, which differs per grade level (TEA, 2020d). TEA (2020c) officials published a scale score as a score that is obtained by measuring the number of questions answered correctly while also factoring in the difficulty of each question. Across all grade levels, students were determined to have passed the state assessment if their score was within the *Approaches Grade Level Performance* category (TEA, 2020c). Table 3 presents an illustration of the four performance categories and the scale score requirement for each.

**Table 3**

*Third Through Sixth Grade Reading and Math Assessment Scale Score Performance Standards for Masters, Approaches, Meets, and Did Not Meet Grade Level Performance*

Assessment Name	Masters Grade Level Performance	Meets Grade Level Performance	Approaches Grade Level Performance	Below Grade Level Performance
Grade 3 Math	1596	1486	1360	Below 1360
Grade 4 Math	1670	1589	1467	Below 1467
Grade 5 Math	1724	1625	1500	Below 1500
Grade 6 Math	1772	1653	1536	Below 1536
Grade 3 Reading	1555	1468	1345	Below 1345
Grade 4 Reading	1633	1550	1434	Below 1434
Grade 5 Reading	1667	1582	1470	Below 1470
Grade 6 Reading	1718	1629	1517	Below 1517

*Note.* Data adapted from TEA (2020d)

The percentage of students from families having limited access to economic resources meeting the grade-level reading proficiency standards for the state remains a concern of administrators of the elementary target site. Though a single program, practice, or resource has not been identified as the reason students struggle with reading, no sole solutions have been suggested (Stevens et al., 2020). It is well-established according to the target site's daily required reading intervention, tutoring efforts, and students' performance on the state's annual reading assessment that that reading



educators of an elementary target site within a southwestern state are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Despite the daily occurrence of campus-based reading interventions, students' academic performance in reading has not met the state's standards from 2017-2021 (TEA, 2020a). The 2020 assessment was cancelled due to the Covid epidemic (TEA, 2020e). Thus, the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Accommodations:* An accommodation is a pre-set, uniquely designed type of support offered to students based on universal screenings or daily teacher observations (Dixon et al., 2019).

*Assessment:* An assessment is a paper-and-pencil or computer-based program used by educators to determine the specific information or individual skills students have mastered (Buffum et al., 2018).

*Attention:* The first stage of Bandura's social learning theory; the stage where learners see the desired behavior. (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018)

*Differentiated instruction:* A type of instruction based on a student's learning style and the level of readiness he/she has demonstrated (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013).

*Educator:* Relative to this study, the term refers to an individual who is a certified teacher but may not be currently positioned as a classroom teacher at the target

elementary site in the 2020-2021 school year. Examples of such individuals include literacy specialists, instructional coaches, interventionists, and counselors.

*Intervention:* An intervention is the use of a program or activity focused on supporting students as they work to learn grade-level skills (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2018).

*Literacy:* The term literacy means the ability to read and write (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2018).

*Retention:* The second stage of Bandura's social learning theory; the ability to internalize what was shown. (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018)

*Motivation:* The final stage of Bandura's social learning theory; imitation of behavior via reinforcement. (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018)

*Motor reproduction:* The third stage of Bandura's social learning theory; practicing the modeled behavior. (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018)

*Remediation:* Remediation is the support given to a student who is working to learn below-level skills (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2018).

*Small group instruction:* Small group instruction is a specific pre-scheduled time especially set aside to work with students in need of extra support or to provide extension activities to students already performing on-level (Dixon et al., 2019)

*Socioeconomic status (SES):* The socioeconomic status (SES) includes a determination of a combination of income, education, occupation, and perceptions (American Psychological Association, 2020).

*State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR):* A state assessment program created to measure the extent of learning of students in Grades 3-12; the assessment is based on state required standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS; TEA, 2020c).

*Universal screening:* Universal screening is a process commonly completed immediately prior or at the beginning of a new school year to identify specific students having scores below grade-level range and which skills they have not mastered (Buffum et al., 2018).

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this basic qualitative study is that it will advance the current understanding of campus administrators, district leaders, and other educators regarding teachers' perspectives of reading interventions and intervention resources for third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources at the target site. The findings from this study also serve as the foundation for a PD I have developed and will provide to the district. Due to the low performance of third through sixth grade students on the state's annual reading assessment from 2017-2021 (TEA, 2020b), a need for inquiry regarding educators' perspectives of the reason current reading interventions have not been successful is necessary. The findings of this study could lead to administrators' improved understanding of the participants' perspectives regarding reading interventions and increase their knowledge of why current reading interventions have not been successful. Additionally, the findings could lead to the empowerment of teachers at the target site. Teacher empowerment in the form of shared decision-making

among teachers and administrators (Balyer et al., 2017) regarding the use of interventions and intervention resources could lead to a positive improvement in practice, which may also lead to positive changes in student performance on the annual reading assessment. This study could lead to instructional changes that will contribute to positive social change by increasing the numbers of literate students matriculating through K-12 schools and the percentage of future on-time graduates (Vaughn et al., 2019). Literacy has been determined to have significant value in many ways, especially in its relationship to a higher quality of life (Scerri et al., 2019).

### **Research Question**

The research question that guided this study was developed based on the problem and purpose and was used to design the interview instrument. Each interview contributed to exploring the perspectives of educators regarding reading interventions and any supports that may be needed to fortify reading intervention instruction for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

This research question was used to guide the study:

RQ1: What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district?

### **Review of the Literature**

In an elementary school located in an urban school district in a southwestern state, educators are struggling support the reading academic needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Their efforts to

support students' academic improvement have included before school tutoring, after school tutoring, and daily reading intervention as a part of the master schedule created by campus administrators. Even with these efforts, students have continued to struggle to reach grade-level performance in the content of reading (TEA (2020a)).

To better understand the problem investigated by this study, this review of the literature initiates with a definition and description of its conceptual framework, followed by a review of the literature on the following topic-related themes: connections between low SES, or students from families having limited access to economic resources, and academic achievement, assessing the reading levels of third through sixth grade students, academic needs of third through sixth grade struggling readers, the role of educators in academic achievement, and reading interventions for third through sixth grade students. In the next section, I discuss the conceptual framework for this basic qualitative study.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Social learning theory (SLT) is the conceptual framework that undergirds this study. SLT, authored by Bandura (1971), supports learning by observation. Bandura (1971) suggested new behaviors can be learned by direct engagement with others and those behaviors can determine the pathway of future choices. The learning that occurs as a result of observing the modeled attitudes and behaviors of others supports the idea that with modeling, students can learn in any setting if the processes that support learning are embedded in the learning process and if the student experiences the four learning components (see Bandura, 1971). The quantitative study of Delaney et al., (2019) documented students' learning which occurred through the modeled behavior of others

during group work posted on an Internet-based discussion board. The authors chose the SLT as the conceptual framework and they noted a positive learning outcome based on the students' ability to collectively engage and learn from one another through observing the online responses of others via the discussion board (Delaney et al., 2019).

According to Hranchuk et al. (2019), the observation of a modeled behavior can lead to the acquisition of that same behavior based on the four observational learning processes. Bandura (1971) identified the four observational learning processes as (a) attention, (b) retention, (c) motor reproduction, and (d) motivation (see Table 4). Each of these learning processes, according to Bandura, should be included in the instructional modeling implemented during Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions. This suggested learning through modeling and observation is common practice in elementary classrooms. To get the greatest level of student participation and improved academic outcomes, teachers' lesson planning should, as explained by Bandura, incorporate an intentional focus on all four of areas of the SLT. For example, when teachers design small group reading intervention lessons and activities focused on a specific skill or set of skills, attention to each part of Bandura's SLT should be included. The teacher's modeling of the skill or skills should be offered in a way that captures students' attention. The teacher's modeled behavior must offer grade-level challenge, but be meaningful enough for retention to take place. Immediately following the modeled action, students must be able to replicate the academic behavior demonstrated. The modeling activity must be presented in a way that leads to students being motivated to duplicate the educators' modeled behavior. Each of these learning processes is important to this study

as they are intricate parts of the mental and physical engagement that occurs as educators explore various ways to increase student learning through modeled behaviors in the reading class and across all content courses. Table 4 presents an illustration of the components of the SLT and application to the anticipated application to the current study.

**Table 4**

*SLC Components and Anticipated Application to Study*

---

SLT Component	Application to Current Study
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' choice of topics</li> <li>- Teachers' choice of materials</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' choice of materials</li> <li>- Teachers' modeling</li> <li>- Teachers' choice of how much practice time is embedded into the lesson or independent activities</li> </ul>
Motor Reproduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' choice of how students will practice the modeling they witnessed during the lesson</li> <li>- Teachers' choice of when students will practice the modeling they witnessed during the lesson</li> </ul>
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' choice of topics</li> <li>- Teachers' choice of materials</li> </ul>

---

In this study, I sought to understand the perspectives of educators regarding why reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students of the target population related to a single Title I elementary school due to the problem of elementary educators struggling to support the reading needs third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, who represent the

majority of students enrolled. In the next section, I review the topics reviewed in this study along with the search strategies used to secure the literature related to each topic.

### **Review of the Broader Problem**

To compile this literature review, I explored various educational databases within the Walden University Library. I explored SAGE, ERIC, Education Source, and ProQuest. Additionally, I explored Google Scholar on each topic. To conduct each literature search, I used the keywords *academic progress, academic achievement, student achievement, academic disparities, educators, low SES and student achievement, low performing, needs of struggling readers, supports for struggling readers, struggling readers, upper elementary struggling readers, assessing struggling readers, reading assessments, role of reading teachers, reading teachers in upper elementary, reading teachers, reading interventions, reading interventions for upper elementary, reading supports, and reading supports for upper elementary*. My review presents a review of the literature around the interconnected subtopics of this study: connections between low SES and academic achievement, assessments and the identification of Kindergarten through Grade 6 struggling readers, assessing reading levels of struggling readers in Grade 3 through Grade 6, role of teachers as communicators, and research-based reading interventions.

Before focusing on review of the literature, it is necessary to clarify what it means to teach reading and to identify which components of effective reading instruction are presented to students on the state's annual assessment. According to National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, 2000), effective reading instruction is



made up of five important pieces: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. When students are afforded consistent, effective instruction that focuses on these five areas, the anticipation is that they will become successful readers. This review of the literature begins with a review of the current research on the connections between low SES and academic achievement (NICHD, 2000). Table 5 presents an illustration of the five essential components of effective reading instruction.

**Table 5***National Reading Panel's Five Essential Components of Effective Reading Instruction*

Component	Definition
Phonemic awareness	The understanding that words are made up of individual units of sounds that when blended together create words. The individual units of sounds are called phonemes.
Phonics	The understanding of the relationship between letters (graphemes) and corresponding sounds (phonemes) for the purpose of spelling and decoding while reading.
Fluency	The ability to quickly recognize words when reading while simultaneously using accurate tone to give the reading a natural sound.
Vocabulary	The understanding of listening words and speaking words as words we use in normal oral engagements with others; reading words as words we quickly recognize when seen in print; writing words as words we use when engaging in the action of writing.
Comprehension	The ability to obtain accurate understanding by connecting the words in the text to one's background knowledge or schema. Comprehension is the ultimate intended goal of reading.

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*Note.* NICHD, 2000

## **Connections Between Having Limited Access to Economic Resources and Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement and students identified as having limited access to economic resources continue to be a focal point of independent research as political, local, and community leaders remain committed to better understand the connection, if any, between these two. Bradley and Corwyn (2002) explained, “Several ways of measuring SES have been proposed, but most include some quantification of family income, parental education, and occupational status” (p. 371). In a U.S. based study conducted by Katz and Shah (2017) and a European based study completed by von Stumm (2017), researchers’ use of the term low SES in each study was determined by parents’ education and occupation. Researchers have found evidence that supports the claim that students with low SES do not perform as well, academically, as their peers from higher SES backgrounds (Destin et al., 2019; Katz & Shah, 2017; von Stumm, 2017). For instance, in a quantitative European study of nearly 6,000 participants, von Stumm hypothesized SES would be positively associated with the academic performance of children at age seven, showing academic gains from students 7-16 years of age. On the contrary, the researcher found children from families having limited access to economic resources performed worse, academically, in their earlier years of education than their peers from families having a higher socioeconomic status (von Stumm, 2017). Likewise, according to the quantitative research findings of Destin et al. (2019), students from families in which the parents have access to greater levels of income and have more years of education were found to be more likely to exemplify higher levels of academic

performance than students from families where the parents have less income and fewer years of education. In contrast to the research of von Stumm, the findings of Destin et al. highlighted students' beliefs, or mindsets, about their performance ability as a contributing factor to the disparities in academic achievement between students from higher SES families and students from families having limited access to economic resources. Another essential point regarding the possible connection between having limited access to economic resources and academic achievement was suggested by Katz and Shah, who conducted a qualitative study focused on the likelihood of children's SES backgrounds affecting their mental processes or cognitive abilities. Participants included two data sets of children 6-18 years of age who completed cognitive training, which included thinking-before-speaking, setting goals, handling frustration, and using past experiences as opportunities for positive reflections and positive future choices.

Mirroring the findings of Destin et al.(2019) and von Stumm (2017), Katz and Shah (2017) suggested even with the use of differentiated interventions, children from families having limited access to economic resources may not show the same level of academic progress or performance in cognitive functions as their peers from higher SES backgrounds. However, in the qualitative study of Bowers and Schwarz (2018), researchers found significant improvement in the reading scores of students from families having limited access to economic resources who participated in a summer reading program designed to improve oral and written narrative skills in reading and writing. Researchers noted no significant measurements were found in reading fluency or reading comprehension (Bowers & Schwarz, 2018). While each of these researchers used

different methodologies to identify performance gaps, a commonality is that they collectively offered confirmation of the relationship between academic achievement and students from families having limited access to economic resources. Though each of the authors referenced found evidence of poor performance of students from families having limited access to economic resources, their findings did not include references regarding research methodology or identification of assessments used to differentiate low performers among participants. Assessments are essential prerequisites in instructional decision making and they are vital toward identification of struggling readers (Nordström et al., 2019).

### **Assessments and the Identification of K-6 Struggling Readers**

Assessments are an integral part of the process of identifying and supporting students from families having limited access to economic resources as some of them may also be struggling readers. According to Nordström et al. (2019), assessments, which may be varied in frequency and application, are necessary to identify struggling readers and foundational learning gaps. The importance of reading assessments was documented in the quantitative study of Missall et al. (2019) which included 980 student participants in kindergarten through sixth grade along with 51 homeroom teachers. The study's topic was focused on the feasibility of identifying struggling readers based on a single assessment compared to the use of at least two measurements for data-based decision-making (Missall et al., 2019). Researchers found the use of teacher ratings and rankings of students' reading levels to be highly accurate and suggested teachers' personal

assessments should be included when collecting data to determine the next instructional steps for student learning (Missall, et al., 2019).

The decision to use a combination of assessments that follow each lesson or those that follow an entire unit are generally at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

According to Saeed et al. (2018), the teacher's implementation of both formative and summative assessments is essential to nurture and enhance learning across all contents at the primary and secondary levels of a child's learning. While Saeed et al. asserted the importance of teachers having a thorough understanding of their rationale for the use of each assessment *for learning* and each assessment *of learning*, Nordström et al. (2019) agreed with the suggestion of using more than one source to assess students' reading skills. Additionally, researchers suggested teachers use assessment data to determine reading intervention activities based on each students' academic need (Nordström et al., 2019). According to the findings from these studies, reading assessments provide teachers with opportunities to engage in data-driven reading instruction to support students' acquisition of the skill of reading.

Acquiring the invaluable skill of reading is typically gained at the primary level of a child's education, but not all primary students demonstrate mastery. According to The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2018), fourth grade reading scores showed poorer performance in 2019 than 2017. Similarly, The NCES also reported only one-third of fourth grade students read at grade level proficiency. These reports point to a national problem of too few students acquiring the foundational skills needed to master the task of reading at the primary levels of learning. Researchers agree that teaching and

assessing students' reading levels and abilities as early as possible is a vital precursor to identifying struggling readers and providing intervention support to students whose reading assessment data provide evidence of learning gaps (Hautala et al., 2020; January et al., 2018; Missall et al., 2019; Thomson et al., 2020; VanMeveren et al., 2020).

The process of teaching a student to read requires frequently assessing students' reading abilities using multiple methods and analyzing the collected data to achieve a holistic identification of struggling readers. Using various forms of assessment may increase a teacher's ability to help bolster students' reading performance by assigning skills-targeted interventions based on individual need (VanMeveren et al., 2020). However, according to Liebfreund and Amendum (2017), offering too many assessments might cause teachers to become conflicted about how to use the assessments in concert rather than giving more consideration to one over the other. While offering multiple reading assessments has great value, offering assessments that also considers students' socioeconomic status, academic and personal schema, and general interests are valuable considerations.

An example of an assessment that could be considered high-interest is a games-based assessment (GBA) since students from all economic backgrounds enjoy games. One such assessment was investigated in a quantitative European study that included 723 student participants from first to fourth grades focused on using a GBA in reading as a primary assessment tool for the identification of struggling readers (Hautala et al., 2020). In addition to students, the participant group also included classroom teachers as supervisors during two GBAs of 25-60 minutes and 40-90 minutes, respectively (Hautala

et al., 2020). Researchers determined GBAs successfully identified students with reading difficulties and showed the greatest positive results in the identification of students' reading fluency. Similarly, the quantitative study of Thomson et al. (2020) focused on the ability to use student-friendly gameplay to adequately measure students' reading abilities, which, according to researchers, includes students' cognitive abilities and phonological awareness. Participants of the study included a mixed ability group of 137 primary-level students who played the assessment game over a timeframe of 25 weeks. At the conclusion of the study, researchers found evidence that showed the at-risk students make the lowest amount of progress (Thomson et al., 2020). While researchers of these studies found similar results, neither offered suggestions regarding how often students should be engage in reading assessments.

Equally important to determining the most appropriate assessment types, is the task of determining the most appropriate assessment frequency. Though studies of Hautala et al. (2020) and Thomson et al. (2020) included details, methodologies, and findings about GBA sessions and session timings, neither included suggestions on regularity for ongoing use of GBAs. However, in a quantitative study comparing the effectiveness of weekly reading assessments versus monthly and bi-monthly reading assessments, January et al. (2018) concluded progress monitoring for reading improvement conducted monthly or bimonthly may yield the most accurate results, with bimonthly assessing being the favored option. Researchers suggested the bimonthly option because they found it to offer the most reasonable approximation of weekly growth (January et al., 2018) and offered a better set of data regarding academic progress.



Regular assessments are needed to identify struggling readers, to support in-need students from families having limited access to economic resources, and also to identify the skills, strategies, and accommodations students may need.

### **Needs of K-6 Struggling Readers**

Many students across the United States struggle to acquire adequate reading skills and thus fail to demonstrate the ability to proficiently perform grade-level reading tasks. As a result, students who demonstrate reading abilities below the grade level standard, those identified as struggling readers, are identified as students in need of extra support to help increase their motivation to read, positive self-efficacy, and opportunities to engage in the action of reading (Ahlfeld, 2020; Haas et al., 2017; Ives et al., 2020; Ortlieb & Schatz, 2020; Parsons et al., 2018; Schimmel & Ness, 2017; Witmer et al., 2018). Of these three areas of need for the struggling reader, motivation is reviewed first.

During the earliest years of a child's education, students from higher income families along with students from families having limited access to economic resources are highly motivated to attend school and to learn to read, but this changes over time. In a descriptive qualitative study that included a convenience sample of 1,104 upper elementary students across seven states in Grade 3 through Grade 6, researchers' findings corroborated the findings in previous studies that showed the decline in students' motivation to read as they moved from lower to upper elementary grades (Parsons et al., 2018). Though finding effective ways to motivate students to read can be a challenge, several researchers have found success.

While educators across the nation may argue that too many students in general, but most especially students from families having limited access to economic resources, are unable to be motivated to read, not all researchers would agree. According to Ives et al. (2020), students *can* be motivated to increase the amount of time they spend reading both on-campus and away from school based on their academic experiences in the classroom. The researchers conducted a quantitative exploratory study of students' motivation to read, which included 195 upper elementary participants in Grade 3 through Grade 5 in which students used *The Self-Regulation Questionnaire – Reading Motivation* survey to explain that they were equally motivated to read while on-campus and when away-from-school (Ives et al., 2020). Researchers explained that students' positive motivations to read fiction and nonfiction in the classroom and away-from-school may have been the result of teachers' in-class encouragement, exposure to a variety of genre, and the allowance of students to frequently engage in self-selection of texts (Ives et al., 2020). The question then might not be '*Can my students be motivated to read,*' but rather '*What can I do to motivate my students to read?*' Based on the findings of Ives et al., (2020) perhaps the concern for students from families having limited access to economic resources and struggling readers is not connected to their motivation, but to their belief in themselves.

For reading teachers at all levels of experience, motivating struggling readers and students from families having limited access to economic resources, identified as struggling readers, may be the goal, but the barrier of self-efficacy is sometimes an unavoidable stumbling block. While an increase in student motivation would be more

appealing than a decrease, the goal is to shape and nurture students who *will* read over students who simply *can* read (Ahlfeld, 2020). Motivation is vital to the good reader and the lack of it affects students' self-efficacy or the belief they hold for themselves within themselves to be able to meet their own goals, personally or academically (Ortlieb & Schatz, 2020).

What others perceive about students is important, but what they believe about themselves is even more important because that belief is essential to their success as readers. Regarding reading achievement, student's self-efficacy can be significantly influenced by teachers, peers, and others in their school community (Ortlieb & Schatz, 2020). This point was made by Johnston and Martelli (2019) as the researchers shared how prospective teachers from the college of education at a local university successfully planned and executed a literacy festival where teachers, librarians, authors, and students attending Title I schools across several counties were invited to attend and actively participate. The researchers' goal was to expose students to various genre and several authors to encourage students from families having limited access to economic resources to independently make the choice to increase their time spent reading.

Encouraging students to engage in the act of reading texts from several genre is the constant goal of all reading teachers. Similar to the research conducted on motivation by Parsons et al. (2018), Ahlfeld (2020) asserted that students exemplify greater motivation and demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy when they experience opportunities to engage in self-selection from a broad range of genre, but the findings of the study revealed that students with a low sense of self-efficacy could be negatively

influenced by the teachers' pre-determined beliefs about their abilities or about their reading interests. According to Ahlfeld (2020), a common error of many teachers is making presumptions about readers based on femineity, masculinity, age, or society. Though Parsons et al. (2018) documented that gender differences influenced students' motivation to read, Ahlfeld (2020) shared the error of educators in making assumptions about gender with regard to students' ability or willingness to engage in reading. When students possess the ability to read and the willingness to engage in the activity of reading, then teachers have a pathway to increase in opportunities to engage in independent reading.

When students successfully learn to read and are introduced to a variety of genre during the early years of their education, they may easily grow to enjoy independent reading and become lifelong readers. According to Erbeli and Rice (2022), including a time of sustained silent reading within the school day has been a practice of many educators to improve students' reading abilities. In a different quantitative study focused on the comparison of oral and silent reading on student comprehension, silent reading was found to be superior to oral reading in the area of recall for narrative passages, but the outcome was the same for expository passages (Schimmel & Ness, 2017). The findings of these studies support the suggestion that all students need regular opportunities to engage in independent reading, preferably sustained silent reading. One of the roles of the reading teacher is to communicate to students which days and times they are expected to engage in sustained silent reading.

**Role of the Teacher: Communicator**

The position of an elementary teacher is vital and is comprised of multiple responsibilities, or roles, essential for students' academic progress. For example, reciprocal communication among teachers, parents, and students is a non-negotiable part of the learning process for the struggling reader (Varghese et al., 2019; Witmer et al., 2018). If teachers fail to communicate, the needs of students could go unmet. In a qualitative study that included special education teachers along with special education students as participants, Witmer et al. (2018) used face-to-face interviews and surveys to uncover a primary hindrance to students' ability to obtain accommodations and other academic services was a lack of effective communication from or between teachers. In short, communication among stakeholders is vital, but the most important communication for the purpose of a student's academic progress should come from the teacher. Lack of communication among stakeholders could result in struggling readers and students from families having limited access to economic resources not receiving the accommodations necessary for academic success.

Similar to the importance of teacher-to-teacher communication is the urgency of teacher-to-student communication, which is believed to positively influence positive outcomes, academically and behaviorally. The connection between teacher-student relationships and academic outcomes was studied in a qualitative investigation by Varghese et al. (2019), which included a combination of 503 struggling and non-struggling elementary readers and 52 elementary teachers. Researchers gathered data in the form of student assessments and teacher questionnaires and found a correlation

between teachers' perspectives of conflict with students and negative student behaviors (Varghese et al., 2019). The researchers' findings supported the suggestion that teachers should make conscious and continuous effort toward building positive teacher-student relationships with students at all socioeconomic levels to increase the likelihood of positive student behaviors and positive academic progress.

Year-long communication from teacher-to-teacher and from teacher-to-student is one of the most essential components needed for the manifestation of a student's success across all subjects. Though researchers Varghese et al. (2019) and Witmer et al. (2018) focused on two different roles of the reading teacher as a communicator, their findings simultaneously documented the positive outcomes that are possible when teachers prioritize their role as a communicator. Both researchers documented that teachers' intentional communication, along with data from ongoing assessments, can more easily identify which academic interventions may best support the struggling reader and students from families having limited access to economic resources.

### **Research-Based Reading Interventions**

Students from families having limited access to economic resources and those identified as struggling readers may become better readers with consistent engagement in research-based reading interventions, or small-group learning sessions, focused on missed or misunderstood skills. Three examples of research-based reading intervention programs used at the target site of this qualitative study are Scholastic's Read 180, Guided Reading, and Istation. This review of this portion of the literature highlights each

intervention program's targeted group, philosophical approach, and relevant current research, starting with Read 180.

Scholastic's Read 180 program, was created to support struggling readers. What Works Clearinghouse describes the targeted group for Read 180 as students who have demonstrated reading proficiency at 2 or more years below grade level expectations (U.S. Department of Education, What Works Clearinghouse, 2016). In a quasi-experimental study conducted by Haines et al. (2018), the learning approach of Read 180 is described as balanced literacy, which is based on the five essential components of effective reading instruction (NICHD, 2000), plus spelling and writing. Researchers of the quantitative study used Read 180 as an intervention program for the purpose of determining the longitudinal performance of 41 below-level participants in fourth through sixth grade and 41 on-level performers from the same grades (Haines et al., 2018). Researchers found the participants identified as below-level continued to make normal on-level progress even 2 years after successfully completing the Read 180 intervention. In short, researchers found Read 180 to be an effective reading intervention program for students identified as struggling readers.

Another program designed to support struggling readers is *guided reading*. Though used as an intervention program or activity on many campuses, Fountas and Pinnell (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017) described guided reading as daily, small-group instruction intended to support the reading development of all students instead of being reserved specifically for below-level readers. According to Bose (2017), guided reading

was created to be a component of balanced literacy. Like Read 180, guided reading also requires teacher involvement along with student engagement.

Before engaging in guided reading, data must be reviewed, and groups must be created. Teachers create reading groups based on each student's instructional level, or the level at which they are able to experience success with teacher guidance (Beach et al., 2018; Clay, 1991). In each reading group, students typically share similar academic needs identified according to their reading behaviors, missing reading skills, or unused reading strategies (Young, 2019). Another characteristic of guided reading, according to Young, is that teachers meet with each group for the purpose of skill-building and to offer daily opportunities to implement reading skills and reading strategies while simultaneously engaged in oral reading.

Though Guided Reading is believed to be one of the most effective research-based practices, not all researchers agree on the effectiveness of the intervention. For example, Young (2019) discussed research that found the guided reading intervention program to be ineffective. However, in a quasi-experimental quantitative study that examined the influence of guided reading on student's pre- and post- test DRA2 scores, Young found guided reading was an effective program to help support student growth in reading. Participants of the study included 79 elementary school students from six different classes within a single campus where the majority of participants were identified as students from families having limited access to economic resources. The total participant group was divided into two groups: the treatment group and the comparison group. The treatment group received approximately 13,500 minutes of guided reading



throughout the school year and their pre- and post- test results showed a treatment effect of 3.66 (Young, 2019). In contrast, the comparison class received about 5,400 minutes of guided reading and their pre- and post- test results showed a treatment effect of 1.34 (Young, 2019). Based on the research findings, Young suggested teachers meet with struggling readers as often as possible to realize the greatest benefit to struggling readers. Guided reading and Read 180 depended upon the combination of teacher involvement and student engagement, but Istation, the third intervention program used by the target site, does not.

While teacher-led interventions are probably most commonly used at the elementary level, computer-based interventions such as Istation are also used to help close learning gaps and increase student performance. Though teacher-led small group interventions may generally be considered best-practice, individualized computer-adaptive programs allow students to receive personalized learning (Baker et al., 2017) by the adaptive characteristic of the program. Istation's literacy balanced instructional model focuses on the five essential components of effective reading instruction (NICHD, 2000) while also offering diagnostic assessments purposed to track student progress based on each computer-based assessment (Baker et al., 2017). Claims of the effectiveness of Istation had not gone unnoticed by researchers.

To better understand the claims of how Istation may be able to support student learning, researchers engaged in inquiry, data collection, analysis, and documentation of findings regarding the intervention program. To investigate whether the use of Istation would influence students' reading proficiency, Luo et al. (2017) conducted research using

a mixed-method approach along with two groups of human subjects. Participants of the study included a convenience sampling of 98 third grade students enrolled at an urban elementary school in the Southeastern region of the United States along with three teachers. Prior to the start of the intervention, three tiered groups were established numbering 18, 37, and 43, from low to high, respectively. Additionally, prior to starting the intervention, teachers were required to complete a 60-minute, face-to-face training. Throughout the study, students were required to complete one campus-based 30-minute session on Istation per day.

At the conclusion of the study, researchers found Istation to be an effective intervention. The researchers' findings were based on an increase in the participant numbers in tier 1 and tier 2 and a concurrent decrease in tier 3 from September to January (Luo et al., 2017). Similarly, in a quantitative study also focused on the effectiveness of a computer-adaptive reading program, Sutter et al. (2019) found student participants initially categorized as the lowest in performance demonstrated the greatest gains as a result of using the Istation reading intervention program. One significant difference between the findings of the two studies was that the participants in the Luo et al. study engaged in Istation activities a minimum of 30-minutes per day while at school and the participants in the Sutter et al. study engaged in Istation activities 90-minutes per day with time spent on the program being divided between on-campus and at-home time. Finally, the result common to both studies is that researchers determined Istation to be an effective reading intervention program, based on participants' positive progress from pre- to post- test that measured reading gains as a result of the intervention.

## Implications

Based on the target site's annual reading achievement scores of students in third through sixth grade, the percentage of students who *Met Standard* was not greater than 28% between 2016 – 2021. Annual reading achievement data for 2020 was not available because of district-wide school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic (TEA, 2020e). This repeated high failure rate is the concern of campus and district leaders. Campus leaders' efforts to close students' learning gaps and improve student performance was evident in their implementation of research-based interventions such as before-and-after-school tutoring, Read 180, and small group re-teaching. However, even with the combination of Tier 1, also called on-level, whole group instruction and the use of teacher-directed, research-based interventions, greater than 70% of third through sixth grade students failed to show on-level performance in reading. According to Filderman et al. (2019), while research shows the use of research-based reading interventions has been proven to positively support student learning at the primary level, it also shows some students may demonstrate repeated insufficient outcomes to the same interventions (Filderman et al., 2019). Uncovering the specific gap(s) in practice regarding the phenomenon of this study requires additional research. Therefore, to gain a deeper, clearer understanding of students' low performance, it is necessary to collect and analyze the perspectives of educators who provide reading intervention support regarding why reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students in the target population of this study. According to Alenizi (2019), understanding the perceptions of teachers may unearth instructional approaches that prove to be more

effective toward a desired academic end. Additionally, understanding the perspectives of teachers participating in this study may help guide campus leaders as they make decisions about time allowances for core classes and interventions, schedule PD related to campus-based interventions and intervention resources, and choose which campus-wide or grade specific interventions and intervention resources to purchase or implement.

The data collected during this research contains rich descriptions of educators' lived experiences related to implementing reading interventions. A 3-day PD project resulted from the study findings with an overarching goal of better preparing educators who deliver reading intervention instruction and activities to third through sixth grade students from families having limited economic resources to more effectively engage in each process. The intent of the PD project is to strengthen reading interventions by increasing the knowledge and critical skills of reading to teachers regarding how to design and implement reading interventions thereby improving students' reading performance.

### **Summary**

In this basic qualitative study, I investigated the problem of elementary educators located in an urban district in a southwestern state struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The review of literature to support this study included a focus on Bandura's social learning theory, the conceptual framework of this study, in which Bandura suggested learning occurs via attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Regarding the connectivity between having limited access to economic resources and

academic achievement, researchers found evidence that students from families having limited access to economic resources do not perform, academically, as well as students from families having a high SES or background (Destin et al., 2019; Katz & Shah, 2017; von Stumm, 2017). Further, the academic abilities of students are not determined by their SES, but rather by reading assessments that determined learning gaps and instructional needs. Nordström et al. (2019) and Missall et al. (2019) explained that assessments are a necessary part of the process in the identification of struggling readers and to understand their foundational learning skill levels. After the identification of students in need of reading intervention, research shows it is necessary to focus on providing support based on each student's specific needs, which can include increasing their motivation and self-efficacy (Ahlfeld, 2020; Haas et al., 2017; Ives et al., 2020; Ortlieb & Schatz, 2020; Parsons et al., 2018; Schimmel & Ness, 2017; Witmer et al., 2018). Supporting the reading needs of students who struggle to demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading also requires the consistent engagement of teachers as communicators with parents, students, and with other teachers (Varghese et al., 2019; Witmer et al., 2018). When stakeholders engage in effective communication, students win. When students are afforded opportunities to engage in research-based reading interventions, such as Scholastic's Read 180, Guided Reading, and Istation their experience of academic *winning* has the highest likelihood of occurring.

Despite the students' participation in site-based tutoring and interventions focused on reading, the percentage of students who successfully met grade-level reading standards on state assessments from 2017 – 2021 was less than 30%. Though campus-

based interventions were a part of the daily instructional plan for all third through sixth grade reading students, more than 70% of the students were unsuccessful in their quest to demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading on the annual state assessment. This outcome is different than the research findings of Wanzek, et al. (2020) that showed students who participated in reading interventions substantially *outperformed* students from the comparison group on standards-based reading comprehension measures. The contrast in outcomes presents the need for further research on the topic of this study and supports providing campus leaders with this study's research findings regarding educators' perspective regarding why reading interventions have not been successful. Results obtained and shared with campus and district leaders could be used to determine future strategies for reading interventions and intervention resources for third through sixth graders students from families having limited access to economic resources.

The project that emerged as a result of this study was a 3-day PD deliverable specifically intended for campus-based and district office educators who plan or provide reading intervention instruction for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The PD project focuses on providing attending educators with foundational research regarding reading intervention and included learning sessions that included research-based system and procedures that support improving reading intervention implementation and academic outcomes.

In the upcoming Methodology section, I discuss the research design chosen for this basic qualitative study. I also describe the study participants, the applied participant inclusion criteria, the target site, data collection method, data collection instrument, data

analysis including the identification of codes, categories, themes, and research findings.

The end of Section 2 includes an answer to the research question and a detailed description of the project genre I selected for the study, a 3-day PD project, *Intervention Transformation*.

## Section 2: The Methodology

The problem explored in this study was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. Evidence of the need for this inquiry showed data revealing the elementary site's enrollment of students from families having limited access to economic resources was greater than 90% from 2016 – 2021 (TEA, 2020a). Furthermore, the target elementary site has an average of 24.75% of third through sixth grade students successfully meeting grade level performance standards on the state's annual reading assessment from 2016 – 2021 (TEA 2020a).

In this qualitative study, I examined the perspectives of educators using a basic qualitative research design. The research question for this study focused on educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources at the target site. The research question was used to help develop the interview instrument. The interview questions explored more deeply the methods, strategies and assessments that teachers used as they related to the implementation of reading interventions. Educators' perspectives of assessing the need for interventions, students' mastery of skills, and resources and PD needs related to reading were explored using carefully aligned



interview protocol questions and probes. The following research question guided this study:

RQ1: What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district?

Using a basic qualitative methodology enabled me to obtain rich data that helped me have a better, clearer understanding of participating educators' perspectives at the target site. The findings of this basic qualitative study will provide the target site's educational leaders with critical data needed to understand the perspectives of site-based educators regarding reading interventions. Additionally, findings of this study will support educational leaders' efforts to improve reading intervention activities for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. In the next section, I describe the chosen research design for this study and approach along with the data collection and data analysis methods.

### **Qualitative Research Design and Approach**

As the intention of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students of the target population, a qualitative approach was determined to be the most appropriate over a quantitative or mixed-methods approach. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), qualitative research involves individuals having broad or specific experience with a certain phenomenon. Different than quantitative research, which involves data examined from a numerical point, a qualitative approach focuses on

understanding situations or occurrences. Further, a qualitative approach is the consideration of the lived experiences of an individual or group regarding a certain phenomenon or event having an unexplained cause or root (Zahavi, 2019). Common research design options for the qualitative approach include case study research, ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and narrative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). According to Babbie (2017), qualitative research focuses on collecting data rooted in people's lived experiences without converting it into a numerical format. Of these designs, this study used the basic qualitative design to unearth understanding of the experiences of research participants.

### **Description of Qualitative Design Used**

The qualitative tradition, or research design, that was used for this study was the basic qualitative design. As the goal of this study is exclusively to understand the phenomenon of educators struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, the basic qualitative design is most appropriate. While Creswell (2013) described narrative, ethnography, phenomenology, case study, and grounded theory as the five different qualitative approaches to qualitative research, Merriam and Tisdell (2009) recognized those same approaches, but also included the basic qualitative design. Kahlke (2014) synonymously refers to the basic qualitative approach as the generic qualitative approach. Merriam and Tisdell and Kahlke defined basic qualitative study as being interpretive and rooted in constructivism since researchers do not discover meaning but, instead, meaning is constructed or created from the interactions with study participants. Kahlke and

Merriam and Tisdell also described the basic qualitative approach as not being loyal to any particular methodological viewpoint but rather meaning is often constructed through research. To pursue participants' perspectives regarding the problem of this study, the basic qualitative design, undergirded by Bandura's (1971) SLT was used to understand the stated phenomenon. Bandura suggests learning is possible via observed modeling and through direct engagement with others. Bandura further suggested that these two avenues of learning could potentially affect each learner's future choices.

### **Justification of Choice of Research Design**

Consideration was given to ethnography as a qualitative research approach, but ethnography focuses on the researcher's immersion in a specific setting to uncover deep cultural understandings (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Though ethnography is a qualitative research design option, it did not align with the intended purpose of this qualitative research. This study was not focused on race or culture and did not collect data regarding either category because they have no connection to the problem of this study.

Further consideration was given to grounded theory as the best-suited qualitative approach for this study. Bowers and Charmaz (2021) explained, "Using grounded theory involves documenting and acknowledging the contexts and situatedness of research participants' lives and the research situation" (p. 4). As I did not seek to develop a new theory through this study but rather to understand a current unexplained occurrence based on the lived experiences of a group of individuals, a grounded theory approach was not selected as an appropriate approach for this study.

Phenomenology was also considered in the process of choosing the most appropriate approach for this qualitative study. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), phenomenology has been identified as both a philosophy and a research method. Zahavi (2019) described phenomenology as the study of a specific phenomenon with a focus on the *how* over the *what* of the phenomena. Another characteristic of phenomenology as a qualitative approach is that it requires researchers to bracket or to set aside personal common assumptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The definition of phenomenology, as shared by Creswell and Creswell (2018), is congruent with that of Ravitch and Carl (2021) and Peoples (2021), but it adds that phenomenology can also allow for the inclusion of the lived experiences of the researcher. Concerning the purpose of this study, a phenomenological approach was not selected for this study because I did not seek to consider the lived experiences of the participants. Instead, I solely focused on perspectives of educators related to the problem of implementing reading interventions for students in third through sixth grade who had few economic opportunities. I explored educators' perspectives of the gap in practice related to the desired goal of third through sixth grade students successfully performing on grade-level in reading compared to the lingering concern of students underperforming in reading.

Finally, narrative research was also considered during the process of selecting the most appropriate approach for this basis qualitative study. Kim (2016) described narrative research as inquiry that focuses on the experiences of individuals as captured in their personal stories. While narrative research may be properly suited for qualitative studies, the narrative research approach was not selected as the most appropriate qualitative

approach for this study because the data collected in this study were not based on the stories of individuals, but on their actual oral accounts of their perspectives related to reading intervention. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Peoples (2021), a qualitative approach involves the study of the real-life experiences of an individual or a group of persons within a real-life setting. As this qualitative study involved the collection of data at a specific place over a specific timeframe, using one data collection tool, the basic qualitative approach was determined to be the most appropriate.

### **Participants**

Choosing the most appropriate participants for research on any topic is a serious undertaking. It is important that researchers intentionally seek participants who hold a deep understanding of the topic and those who will be able help answer the stated research questions (Sargeant, 2012). In the next sections regarding participants, I focus on the setting of the study, the participant sample, sampling procedure, justification of sample, gaining access to participants, building relationships with participants, and the rights of participants.

### **Setting**

In qualitative research, participants are investigated in their natural setting, which provides the researcher the benefit of collecting valuable data that could lead to a deep understanding of the phenomenon (Richards, 2021). However, due to COVID-19, participants were offered opportunities to be interviewed virtually on Zoom or by telephone with an opportunity to give permission to allow me to audio-record each session. All participants elected to be interviewed by telephone and each participant gave

permission to have their interview session audio recorded. Interviews with participants were conducted outside of each participant's contract hours to avoid interviewing during instructional times. Interviews were scheduled and held according to the participants' preferred mode and time as indicated in response to the Research Study Interview Appointment Options email. Each interview was confirmed electronically, via email. Specific criteria were used to determine the target site and to select educators who might have lived experiences of the phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The target site for this basic qualitative study is situated within Big City ISD, the 13<sup>th</sup> largest school district in a southwestern state. Big City ISD includes 14 high schools, 10 junior high schools, and 55 elementary schools and it serves nearly 60,000 students annually, which includes the target site's enrollment of 742, 689, and 641 students in grades Kindergarten through Grade 6 from 2016 – 2021, respectively (TEA, 2020a). Additionally, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2018), Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (Title I, Part A), the definition of Title I, is that at least 40% of a schools' enrollment consists of students identified as low SES. The data presented in Table 6 show enrollment of students with low SES at the target site was more than 40% from 2016 – 2021.

**Table 6**

*Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged (Low SES) Students 2016-2021 at the Elementary Target Site*

School Years	Student Enrollment	Percentage of Low SES
2016-2017	742	94.6%
2017-2018	689	92.5%
2018-2019	641	93.8%
2019-2020	591	90.0%
2020-2021	567	90.6%

*Note.* Data adapted from Texas Education Agency (2020a)

### **Participant Criteria**

Researchers often consider the use of qualitative sampling as an avenue intended to collect the most intentional data related to their specific research subject. Creswell (2013) explained the importance of researchers asking themselves who or what they mean to explore and the reasons why. Since the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site, I concluded the most knowledgeable potential participants for this research study were target site educators with life experiences in teaching reading or delivering reading interventions and districtwide support staff who support this population of students at the elementary level. Specifically, I included instructional coaches, interventionists, and literacy

specialists in the definition of the term educators as this group of educators may have knowledge of the phenomenon being studied which was that educators are struggling to meet the academic reading needs of students in third through sixth grades. Aside from target site classroom teachers who met the criteria to participate in this study, instructional coaches, interventionists, and literacy specialists also serve students from families having limited access to economic resources at the target site and district-wide for this population of students. This group of individuals had valuable perspectives regarding the reading academic support of students from families having limited access to economic resources in literacy at the target site and other campuses, enabling them to share a district-wide perspective regarding the problem of literacy support for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Having identified a specific purpose and a specific potential participant group with specific life experiences, purposeful sampling was determined to be the best form of sampling for this study. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), "Purposeful sampling means that individuals are purposefully chosen to participate in the research for specific reasons, including that they had a certain experience, have knowledge of a specific phenomenon, reside in a specific location, or some other reason" (p. 128). Participant criteria is addressed in the next section.

Participants met the inclusion criteria as an educator who is (a) a certified teacher, (b) an educator currently teaching reading or who have previously taught reading to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, and (c) an educator who had experience with reading interventions for third through sixth



grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. All educators maintained a certified teaching certificate and could also be considered to serve in other roles in the educational system such as instructional coaches, interventionists, literacy specialists, and librarian. Participant criteria for this study were specified in the letter of invitation, re-stated in the consent form and confirmed through the demographic questionnaire.

According to the target site's Internet posting of educators for the 2020-2021 school year, there were following 30 certified educators in teacher positions from kindergarten through sixth grade (see Table 7). Other campus and district level educators were also included. The positions of instructional coach, interventionist, and dyslexia teacher these positions were categorized as specialists. Table 7 reflects the educators who comprised the recruitment pool for this study.

**Table 7***Educators in Recruitment Pool by Position at the Target Site and District-wide*

Educators	Number
Teachers	30
Librarian	1
Instructional Coach, Target Site	2
Interventionist, Target Site	1
Dyslexia Teacher, Targe Site	1
Literacy Specialist1, District	3
Total	38

*Note.* Data adapted from Target Site School District (2021a)

Potential participants confirmed their interest in participating in this study based on the stated criteria when they self-selected to participate via reading the letter of invitation, reading and reviewing the consent form, and providing implied consent by clicking the word NEXT at the bottom of the consent form, which then returned the form to my Survey Monkey account. The potential participants answered the questions presented on the demographic questionnaire to determine if they would meet the participant criteria and were provided the opportunity to furnish their personal or nonwork email and phone number to facilitate confidentiality. Participants submitted this form via Survey Monkey.

Though I initially sent the letter of invitation and an active link to the consent form to all 38 educators in the participant pool and again, a week later to those who had not responded to the first letter of invitation and consent form, only 10 educators chose to

participate. The goal was to gain a minimum of 10-12 participants and there were a total of 10 participants included in this study. The participant group of this study included eight teachers, one Dyslexia teacher, and one interventionist. Table 8 reflects the demographics of participants who met the inclusion criteria and self-selected into this study.

**Table 8**

<i>Participant Demographics</i>	
Participant Code	Educator Position
Participant 1	Teacher
Participant 2	Teacher
Participant 3	Teacher
Participant 4	Teacher
Participant 5	Dyslexia Teacher
Participant 6	Teacher
Participant 7	Interventionist
Participant 8	Teacher
Participant 9	Teacher
Participant 10	Teacher

### **Sampling Size**

The recruitment pool for this study was comprised of 38 educators. The target sample population were comprised of 10 educators who met the inclusion criteria. Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained there is currently no rule in place that applies to the specific number of participants required as a sample size in qualitative research.

According to Sargeant (2012), the number of participants will vary depending on the number of participants necessary to fully answer the stated research questions. The sample size is a vital component of research, but a large same sample size is not necessarily the goal. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), “It is not the goal of purposeful sampling and qualitative research to generalize; thus, the sample size becomes less important than in quantitative research” (p. 138). Creswell (2013) added the protocol for the qualitative sample size is to purposefully study only a few individuals, and to simultaneously collect a wide range of details from each participant. In general, the fewer the total number of participants, the greater the depth of inquiry per participant. Hence, the 10 participants recruited for this study were appropriate for this basic qualitative study and saturation was reached with this sample of participants (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Young & Casey, 2019).

Finally, the intention of this basic qualitative study was not to generalize the findings to a larger population, but to uncover new understandings to be shared with campus leaders as a result of examining the perspectives of current and previous reading educators regarding reading interventions for third through sixth grade students and educators experienced in reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The sampling procedure is integral to qualitative research.

### **Sampling Procedure**

To conduct this research, I used purposeful sampling. The sample size was a total of 10 educators. According to Fereshteh et al. (2017), purposeful sampling is a type of

nonprobability sampling common to qualitative research. Creswell (2009) explained purposeful sampling is used to support researchers' efforts to address the highlighted phenomenon and to answer the research questions that guide the research. Specifically, in purposeful sampling, participants are selected because they hold a similar experience or set of experiences that offer the best opportunity to help the researcher address the phenomenon and purpose of the study. The problem addressed in this basic qualitative study was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading academic needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. To select the participants that would best satisfy the purpose of this study, I created a Demographic Questionnaire in Survey Monkey and included the link to the questionnaire in the Consent form for potential participants to access. I confirmed participants met the inclusion criteria using the participants' responses to the Demographic Questionnaire. I interviewed the educators who self-selected to participate in this study, and I gained access to the participants following specific procedures.

### **Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants**

Prior to attempting to gain access to potential participants, I followed Big City ISD's research request procedures (Big City ISD, Research Proposal Procedures, 2021) for conducting research connected to the target district. The first requirement of the process for approval was to review the web-published Research Request Guidelines and Research Proposal Instructions (Big City ISD, Research Proposal Instructions, 2021). The next step was to submit a Research Proposal Application (Big City ISD, Research Proposal Application, 2021) to the research review committee. According to Big City

ISD's Research Proposal Instructions, applications were to be submitted electronically or via paper copy. The study school district required an application to conduct research, an approved proposal, Walden IRB approval and supporting appendices that were to be used to conduct the research study. Big City ISD's Research Proposal Procedures confirmed that Research Proposal Applications are reviewed once per month, after proof of the university's IRB approval was obtained and provided with the Research Proposal Application (Big City ISD, Research Proposal Procedures, 2021). I completed the application process for the study school district following all directions and concurrently completed the Walden IRB application.

After I gained permission to conduct the study from the Walden University IRB, I forwarded the approval letter and Walden IRB approval number, #10-12-21-0286199, along with the target site district's application to conduct research, and appropriate appendices documents to the Big City ISD gatekeeper. I received approval from the target site school district on October 29, 2021. Then, after requesting and gaining access to participants' email addresses through Big City ISD's gatekeeper, I emailed the letter of invitation to each potential participant, confirmed interview appointments of educators who self-selected to participate in this study, and collected data through individual interviews. In the letter of invitation, I described the purpose of the study, listed the participant criteria, and explained next steps to participate in the study. In the consent form, I shared information critical for participation, which included an explanation of (a) how I obtained their email address, (b) participant criteria, (c) information about role of the researcher, (d) purpose of this study, (e) method of data collection, (f) interview

options, (g) participant criteria, (h) data collection process, (i) sample interview questions, (j) nature of the study, (k), risks and benefits of participating, (l) payment, (m) participant privacy, (n) how to contact the researcher to ask questions, and (o) how to indicate consent to participate.

After I received approval from the Walden IRB, per Big City ISD research guidelines, I contacted the principal of the target site, via email, to request permission to conduct research at the target site. In the email, I shared details of my research proposal, and I requested permission to conduct research at the target site. I also provided the principal with electronic copies of the Walden IRB and Big City ISD approvals to conduct research at the target site. The approval of the principal was necessary because, per Big City ISD, the principal has the authority to deny any research request even after Big City ISD's research committee has approved the application (Big City ISD, Research Proposal Procedures, 2021).

After gaining the principal's approval to conduct this study at the elementary target site in the target district, I contacted Big City ISD's Technology Department to request a listing of the certified employees' names and email addresses at the target site, by grade level and content, for elementary educators serving in the roles of: elementary literacy instructional specialists, literacy coaches, and literacy interventionists serving third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources attending elementary schools in the target district. I excluded campus administrators: principal(s), assistant principal(s), and dean(s) of instruction for the study elementary site. Educators on the list of prospective participants received an

electronically delivered letter of invitation to participate in this study that I sent from my Walden email address. The researcher-created letter of invitation identified the purpose of the study, explained participant responsibilities and time required, and included a reminder statement that their participation is voluntary, and they would be able to withdraw from the study at any time. If participants were interested in participating, the letter of invitation included instructions to click on the hyperlink at the bottom of the page that took the potential participant to the consent form.

At the top of the consent form, the following statement was included: *Below is the important information for your review to consent for this study. After reading, if you feel you understand the study and wish to volunteer, please indicate your consent by clicking NEXT.* The consent form and contained a reminder that all educators who agree to participate in this qualitative study do so on a voluntary basis and that their participation will not influence their status or position at the target site or within the district. Educators who read and understood the consent form and agreed to participate indicated so through implied consent after reading the following sentence at the bottom of the consent form: *If you feel you understand the study and wish to volunteer, please indicate your consent by clicking NEXT.* Clicking the word NEXT moved the participant to the demographic questionnaire.

The demographic questionnaire was set up using the Survey Monkey website. Participants were asked to answer questions to confirm they meet the participant criteria, and they were asked to supply their nonwork contact information for the purposes of confidentiality, including their personal telephone number and personal email address or



preferred method of communication. Providing nonwork contact information were described as optional. Once the potential participant completed the demographic questionnaire, the following statement was noted at the bottom of the form: Thank you for your time and for volunteering to participate in this study. I will be contacting you soon! Please click SUBMIT.

When at least 10-12 volunteer participants did not respond to the initial letter of invitation within the first 7 days, a second (follow-up) letter of invitation was sent only to those potential participants who did not respond. The second letter of invitation email was sent 7 days after the initial letter of invitation was sent and the same process was used regarding obtaining informed, implied consent, scheduling the interview, and confirming the interview date and time. After sending the second letter of invitation, I received responses from 10 participants who met the inclusion criteria. I did not need to post a recruitment flyer as 10 participants responded to the letter of invitation by returning the consent form and demographic questionnaire and self-selected into this study.

The first 10 educators of the participant pool who provided an implied consent, returned the demographic questionnaire form, and met the participant criteria were identified as participants of this study. Participants self-selected into the study. I contacted each participant by email to coordinate a mutually convenient time for the one-on-one interview. The interview options included dates and times that did not interfere with educators' instructional times. If there had been any volunteers beyond the desired 10-12 participants, they would have been contacted by phone to inform them that the

number of desired participants meeting the participant criteria had been reached and I would have thanked them for volunteering. This step was not necessary as the number of volunteers did not exceed 10. When I received the email identifying the participant's preferred interview date and time, I sent a confirmation email to the participant regarding the agreed upon date and time for the interview.

### **Researcher – Participant Working Relationship**

The researcher – participant relationship is purposeful and is about building trust. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), “Ordinary conversations are most often about sociability and maintaining a relationship, while interviews are more about *making* a relationship to help find an answer to a research question” (p. 99). The relationship-building process began at the request for approval to conduct research through Big City ISD's research department, from the Walden University IRB, and from the principal of the target site.

Upon receiving the required approvals to conduct this basic qualitative study from the Walden University IRB, Big City ISD, and the principal of the elementary target site, I focused on gaining access to potential participants as already described. From my initial contact through the end of the study, I worked to develop and maintain a professional, yet contributory relationship wherein participants felt comfortable to ask clarifying questions and to provide open and honest responses to each interview question and each follow-up question (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). At each contact, I remained neutral, recording and transcribing exactly what participants said and using the interview protocol as intended, asking specific and follow-up questions. Aside from my personal

audio recording, I took notes in my field journal. Additionally, I reminded participants of my email address and mobile telephone number, that were also provided to them in the emails containing the letter of invitation, and consent form. During each contact, I reminded each participant of their right to ask research-related questions by telephone, and email. Participants were reminded of the volunteer nature of their choice to participate in this study and of their right to discontinue their participation at any time (see Davis & Lachlan, 2019). To establish trust with the participants, they were reminded at the start of each interview and on the consent form that they could choose to not answer an interview question at any time and for any reason during the interview. Sample interview questions were provided on the consent form to help provide the participant with comfortability with regard to the types of questions that would be asked.

Trust and confidentiality were priorities throughout this study. To protect the confidentiality of the target site and the district participants, I did not identify the target district, target site, or otherwise reveal any identifying data in this basic qualitative study (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Thomas, 2017). Instead, the pseudonym, Big City ISD, was used throughout this study. Participants were not identified by name or other identifying data. Randomly created numeric pseudonyms were assigned to each participant (see Thomas, 2017). I explained to each participant that I would be the only person aware of the participants' identifying credentials (see Davis & Lachlan, 2019).

### **Protection of Participants' Rights**

The ethical responsibility of researchers concerning volunteer participants is significant. As evidence of my understanding of the ethical protection due each volunteer

participant of this study, I completed training with the National Institute of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research. In accordance with the protocol of Walden University's IRB, an affirmative consent is required of each participant prior to their participation in this study. Participation in this study involves some risk of minor discomforts that can be encountered in everyday life, such as fatigue. However, participation in this study did not pose risk to participants' status, safety or wellbeing. Participants were informed that they could pause, stop, or reschedule the interview at any time and for any reason. Participants were also informed that they could request to take a break, skip any interview question(s), or request to be removed from this study at any time. No participants requested to pause, stop, or reschedule their interview. Also, no participants requested to take a break, skip any interview question(s), or be removed from this study.

As previously noted, to protect the privacy and confidentiality of each volunteer participant, participants' names were not used in the study, or on any reports generated from this study such as an executive summary. Instead, a numeric pseudonym was assigned to each participant. The safety and confidentiality of each participant was the main priority throughout this study.

All electronic data will be maintained in password-protected files in my personal lap-top computer in my home. All nonelectronic data was safely stored in a locked filing unit in my home. Per Walden University's protocol, each will remain safely stored and maintained for a period of 5 years at which time, per Walden IRB policy, I will shred all documents.

## **Data Collection**

The collection and examination of data is the most essential component of a researchers' effort toward completing a study of any design. Creswell (2009) described the five steps involved in the data collection process as (a) identify potential participants of the target site and gain access to them, (b) gain consent of participants, (c) establish the most appropriate data to collect to be able to answer each research question (d) determine the data collection instruments to be used, and (e) identify any ethical concerns.

According to Billups (2021), collecting qualitative data requires focus and can be complex. As a qualitative researcher, you must plan to immerse yourself in the field for sufficient time to collect extensive data, understand the context for that data, and uncover the nuances of what is occurring. The data collection method selected to help answer the identified research question for this basic qualitative study was semistructured interviews, which occurred by telephone. The justification of data for collection is discussed in the next section.

### **Justification of Data for Collection**

There are a range of methods available to collect qualitative data. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), focus groups, interviews, observations, and field notes are the main methods adopted by researchers engaging in qualitative research. Of these data collection options commonly used in the qualitative design, Ravitch and Carl (2016) describe interviews as the mainstay of qualitative research, but also suggest researchers not follow traditions, but choose the data collection method best suited to obtain answers the stated research questions.

Focus groups were considered as the primary method of collecting data for this study, but since the focus of this study is on the individual perspectives of educators, the use of focus groups was not determined to be the most appropriate. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), focus groups are commonly used when group discussions or groupthink is necessary to generate new ideas on a particular topic. Since in this basic qualitative study I did not focus on the creation of new ideas, focus groups was not selected as a method to collect data.

Participant observations and the generation of field notes were also considered as the primary method of collecting data for this study. However, since the goal of this study was to understand the individual perspectives of educators, it was necessary to ask direct, open-ended questions intended to encourage participants to share their thoughts or opinions based on their experiences while teaching reading. While observations and the creation of field notes would sufficiently support the goal of capturing the perspectives of educators, this method of data collection was not selected due to the focus on obtaining perspectives.

Finally, interviews were considered as the primary method of data collection for this study. This method of data collection allowed the researcher to ask open-ended questions and allowed participants the freedom to respond without limitations. Rich, uninhibited responses was the goal. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), researchers who use qualitative interviewing seek individualized, detailed information from participants, not yes or no responses that offer no depth. After considering each of the qualitative data collection methods, face-to-face interviews were determined to be the

most appropriate method of data collection as they presented the most efficient and effective opportunity to obtain answers to the stated research questions.

### **Instrumentation**

The data collection instrument used in any quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods study should be a single instrument or a combination of instruments that offers researchers the best opportunity to obtain answers to the stated research questions. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), observation and fieldnotes, focus groups, questionnaires, and interviews are among the main methods of qualitative data collection instruments. Each of these methods were considered for this study, but interviews were ultimately selected as the principal data collection instrument. As this study sought to investigate the perspectives of educators, having face-to-face conversations with participants in one-on-one interviews were determined to be the most sufficient data collection instrument option by which to gain answers to this study's stated research question. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), unlike ordinary conversations, interviews narrowly focus on stated research questions and may also use probes and follow-up questions to pursue in-depth responses. Rubin and Rubin also explained, the semistructured interview is approached in a way that allows participants to respond in detail and at length to open-ended questions. Though the initial interview question was the same for all participants, each probe or follow-up question varied, according to participant's response to the initial question to encourage, which is a common characteristic of semistructured interviews (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

The interview is one of four basic types of qualitative data (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In response to the phenomenon that was investigated in this study, that educators are struggling to support the instructional reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, interviews were the data collection tool determined to be the most sufficient to gain answers to the stated research question. According to Thomas (2017), the three options under the broad title of interviews include (a) structured, (b) unstructured, and (c) semistructured. Thomas (2017) explained structured interviews offer researchers an opportunity to ask questions, but participants' responses are limited. Unlike structured interviews, the unstructured interview is presented more like a casual conversation that is not guided by any predetermined set of questions related, but the conversation is open-ended and directed by the interviewee (Thomas, 2017). The third type of interview, the semistructured interview, represents a mixture of the characteristics of structured and the unstructured interviews. The semistructured interview allows the researcher to approach each interview with a predetermined protocol that includes open-ended questions and offers the researchers the freedom to ask probing or follow-up questions, but semistructured interviews also offer participants the opportunity to freely respond to each question in a way that may lead to a new topic (Thomas, 2017).

As the phenomenon explored in this study was that educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, it was important to use a data collection tool that would allow me to ask questions focused on obtaining answers to the interview questions



while also offering participants an opportunity to respond to questions in an unstructured, open-ended way. Using a self-designed semistructured interview data collection tool allowed me to engage with participants in relaxed, one-on-one conversations, to ask the necessary questions that would lead to greater understanding of the phenomenon explored in this basic qualitative study. Interviews represent a sufficient data collection tool for this study as the interviews were pathways that allowed me to collect the data needed to answer the stated research questions (see Creswell, 2013).

The integrity of the data collection instrument is critical in the interview process (Josselson, 2013). The interview questions were aligned with the research question (see Castillo-Montoya, 2016). In this study, I developed the interview protocol that related to the research question regarding educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district. Researchers noted that obtaining feedback on an interview protocol is a common technique to strengthen the protocol's trustworthiness and the clarity of the content (see Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

An expert panel of two educators having professional, lived experiences with reading interventions and intervention resources were asked to review the interview questions for this research study and provide feedback on quality and clarity. The expert panel was asked to read the interview questions and share any suggested changes or additions with the goal of creating questions that would increase the likelihood that participants would be able to provide responses that answer the stated research question. The cycle of review of the interview questions with the expert panel continued until the

panel members agreed that the finalized list of questions was clear and of excellent quality. Members of the expert panel were not involved in the recruitment of participants for this study, virtually or at the target site. Details regarding the interview protocols are addressed in the next section.

### **Sufficiency of Data Collection Instrument**

I created a single research question to address the purpose and problem of this basic qualitative study. I designed 12 interview questions to answer the sole research question. Sufficiency of the data collection instrument was demonstrated when the point of saturation was reached by the gathering of repeated data in response to the 12 interview questions. Additionally, the sufficiency of the data collection instrument was demonstrated when participants' responses to the 12 interview questions provided responses that effectively answered the research question of this study (see Roberts, 2020). Table 9 is an illustration of the research question and interview protocol questions.

**Table 9***Research Question and Interview Protocol Questions*

Research question	Interview questions
<p>1. What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your opinion, what do you perceive as reading interventions?</li> <li>• Please describe the method/strategy used to determine if reading intervention is needed for a student.</li>   <li>• What do you perceive are the prioritized learning expectations for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading students?</li> <li>• Please describe how you determine reading interventions for students.</li> <li>• What role do you perceive student choice has in the selection of interventions?</li> <li>• Please describe the interventions used in the reading intervention time.</li> <li>• What reading materials have you found that support engagement for this population of students?</li> <li>• Please describe how students demonstrate their understanding of a skill you teach them?</li> <li>• In which ways do you perceive it is most effective to have students demonstrate a reading skill to you?</li> <li>• How do you discern if a student is having difficulty with a reading skill you have taught?</li> <li>• How do you intervene with a student or group of students who are challenged to use a reading skill?</li> <li>• In your opinion, what PD do you perceive may be needed, if any, to strengthen reading support for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students identified as low SES?</li> </ul>

### **Systems for Keeping Track of Data**

Interview sessions were conducted with educators who self-selected to participate in this basic qualitative study by returning the required consent form and completing the required demographic questionnaire. To help ensure the likelihood of obtaining answers to the stated research question, the interview process included the use of an interview protocol. According to Thomas (2017), the interview protocol is a list of interview questions, follow-up questions, and probes that will be offered to each participant. Rubin and Rubin (2012) defined probes as, “Probes are questions, comments, or gestures used by the interviewer to help manage the conversation” (p. 118). Some examples of a probe include, “Would you explain that?” and “Tell me more about that.” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, each interview occurred using an audio platform, according to each participant’s chosen selection indicated on the form used to schedule the interview.

Interviews were scheduled to occur by telephone were recorded using my personal, digital voice recorder to ensure all questions, answers, prompts, and probes were captured for transcribing. If any participant(s) had chosen to complete their interviews using a video platform, a suitable platform would have been used and the choosing participant(s) would have received, by email, a hyperlink to complete their one-on-one interview. If any participant(s) had chosen to complete their interviews using the video platform option, the record feature would have been used to capture the interview process. Steps related to the visual platform option were not necessary since all participants elected to complete their interview session by telephone. I used a back-up audio recorder for the telephone interview sessions in the event there was a malfunction

of the recording equipment. I checked the audio recording capability at the outset of each interview.

Beyond to the audio recording, I used hand-written notes in my personal research log throughout the interview session. Research logs are perceived to be a method of maintaining the integrity of the data collected in qualitative interviews (Billups, 2019). The research log was used to document changes in participants' speaking volume, excitement, nervousness, confusion, or delays in responding. Additional hand-written notes were maintained in a reflective journal used to record my reflective thoughts. Thomas (2017) described reflective thoughts as intentional self-questioning. My reflective journal was used to document my reflective thoughts of my feelings, opinions, and mental reactions throughout the interview process. Also, participants were asked to have a copy of any recently used reading intervention lesson plan or lesson guide to reference during the interview. I guided the interviews using a self-developed interview protocol that included interview questions, potential follow-up questions, and probes that were aligned with the research topic pertaining to the perspectives of educators regarding reading interventions and reading intervention resources for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. At the conclusion of each interview, I described the strategies I would use to protect their confidentiality such as using a numerical pseudonym in place of using their name. I explained that no one, other than me, would have access to their responses. Throughout the study and on any document or report related to this study, their numeric pseudonym was used in place of their name. Additionally, the names of the district and target site were also masked to

protect their confidentiality. The same procedures were followed before, during, and after each participant's one-on-one interview (Creswell, 2009). Confidentiality was a priority during this study. Participants were informed that the findings produced after the analysis of the data collected would not include participants' identifying credentials. Numerical pseudonyms were used instead.

Each recorded interview session was transcribed within 24-72 hours of completing the interview. While the actual interviews are essential to the data collection process, the transcript of each interview is equally important. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), "Without transcripts, it is difficult to engage in intensive, iterative data analysis" (p. 159). Each participant's transcribed interview documents and any handwritten notes pertaining to the interview was maintained in separate manilla file folders labeled according to each participant's assigned numerical pseudonym.

### **Role of the Researcher**

In my role as the researcher of this basic qualitative study, I participated as the principal collector of data and the principal researcher to summarize participants' perspectives of reading interventions and intervention resources. At the time of data collection, I was an elementary classroom teacher assigned to a different campus within the same district as the elementary target site. Previously, I was a classroom teacher at the target site from 2018-2019. When I was an employee at the target site, I did not hold any leadership positions, and I did not have any supervisory authority over any other target site employees. My previous affiliation with the target site did not impede the processes of this basic qualitative study. To ensure my role as a researcher in connection to this

study is clearly defined, I introduced myself as the researcher at each communication or meeting with participants and I defined the purpose for the connection or meeting.

I may have had personal opinions regarding the topic of this study and those opinions may have surfaced as biases. Ravitch and Carl (2016) suggested journaling as a way to record my emotions, feelings, thoughts, questions, and ideas throughout the study. Thus, I maintained a reflective journal to record my biases and to remain aware of my opinions as I collected and analyzed data during this study.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

The process of data collection was immediately followed by data analysis which has been defined differently by different authors and researchers. Ravitch and Carl (2016) defined data analysis as a process in which researchers interpret or make sense of collected data. Creswell (2013) described it as a process that includes organizing information, coding, organizing themes, illustrating data, and converting collected data into findings. Babbie (2017) defined qualitative data analysis as, “The nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships” (p. 391). Additionally, according to Rubin and Rubin (2012), “Analysis takes you step by step from the raw data in your interviews to clear and convincing answers to your research question” (p. 190). Ultimately, data analysis is, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), when the researchers find and are able to communicate an understanding of the data collected. The commonality among these definitions is that the data analysis process is an essential component of all research. In the next section, I describe the methods of data analysis used.

To accurately analyze the data collected during each of the 10 one-on-one, semistructured telephone interviews, I used the content analysis method (see Creswell, 2009) to closely review the unaltered data collected from volunteer research participants. Qualitative analysis is described by Kleinheksel et al. (2020) as, “It is the process of considering both the participant and context when sorting text into groups of related categories to identify similarities and differences, patterns, and associations, both on the surface and implied within” (p. 128). I used content analysis to better understand participants’ responses and to determine the themes. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) described the steps involved in data analysis as (a) collecting data, (b) reading the data, (c) decipher the themes, (d) adding codes, and (e) interpreting, (f) and sharing findings. However, I followed the five steps of data analysis process outlined Yin (2016) that include: (a) collecting or compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, (e) and concluding. I provide a detailed description of my data analysis process in the next section.

### **Data Analysis Results**

Qualitative researchers prioritize investigating an unexplained phenomenon by investigating the lives experiences of study participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Though the process of qualitative data analysis has been defined as linear, Mohamed (2022) described qualitative analysis as an iterative or repetitious process. In this basic qualitative study, I analyzed the interview transcripts and my hand-recorded notes in my field journal. According to Birkinshaw et al. (2011), qualitative methods are critical to understanding the variety of contexts represented in the data. Maxwell (2013) offered “a



major strength of qualitative research is in getting at the processes that led to the outcomes, processes that experimental and survey research are often poor at identifying” (p. 30). Merriam and Tisdell, (2015) explained that one of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research tools is that qualitative data collection methods allow researchers to collect data from participants in their natural settings. During the qualitative data collection process, I interviewed participants to better understand the phenomenon. In my analysis of the data, I used the five steps of data analysis process outlined Yin (2016) that include: (a) collecting or compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, (e) and concluding that I discuss in the following section.

### **Coding Strategy**

#### ***Collecting or Compiling Data***

Upon engaging in the data analysis process, I first organized the participants’ data in the order of completion. I transcribed each participant’s one-on-one audio-recorded telephone interview. Within 24 hours of each participant’s interview, I uploaded the audio-recording for transcribing using *Rev*, an online speech-to-text transcribing service provider.

Then, I read each participant’s transcript. I read and reread each one several times, submerging myself in the data to ensure I was intimately familiar with it (see Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I also read my personal journal notes to help me make connections across transcripts and engage more fully in the analysis process. During my data analysis process, I immersed myself in the data, closely analyzing participants’ transcribed interviews and my handwritten notes using deductive and inductive coding methods to

answer the stated research question. As I immersed myself in the process of reading, rereading, and closely analyzing the qualitative data collected via telephone interviews, I used color-coded highlighting to code the participants' responses. Bengtsson (2016) noted the importance of becoming acquainted with the overall transcripts, leading to the ability make meaning of the data. I linked all the interview transcripts together in one Word document using labels to distinguish between each participant. I pasted the RQ, the purpose statement, and the research question at the top of the Word document to help me remain focused on coding only information pertinent to the RQ and purpose of the study.

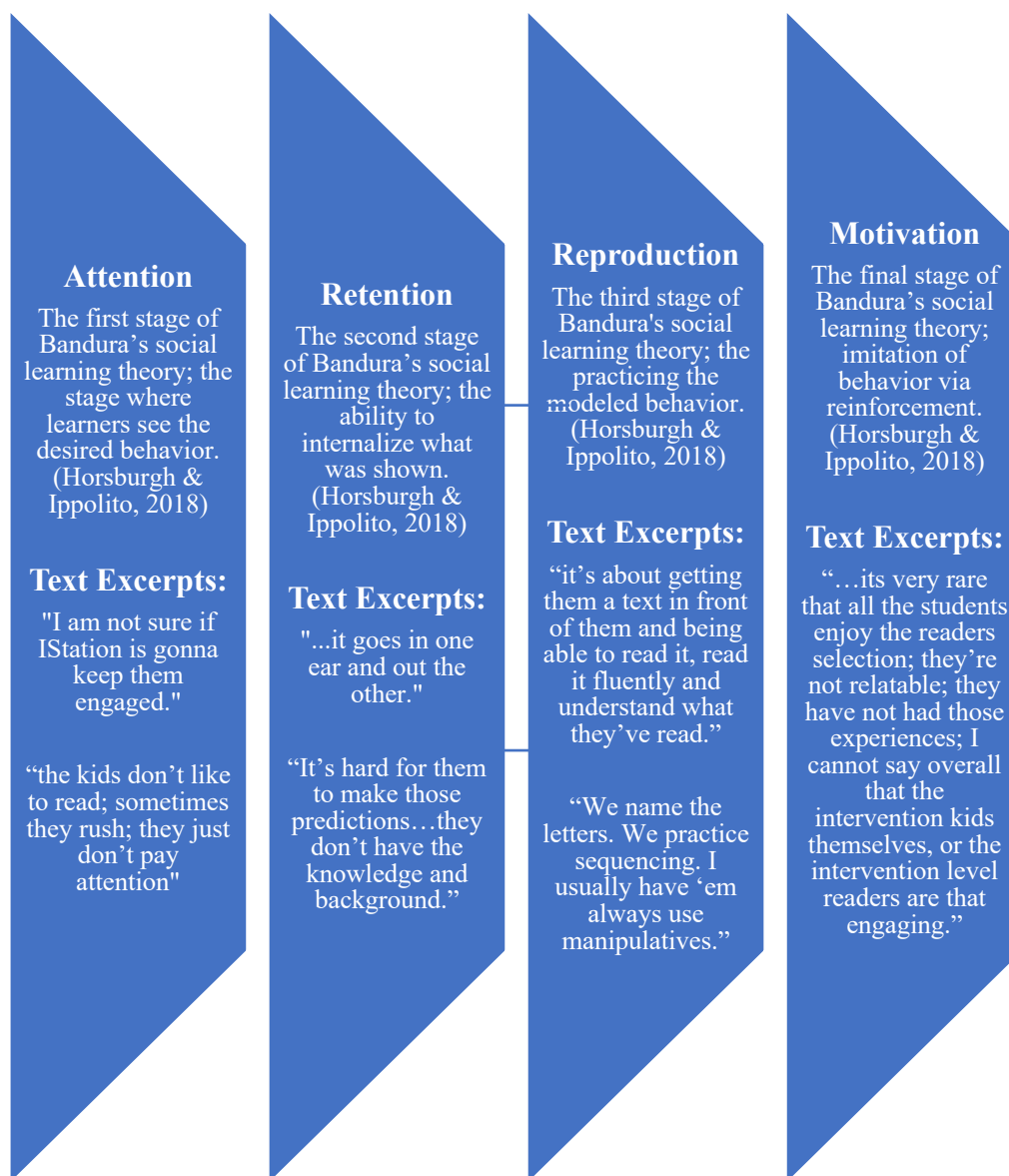
### ***Disassembling***

Data analysis is an iterative process. Bengtsson (2016) noted that both deductive and inductive coding are used in the content analysis process. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) contends the qualitative data analysis process begins with the interview process and continues throughout the analysis process. Therefore, in examining the problem of elementary educators struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources, I created interview questions that supported the exploration of this phenomenon focusing on the knowledge, skills, assessment strategies, reading strategies, and implementation process of educators with knowledge of reading interventions for this population of students. After completing the transcription process, I moved to the coding process using Word documents and highlighters. I decontextualized the data by identifying codes, categories and themes (see Bengtsson, 2016).

According to Castleberry and Nolen (2018), coding qualitative data has a single goal of converting raw data into usable data by discovering themes and ideas within the data that offer valuable connections. I used deductive, a priori coding, using Bandura's (1971) SLT as the conceptual framework, and inductive, descriptive coding, in the content data analysis process. I pasted participants' highlighted text excerpts from the transcriptions in the form of quotes into an Excel spreadsheet. Entering these data into an Excel spreadsheet provided a visual for me to make connections among codes more easily. Bandura considered how environmental and intellectual factors intertwine to determine the actions and behaviors of humans. First, I conducted a priori coding using the SLT framework and assigned the deductive codes attention, retention, reproduction, motivation. I used a pivot table to observe the frequency of the assigned deductive codes. The coding procedure was critical for me to effectively compare and contrast the data participants provided. Figure 1 is a reflection of sample a priori codes and text excerpts identified in the a priori coding process using Bandura's (1971), SLT.

**Figure 1**

*A Priori coding using Bandura's social learning theory with sample text excerpts*



My recursive analysis of the data allowed me to identify critical connections to the research question that guided this study. I continued to disassemble the data by conducting the next phase of my coding process. My next step in the data analysis process was to use inductive open coding to identify the most vital and valuable data of

this study. I read and reread the transcripts and highlighted text from the Word documents that I identified in open coding using descriptive codes. I highlighted, copied and pasted the text excerpts into the excel spreadsheet. I used a pivot table to observe the frequency and patterns of assigned codes. I conducted two rounds of open coding assigning descriptive codes to identify patterns, categories, and emerging themes directly from the participants' responses. Descriptive coding, a form of inductive coding, involves the labeling of the words, phrases and paragraphs with descriptions of the participant's message from the interview transcript. Saldaña (2016) maintains that the central focus of qualitative research is the analysis of human actions and their meanings. I conducted a second round of descriptive coding looking for common patterns. I collapsed codes that appeared to be similar. I used the pivot table to examine the remaining identified descriptive codes. In the next phase, I begin to interpret the codes by observing patterns using the pivot tables.

Coding processes are used to identify participants' intended messages and to identify the emerging themes (Azungah, 2018). The open coding process involved reading and rereading each participant's transcribed one-on-one telephone interview. Table 10 is an illustration of sample Round 1 descriptive codes and text excerpts identified during open coding.

**Table 10***Sample of Round 1 Open Codes and Text Excerpts*

Open codes	Text Excerpt
Priority/Rationale	All teachers no matter what content they teach should be Reading should be teachers. Everyone should be given PD on basic reading techniques and skills...based on the needs of your campus.
Challenges Time Limitation	I just mention that not enough time, not enough time to prepare more meaningful interventions
Needs and characteristics of students with limited economic opportunities	...you should be able to select what books we use in the curriculum to support the different student expectations. Students aren't interested or engaged, and they disconnect and they're not really paying attention.
Challenges Resources	Many of the resources that I have are things that I make up because it's really difficult sometimes to find accurate resources for our kids
Challenges Resources	...a reading resource that was more like a video game, they would catch on better, because I noticed that when they play games they catch on better.
PD/Uniform District Approach	I think they don't include teachers as much as they should. They are always having research-based people, they haven't been in a classroom...the teachers are the ones that have the best ideas.
PD/Uniform District Approach	You need to get the teachers to do the PD. I think that would help a lot. I went to a math training and they showed us what they were doing. ...It was some of the best ideas and I still use those ideas. And it is just different things that I wouldn't have thought of, but it was coming from a teacher. If they could do the same thing with reading, we would have some better results.
PD/Uniform District Approach	They need to get the lower grades PD because we really all need to see how a child is coming and how they grow. I think everybody across the board needs to get the same PD.
PD/Uniform District Approach	Why are we not doing the same thing across the board? ...why does it have to be different?
PD/Uniform District Approach	I think any type of PD on vocabulary development in helping kids develop their schema and different ways to do that would be beneficial for all of us.
Students with limited economic opportunities needs and characteristics	The intervention kids can't read, or we recognize they cannot read. We may not have found out why. Some may be end up being diagnosed as special education. Some may have memory issues.
Assessment for/of learning:	The most effective way to demonstrate reading skill is to actually observe the child read to me...and have an oral discussion with the child... or written response. Sometimes pairing them up with a buddy...because they may feel more comfortable and having them take turns. I take anecdotal notes and observe.
Assessment for/of learning	Listening to them read. Read a sentence and fill in the blank with a missing word from a word bank. Have them read a passage and do a comprehension question or circle the beginning sounds, like the blends, all of that.

### ***Reassembling***

I moved to examining the codes for possible categories through grouping codes together that appeared to be similar or related to one another. I used a reflexive, iterative process of examining and re-examining the codes to form categories. I used the pivot tables for the a priori coding and descriptive coding to discern the overall meaning from participants' interviews. After this review, and another round coding, I collapsed codes by comparing and contrasting the codes and looking for similarities and differences among them. In moving to the Round 2 of open coding, I initiated the reassembling phase of the data analysis process. I reviewed all of my journal notes and participants' transcripts to make certain I had accounted for all of the collected data.

During Round 2 of open coding, I assigned the Round 1 descriptive codes to categories by examining the coded words, and phrases for patterns and similarities throughout each transcript. Beyond discovering connections between participants' responses and the conceptual framework of this study, deductive and inductive coding methods were used to strengthen my understanding of the perspectives of the participants regarding the identified phenomenon (see Bengtsson, 2016). More specifically, according to Richards and Morse (2013), categorizing, as the researcher moves beyond "the diversity of data to the shapes of the data, the sorts of things represented, concepts are how we get up to more general, higher level and more abstract constructs" (p. 173). Keeping the research question of this study in mind as I continued to look for patterns and similarities among the data, I collapsed 115 codes, according to patterns and

similarities, into seven categories. From those seven categories, three themes emerged.

Table 11 illustrates Round 2 coding to categories.

**Table 11**

*Round 2 Coding to Categories*

<b>Round 2 Coding</b>	<b>Categories</b>
Assessment for/of Learning	Assessments and Priorities for Reading Interventions
Challenges Resources Challenges Time Limitation PD/Uniform District Approach Priority/Rationale Small Groups/Intervention Programs	PD/Uniform District Approach/Time Limitation/Resources/Challenges Priority/Rationale What/Small Groups/Interventions How to teach Reading Interventions
Students with limited economic opportunities needs and characteristics	Factors that influence Reading for Students with Limited Economic Opportunities Reading

Categories are used by researchers to identify an element of the data and make it explicit (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Categories are therefore words and phrases that represent participants' intended meaning of the initial cycles of coding. Themes are an "outcome of coding, categorization, or analytic reflection...but themes are not coded (Saldaña, 2016). Themes are the outcomes of coding and are a "phrase or sentence describing more subtle and tacit processes (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 282). In the next section I describe the themes that emerged from the categories.

***Interpreting***

As a qualitative researcher, it is critical to represent the intended meaning of the participants that is conveyed through their responses (see Yin, 2016). I began to make decisions about the categories and themes. I examined the categories and began to make decisions by collapsing the categories that were related into themes. This step led me to



create themes using the categories while continuing to focus on the purpose of the study and on this study's single research question. Researchers advise depicting the findings to demonstrate the relationship between the codes and themes that emerge and also to support the credibility of the qualitative data analysis process (Clark & Vealé, 2018; Yin, 2016). Table 12 is an illustration of the categories to themes of this study.

**Table 12**

*Round 2 Coding to Categories to Themes*

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Themes</b>
PD/Uniform District Approach/Time Limitation/Resources/Challenges	<b>Theme 1:</b> Professional Development
Factors that influence Reading for Students with Limited Economic Opportunities Reading	
Priority/Rationale What/Small Groups/Interventions How to teach Reading Interventions	<b>Theme 2:</b> Foundational Reading Skills
Assessments and Priorities for Reading Interventions	<b>Theme 3:</b> Assessments

***Concluding***

I examined the emerging themes in relationship to the research question and purpose of the study. I used the pivot tables from each round of coding to visually make comparisons of the coding cycles and to determine the possible relationships between the categories, and themes. I examined the a priori codes and descriptive open codes in

relation to the themes that emerged. I analyzed educators' perspectives of implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district. In seeking to fulfill the purpose of the study to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site, I identified three themes:

1. PD: Educators perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based reading intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources, and support for reading intervention lesson planning.
2. Foundational Reading Skills: Educators perceive prioritizing the foundations of reading will strengthen reading interventions.
3. Assessments: Educators perceive consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

To answer the stated research question, I created a semistructured interview protocol containing 12 guiding questions. I aligned the interview questions to the research question. Bandura's SLT was used to develop the interview questions. Qualitative data analysis, using content analysis, was employed to analyze the data collected. A priori deductive codes were identified from the conceptual framework to analyze participants responses. I also used open coding and identified descriptive codes

to convey meaning to the participants' responses obtained from the interviews. In the next section, I review the themes and supporting text excerpts from participants.

### **Research Question 1**

What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district? Three themes emerged from the information collected and analyzed. Theme 1 focused on participants' perspectives of the need for PD focused on intervention preparation, intervention instruction, web-based intervention programs, uniformity of intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for lesson planning and preparation, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions. Theme 2 focused on prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions. Theme three focused on a need for consistency in the proper use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. Educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading intervention for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources were that they needed PD in various areas to prioritize the foundations of reading, and to increase the student participation during intervention.

#### ***Theme 1: Professional Development (PD)***

Educators perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based reading intervention

programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources, and support for reading intervention lesson planning. The first area of PD participants discussed was focused on reading intervention preparation. The need and value of PD focused on lesson planning is often underrated, but participants of this study made clear their perspectives about the need for PD focused on reading intervention planning and preparation. Of the 10 educators who participated in this study, 90% expressed that PD related to reading intervention preparation is needed for new and tenured teachers who provide reading intervention instruction and activities to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Fifty percent of participants expressed that they did not fully understand how to effectively select follow-up intervention independent practice activities for students. Examples of participants' perspectives are described in the paragraphs that follow.

One example of a participant's shared personal need for PD was offered by P1, who expressed, "I think it would be cool if they sent, me as a reading teacher to the training center just get a morning, a day, or something. A morning of meeting with people that are employing things that are actually being successful in the classroom for them." P1 also expressed a need for one-on-one, on-campus guidance and support regarding the planning and implementation of reading intervention. P1 explained the desire for on-campus support was rooted in an aim to increase students' engagement and make learning more meaningful. Additionally, P1 described how not being clear on what to do or how to do it sometimes caused thoughts of *going through the motions* when

preparing intervention lessons and said, “Cause right now I think it’s just a requirement. And yes, you know, you gotta input it in the computer, but it’s just another task to add on top of your... everything that you’re already doing.”

A second example of a participant’s shared personal need for PD was offered by P6 who expressed being confused about how to effectively use the on-campus intervention programs. Specifically, P6 described not being equipped to use the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program teachers are required to use with struggling readers. When asked what PD may be needed, if any, to strengthen support for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, P6 responded, “Um, for me, personally, I, I guess I would say, you know, training and, LLI. I don’t have any training in that. So, I think that that would be really great.” Thus, participants expressed the perspectives of not understanding how to use existing district approved interventions. Participants also expressed the need for PD related to literacy instructional foundations, interventions, and that PD be tailored for teachers providing instruction to students with limited economic opportunities. The second area of PD participants discussed was focused on reading intervention instruction.

Many third through sixth grade educators struggle to attain and grow in the critical skills needed to deliver effective reading intervention instruction. In agreement with the perspectives of P1 and P6, P7 added the perspective of there being a need for PD focused on fortifying teachers’ instructional skills and abilities to increase of the vocabulary skills and background knowledge of upper elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources. Specifically, P7 said, “I think, um, more

professional development on vocabulary development for kids in the SES category and helping.... finding different ways to help them develop their schema.” P7 added that all educators should be provided with PD focused on supporting students in the development of their background knowledge because, “They don’t necessarily have the same schema that other kids do....in different parts of our district or any district really.” Similar to the perspective of P7, P8 and P9 agreed with the importance of classroom teachers receiving instructional PD on improving students’ vocabulary levels, but also emphasized that all content teachers should know how to teach the fundamentals of reading. P9 offered, “I believe that all teachers, no matter what content, should be reading teachers. So, everyone should be given PD on basic reading techniques and skills.” Likewise, P8 explained though not all teachers are trained to teach the content of reading, “that should be changed.” The following few paragraphs describes participants’ perspectives of PD focused on programs that require students to engage with them via the Internet. The third area of PD participants discussed was PD focused on uniformity concerning web-based reading intervention programs.

In addition to participants’ perspectives of the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation and reading intervention instruction, another essential area of PD was discussed: PD focused on uniformity among web-based reading intervention programs chosen by district or campus leaders and required to be used by classroom teachers. P6 expressed a personal need for PD focused on how to accurately use on-campus and online reading intervention programs. Participant 6 explained using the free

version of Reading A – Z, a district-approved, but not campus directed, online reading program, as an alternative reading intervention program.

Similar to the perspectives of P6, Participants 1, 3, 7, and 9 also discussed web-based programs and the need for PD focused on them. One web-based intervention program participants discussed was Istation. Participants explained that Istation is a district-purchased program used as the universal reading screener, as a monthly assessment of learning tracker, and as a daily intervention activity. One of the characteristics of Istation was identified by P1 who explained that it was the program, not classroom teachers, that identified and categorized students at the Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 levels. Three common perspectives teachers offered regarding Istation were regarding students' low engagement while using the program, teacher's lack of training to understand details about how to use the features of the program, and teachers' lack of training to understand of how to interpret the data produced by the program when students complete the monthly assessment. Participants' perspectives around the topic of unity of intervention programs is discussed next. The fourth area of PD participants discussed was focused on uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, which is discussed next.

This section describes participants' perspectives of a need for PD focused on creating or increasing uniformity regarding the use of tangible reading intervention programs and resources. One perspective of some participants was that having a variety of instructional methods and choices of intervention activities could benefit students because of their varied learning styles. However, increasing autonomy for students could

be a negative for teachers. Participants suggested a need for PD focused on uniformity in intervention tools, materials, and curriculum. P2 and P5 agreed that PD related to the uniformity in the referenced areas is needed on the target campus and across the district. The same participants shared that the resources used during the daily intervention hour are often different from class to class, teacher to teacher, or from one grade level to the next. When asked to describe the reading intervention resources used during instructional delivery or independent practice time, P10 said, "I go against the curriculum at the school, and I use a different one and it has flashcards." In addition to the alternate program used, P10 also described using personal intervention resources in place of those provided by the campus or district as a personal preference.

Other participants shared their practices too. Some of their shared practices were the same as those shared by P10 regarding reading intervention. Participant 6 shared an identical practice of using a self-selected intervention program and supporting materials. P6 explained that the use of independently purchased flashcards as an intervention tool came about as an alternative resource in the absence of on-campus materials. Like P6 and P10, P5 described using flashcards as a reading intervention tool. However, P5 explained that the flashcards were a component of a district-approved intervention program. P8 shared that while some teachers consistently used district-approved intervention programs and materials, others do not, which becomes evident in student outcomes on reading intervention assessment data.

Participants identified having challenges locating available district reading resources to implement interventions and making resources for interventions. Unlike P5,



P6, P8, and P10, P3 did not reference using flash cards or graphic organizers as reference materials used during reading intervention. Instead, P3 discussed the struggle to locate appropriate reading intervention resources to support students' individual academic needs. P3 also referenced creating suitable resources over purchasing them. According to P3, "Um, many of the resources that I have are things that I make up because it's really difficult sometimes to find, um, accurate resources for our reading kiddos as grades, uh, three through six." P3 described using self-made resources to teach skills such as inferencing during the intervention hour but did not clarify whether the choice to use created materials was because of the absence of materials or as a personal preference.

In agreement with the notion of identifying and using a single reading intervention tool across the campus, P2 used the term *convoluted* to describe the many choices and options regarding intervention programs teachers have available to them. P2 stated, "And so, I feel like if we take one thing that we can do really well and be intentional with it, I feel like that's what works." In agreement with the convoluted status of reading intervention across the target campus, P5 suggested the need for more uniformity and consistency in the use of specific reading tools across the campus and district, from kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The example P5 provided was regarding the use of a single graphic organizer as a K-12 tool in the reading and reading intervention class. This perspective was offered as an alternative to allowing educators to make their individual choices regarding the use of regarding materials. Overall, participants expressed the concerns of materials and the availability of resources, knowledge of using existing district-provided literacy intervention, and the need for a consistent approach to

PD on literacy foundations and interventions tailored to meet the needs of students with limited economic opportunities so they could deliver reading interventions to this population of students. Another area of PD discussed during participants' interviews was a need for PD focused on reading intervention lesson planning. This topic will be presented in the following few paragraphs.

In addition to the perceived need for a more uniformed approach to delivering reading instruction to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, participants discussed another area of concern. In this section, I will chronicle participants' perspectives of the use of, or lack of time related to implementing reading interventions. P1 and P3 shared their individual perspectives about their struggles with not having enough time and their desire for PD focused on how to accomplish the duty of effectively planning and preparing for reading intervention instruction and continuously assessing students and using that data to guide the next instructional steps. P1 discussed the lack of time provided within the daily master schedule to adequately prepare data-driven reading intervention instructional plans and create more engaging and effective reading intervention independent practice activities. P1 also candidly talked about how the weekly requirement to create and upload reading intervention lesson plans along while also meeting work-related deadlines often led to quickly assembling *something* to upload. P1 further explained that the uploads often happened just to meet the upload requirement due to a lack of time. P1 described the greatest struggle with time as having to manage too many tasks with too little available time. Like the perspective of P1, P3 shared the same challenge regarding the struggle of

not having enough time for assessing, designing, and documenting the reading interventions for student groups. P3 explained that much of their allocated time for lesson planning and preparations was lost to searching for appropriate intervention resources, materials, and activities.

Discussing the availability of time from a different point of view than P1 and P3, P9 discussed feeling that they do not have adequate intervention preparation time. P9 discussed time as a positive commodity made available to teachers via the campus' master schedule created by campus administrators at the start of the school year. P9 explained that the preparation time provided via the master schedule, also identified as the conference time, was meant to be used, in part, to prepare lesson plans and independent practice activities. P9 shared the campus-based requirement of all intervention teachers to assess students' learning of the specific intervention skills. No other participant discussed assessing students' learning of intervention lessons.

Adding to other participants' perspectives regarding time, P4 offered a yet another perspective. In response to a follow-up question asking the participant to identify available time or intervention activity as the more important of the two when focusing on intervention, P4 said, "Whatever the activity that you're doing, if it is tailored for those students, you can have less time, but you can get a lot done." A similar perspective was shared by P8, who agreed that PD sessions and workshops focused on how to select and manage intervention lessons and activities could be helpful to third through sixth grade teachers. P2 expressed a desire for an additional intervention time in the master schedule to increase the likelihood of improving students' performance in reading. Similarly, when

asked if their current systems and procedures were the best possible ones, P1 said, “I’m sure there’s other ways, uh, maybe something more hands-on other than just giving them a paper and, uh, a pencil. You know, but at this point it is it’s, uh, we have so much on our plates.” One final area of PD participants discussed was the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to academic resources is presented next.

As the target population of this study was students from families having limited access to economic resources, participants’ responses were solely focused on this group of students. Participants’ responses regarding the academic needs of this group included clear descriptions of students’ academic challenges and academic needs. For example, P2 discussed students’ issues with comprehension and P7 said, “They don’t necessarily have the background knowledge and the vocabulary to connect to what they’re reading.” Participant 9 agreed with P7 and added that their limited schema causes a challenge in their ability relate to text they read or hear. Additionally, P9 discussed students’ lack of interest during reading intervention. Participant 5 discussed students’ attention issues as an area of challenge for the target population. Moreover, P1 said the students do not like to read and they rush while reading to finish the assignment during reading intervention. The matter of students rushing was also discussed by P4, who said while working on computer-based programs, students just click through the assignment, rushing to get finished. Participant 4 said, “Everybody needs everything because you don’t know what grade level you may, they may decide you may have to do to” and P9 added, “All teachers, all contents should be aware of what a fluent reader looks like.” Regarding the need for PD led by teachers, P3 said, “And so they really need to get the teachers, you

know, to do the professional development. And I think that would help out a lot, you know, because I went to a training like that, where it was some teachers who taught math and they showed us what they were doing. And I mean, it was some of the best ideas and I still use those ideas in my classroom to this day. And I mean, it was hands on activities and just different things that I wouldn't have thought of, but it was coming from...it was teacher led. It wasn't like from a company, it wasn't from, you know, someone who has never been in the classroom, it was from *them*. And so, I think if they would do the same thing with reading, we would have some better results.”

### ***Theme 2: Foundational Reading Skills***

Educators perceive prioritizing the foundations of reading will strengthen reading interventions. Of the 10 educators who participated in this study, 90% perceived prioritizing the 5 pillars of reading is needed to strengthen reading interventions provided to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The remaining 10% percent did not offer any specific response revealing their agreement or disagreement in prioritizing the 5 pillars. In the following section, I provide examples of participants' responses and perspectives regarding the 5 foundations of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) in the following sections. The first of the foundational reading skills to be discussed next is the prioritization of phonemic awareness.

Participants discussed their perspectives around prioritizing intervention instruction inclusive of all five pillars of the foundations of reading, beginning with phonemic awareness. One example of prioritizing intervention instruction around the

essential foundations of reading was offered by P8, who explained the need for all students to master the smallest units of sound in English words. Participant 8 added, “If I’ve introduced a syllable type, and um, we’re reading sentences, and I may say find a word, circle a word in this sentence that has a closed syllable or an open syllable. They have to know what that is. You know, uh.... They have to know the syllable type and they have to know the patterns, and the words that fit that syllable type.” Participant 9 described phonemic awareness as having an appropriate understanding of the sounds and their positions within words. Further, P9 added an example of a student’s assessment *of* learning. Participant 9 explained a student’s ability to demonstrate phonemic awareness is especially important in cases where a single letter has more than one sound associated with it. Another participant shared a different situation focused on phonemic awareness. This situation was experienced by P5, who explained offering phonemic awareness instruction at a slower, highly repetitive pace because the student exhibited a lack of the ability to appropriately identify the initial, middle, and final position of sounds in words. Participant 10 described their preferred method of determining each student’s mastery of phonemic awareness as an individual assessment of each student. However, the participant did not include the curriculum or measuring guideline used during the assessment.

While 50% of participants openly shared the importance of intervention instruction focused on phonemic awareness and their experiences with students’ lack of phonemic awareness mastery, most did not identify any required or mandated district or campus-based program or curriculum for teachers delivering reading interventions.

Participant 8 mentioned having had experience using a program called, Neuhaus, which focuses heavily on the foundations of reading. Another participant, P4, also referenced having used Neuhaus and identified it [Neuhaus] as being really good. Similar to the perspective of P8, P4 mentioned the essential need for every student to master phonemic awareness and the remaining pillars of reading. Additionally, P4 offered a reason students should learn to grasp the skill of reading. P4 explained, “The foundation should be strong because if not, there’s no possible way they can get and do grade level stuff if they can’t read it.” Participant 8 offered an opinion about why some students might be struggling to grasp phonemic awareness. P8 said, “A lot of that is just teachers; reading teachers weren’t taught to teach it and they weren’t taught it, and so nobody wants to learn it.” When asked to share the pros and cons of prioritizing phonemic awareness over other options, P5 said, “Um, there are no disadvantages to prioritizing phonemic awareness, period.” Next, I discuss prioritizing phonological awareness, the second of the foundational reading skills.

Participants collectively shared the perspective that mastering phonics is essential for all readers. According to P9, “Phonics awareness is having the children to be able to decode words, help them to understand their blends, and the different rules for the vowel sounds.” Participants’ perspectives of the need for phonics-based instruction during intervention was similar to their perspectives of the need for instruction focused on phonemic awareness. Participant 7 expressed agreement with the value of prioritizing intervention instruction focused on phonological awareness and added a remark about the assessment tool they used to determine if a student would need phonics-based

intervention support. Participant 7 described using the results of reading Inventory, a web-based intervention reading assessment, to determine if a student's participation in intervention should include a focus on phonological awareness. According to P7, if a student's reading Inventory assessment score produced a Lexile number of less than 400, it would be determined that the student is in critical need of phonics-based intervention instruction. Students receiving intervention support guided by P7 and focused on building mastery in phonics experienced a combination of working in a teacher-led small group while simultaneously working, independently, in System 44, a web-based intervention program that focuses on the 44 speech sounds, or phonemes, of English words.

Another participant shared their practice of using students' Lexile number to determine their performance abilities. Participant 9 explained that each child's Lexile number is used to determine their independent reading level. The participant did not include a description of the method or program used to determine each student's Lexile number. Instead, P9's exact response was, "I give'em a Lexile number, then there's several books there they can use to read from." The participant was specific to explain how they used the Lexile number to move forward toward independent reading. The perspective of P9 directly connects to the perspective of P4 who explained that students need to experience balanced literacy, which they described as being inclusive of the physical activity of reading to practice reading skills introduced during intervention instruction. As explained by P4, the campus' master schedule does not allow much time for isolated independent reading, which could be a factor that contributes to the students' struggles with reading. Even with what was explained as a tight master schedule, another



teacher found a way to include a needed area of support for students who demonstrated a need.

Another method of allowing students to engage in independent practice was offered by P6, who described allowing students to use flash cards focused on building phonological awareness. According to P6, the students were allowed to use the flash cards after recognizing the phonics struggles of students during the literacy block. Specifically, P6 explained that the phonics-focused flash cards were teacher-purchased and introduced to the students upon realizing no curriculum or phonics-related materials were available on campus. Next, I discuss prioritizing the third foundation of reading, fluency.

Participants discussed the need for intervention instruction focused on phonemic awareness and phonological awareness more than they discussed the need for instruction focused on fluency. Participant 5 said, “The thing is, is just to go back to, you know, whole language and phonics instruction. Whole language phonics instruction. In Big City ISD, we are using whole language still. If phonics instruction was really taking the lead, then, Big City ISD would take the scope and sequence and adapt it to follow multisensory instruction because one of the, the ideas is like.... If the first, very first letter I’m gonna teach you is the short vowel i, then I’m first gonna teach you t, p, s, n, then I’m gonna teach you short vowel a.” According to P10, fluency is the prioritized learning expectation for third through sixth grade reading students, and “If they have been taught reading and phonics prior, by the time they get to third grade, they should be fluent.” Participant 1 agreed with P10 and named fluency as one of the prioritized learning

expectations of upper elementary school students. Participant 9 did not agree nor disagree with P1 and P10, but only described the importance of focusing on fluency during intervention and an essential need to expose students to various texts. Similar to the perspective of P10, P9 expressed the viewpoint that students should be assessed regularly to determine their ability to fluently read all chosen or assigned texts. A description of determining grade-level proficiency in fluency shared by P9 was that students are assessed before and after completing a read-aloud as a whole group. In P9's example, the fluency assessment was completed using a single text, covering only the pages to be read during the read-aloud. The before and after scores were compared to determine the effectiveness of the reading intervention lesson. The bottom-line regarding reading and fluency, according to P2 is, "It's about them getting a text in front of them and being able to read it, read it fluently and understand what they've read." In the next section, I discuss participants' prioritizing vocabulary, the fourth of foundational reading skills.

Participants discussed the need for intervention instruction focused on vocabulary more than they focused on the need for fluency-based instruction. One of the concerns identified by P2 is the matter of students' reading comprehension being negatively affected by students having obvious issues with grade-level vocabulary. Another concern referenced by P2 is that students' lacked mastery of the ability to apply context clues to understand the meanings of unknown words discovered while reading. Participant 10 agreed with P2 that students lacked appropriate grade-level vocabulary. To support students in the acquisition of grade-level word knowledge, P10 purchased vocabulary flash cards and allowed students to use them during the daily reading intervention hour.

The perspective of P7 is that the lack of word knowledge is a major problem. According to P7, students lack the ability to connect to the text they read because they lack the background knowledge and the vocabulary needed to infer and comprehend. Though daily vocabulary sessions are not offered in isolation, one method used by P7 to assess students' word definition knowledge is to listen for students' use of the words defined and discussed during intervention lessons. Participant 7 explained the desired outcome is that students would use the new vocabulary words, in context, in their normal academic or everyday conversations. Vocabulary development, from the perspective of P7, is beneficial for academic comprehension now and in future grade levels. However, from the perspective of P7, equity-based intervention instruction focused on vocabulary development would specifically benefit third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Equity-based instruction would be vital because, according to P7, "But especially those kids from low SES places where they don't get have the same background, same vocabulary development, same resources in the home to help them become better readers." In the next section, I will discuss participants' perspectives on prioritizing the final foundational reading skill, comprehension.

Identifying students' comprehension abilities was described as being addressed or assessed using a variety of methods. In response to an interview question asking participants how they discern if a student is having difficulty with a reading skill, P3 explained, "You can just look at the level of the answer and the responses that they are giving. If they don't have any understanding or if they don't comprehend the material,

that alone tells you that they're struggling." Another Participant, P1, offered the perspective that comprehension and fluency are the prioritized learning expectations for the focus group of this study, but added that there is an obvious lack of grade-level performance in comprehension among the students served in the daily intervention groups. This lack of grade-level reading ability is the reason P5 suggests the use of oral responses to comprehension questions for students identified as needing extra support in reading. An agreement with the suggestion of allowing students to give oral responses was offered by P2, who also mentioned the positive outcome of offering students a reading comprehension activity during the daily reading intervention station rotations. Participant 2 further explained that the inclusion of the reading comprehension activity would be based on the monthly Istation ISIP assessment, not based on a teacher-created test.

In assessing students identified as struggling readers, P9 explained the practice of assessing students using teacher-created questions from student or teacher-selected text. Another participant, P7, referenced using a teacher-created comprehension assessment too. Specifically, P7 said, in response to the interview question about the most effective way to have students demonstrate a reading skill, said, "If I were to read a writing sample from their Language Arts class... if I see some of the skills on how to cite text evidence and explain it, to me that shows true comprehension." The participant did not mention this practice as a team or campus directive, or as an independent choice. Participant 8 did not agree or disagree with teacher-driven assessments, but instead referenced the use of Lexia Core 5, a web-based program that is used to assess and support students who have

demonstrated the need for reading intervention instruction. Another web-based program, Reading A-Z, was referenced as the program used to support students' who have been identified as underperforming in reading. Opposite of the use of a web-based program, P4 described using teacher-created exit tickets to determine comprehension but did not mention methods of engaging in intervention instruction focused on comprehension.

### ***Theme 3: Assessments***

Educators perceive consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions. Of the 10 educators who participated in this study, 100% expressed the same perspectives, that the consistent use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Participant 1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, and P10 expressed perspectives around placement assessments and formative assessments, while 100% expressed perspectives around summative assessments. The following paragraphs describe participants' perspectives.

Participants' perspectives regarding placement assessments and formative assessments to determine if reading intervention is necessary, were varied. When asked to describe the method or strategy used to determine if reading intervention is needed for a single student or for a group of students, P10 responded, "It's like a reading program and it'll gauge their reading level. If they're on grade level or, above they can keep on working on their level and I will check back in with them." When asked a similar question to identify the specific tool used in the assessment for learning, P10's response

was, “Leveled Readers or something like that.” Like P10, P3 also did not identify the specific program used in assessing students for learning. Participant 3 acknowledged participating in pre-intervention testing and, beyond testing, being involvement in analyzing the tested data to conclude if students have mastered specific skills or if they have any learning gaps that might require participation in reading intervention.

Another participant, P1, described using the computerized student-adaptive program, Istation, as the assessment tool used to identify students in need of reading intervention. Though making it clear that Istation was the assessment program being used, P1 also shared, “Um we have Istation, which I don’t think is the best tool, but that’s what we have here, and we use it and that’s what I use.” Further into the interview, P1 described analyzing the Istation assessment data to identify the students who underperformed in specific areas, based on academic expectations for their specific grade level. According to P1, the Istation program categorizes students as being on-level or in critical condition and in need for reading intervention support.

In contrast to the opinion of P1, P2 offered a positive view of the computer based, Istation, as a method or strategy used to determine if reading intervention is needed for a student. Participant 2 explained, “I am a firm believer in Istation. I’ve used it numerous times and if it’s used with fidelity, it can really boost a lot of the reading scores. So, one thing that I do is take their ISIP, uh, Priority Report, to see where they are. And if I notice that they have, a large number of students who are all having the same issue, or they’re all having some sort of weakness in comprehension, then, I know that’s gonna be the one that I’m probably gonna be working with. I also make sure that when I’m teaching, I see

that reading comprehension or that decoding may pop out when we're in just our mini lesson that could also lead me to do something small group based on something that I see when I'm teaching." Participant 2 explained using the Priority Report produced as a result of completing the Istation assessment to identify each student's level at Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3. Participant 2 also explained using the Tier-based data obtained from the Istation Priority Report to help in the creation of intervention groups and to create future reading intervention lessons.

Another participant, P8, discussed using a different computerized, student-adaptive program, Measurements of Academic Progress (MAP), as the assessment for learning tool. According to P8, if students are identified by the program as being below grade level in their assessed performance, the teacher would begin to observe the students' in-class work more closely to conclude if reading intervention support is needed and in which specific areas. Additionally, according to P8, the MAP assessment data would also be used as a prescreener for dyslexia.

Participant 5's first response to the question asking participants to describe the method or strategy used to determine if reading intervention is needed for students was actually a question. In response to the question, P5 wanted to understand if I was requesting to know their personal method used to identify students who may need reading intervention support or to know what the school district uses. Ultimately, P5 shared that listening to students read aloud is their personal, preferred method for assessing students for learning. Another participant, P9, described a similar method of assessing students to determine if reading intervention is needed. In response to the question, P9 referenced

having students read aloud, beginning at the students' grade level, and moving up or down based on their ability to decode and comprehend. One difference in the assessment strategies used by P5 and P9 is that P9's assessment practice included a review of the students' completed Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) along with the results of their oral reading assessment. Similarly, P4 and P7 explained using a combination of students' DRA results and the results of the Istation diagnostic assessment to determine which students, if any, might need reading intervention support.

Beyond relying on students' DRA and Istation results, another participant, P7, offered the only reference to the state assessment. In addition to DRA and Istation results, P7 discussed analyzing the results of students' annual standardized assessment to determine each student's need for reading intervention support. The results of this interview question unearthed discussions on methods or strategies of assessing students for learning, which can occur prior to beginning a new lesson, as well as during the intervention time frame to determine academic progress. Next, I discuss assessments required to determine students' progress prior to the end of a lesson, which can be identified as formative assessments.

During the one-on-one interviews, participants were asked to describe how they discern if students are having difficulty with a specific reading skill taught during a recent lesson. Several responses and examples were shared. Participant 10 offered the response of using the students' answers provided on their exit tickets to determine if they understood the concept or if they might have a lingering misunderstanding. Participant 10 also shared examples of exit tickets that could be used for specific grade levels. Third



graders, according to P10, could do a quick read aloud with the teacher and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students could be required to read a passage and answer a few comprehension questions on paper.

Another participant, P6, described using exit tickets as the guide in determining if students are having difficulty with a specific reading skill. Participant 6 described the exit ticket as, “It’s short; it’s quick enough for them to be able to not have to linger on it.” According to P6, the exit ticket is probably the most effective way to determine a student’s mastery of a skill. Unlike the example of using exit tickets offered by P6 and P10, P2 described accepting students’ responses, oral or written, as the assessment tool used to determine each student’s level of mastery or difficulty in understanding new skills. Specifically, P2 and P4 described a key indicator that surfaces when students are having difficulty with specific reading skills as their inability to provide accurate responses to questions around specific reading topics of study like, text structure, cause and effect, sequence, or text features. Participant 7 shared a response that aligned with the response provided by P2. However, P7’s response included an emphasis on identifying struggling students already receiving intervention support because these students would already have been receiving accommodations such as, sentence stems or sentence starters to support their learning.

Like the response of P7, P3 explained that analyzing the level of the students’ responses to assessment questions usually provide enough information to determine if students have grade-level comprehension. Another example of accepting oral responses was offered by P9, who explained students participating in reading intervention are

informed prior to their check-up assessment of the questions they would be asked at the time of assessment. According to P9, knowing the expectations before-hand has proved to motivate students to do their best.

Another example of assessing students' level of understanding or difficulty in the area of comprehension prior to the end of an intervention session was offered by P5, who explained using the oral reading of text and individual sight words as the guideline for all students, but specifically for students already identified as dyslexic and already receiving reading intervention support. Participant 7 described identifying students struggling with a recently taught skill as those who may be sitting quietly, not offering any response at all. The specific response offered by P7 was, "Well, a lot of times, they're just kind of staring at the paper for a long period of time and you want them to think, but I don't want them to get frustrated, so I give them some ideas." The methods described were all focused on assessing students for learning while receiving reading intervention. In the following paragraphs, I describe participants' perspectives of summative assessments to determine students' level of mastery of a new or revisited skill at the end of the lesson.

Participants' responses regarding summative assessments were similarly varied as with placement assessments and formative assessments. When participants were asked to describe ways in which they perceived it is most effective to have students demonstrate their understanding of a skill, participants provided responses that included results that included computer-based assessments and oral responses provided directly to the teacher. Examples of responses are provided in the following paragraphs.

One example of the most effective methods to have students demonstrate their understanding of a skill, according to P6, is by completing an exit ticket. P6 defined the term and described the process of using exit tickets as, “So, an exit ticket is just a quick 5-to-10 minutes assignment that a student would complete individually, over the concept that was just taught in class. The students will complete it by themselves, and it would let me know whether the student has grasped the concept or not. So, it could be multiple choice questions about the concept that was just taught, or it could be them filling out a graphic organizer, or it could be them completing a web-based activity where they put something in chronological order. Then I would be able to see if they understood the concept.” Participant 6 explained that when students hear the lesson, watch the model, have opportunity to participate in practicing the independent activity, and are still unable to earn a passing score on the independent practice, that is a strong indicator that the student does not understand the concept. Participant 4 agreed with P6 concerning the use of exit tickets as an effective method of assessing students’ understanding. Participant 4 said, “So, we are constantly doing exit tickets and I’m going around doing aggressive monitoring. So, I’m looking in and I’m checking in on them and seeing what they’re doing. I’m asking guiding questions, making sure they are staying on track. That’s number one.” However, P4 explained that aggressive monitoring is a contributing factor in determining students’ understanding. In cases where the students are unable to demonstrate an adequate level of understanding, P4 explained that the students would receive guiding questions to help lead them toward understanding.

Another participant, P5, described students' demonstration of their understanding of a skill as, "They're able to name the key word and sounds super-fast. They demonstrate it by name and by letter super-fast." Participant 9 identified three ways students demonstrate understanding as: when students engage in a read aloud, when students offer oral responses during whole group discussions, and when students offer written responses to comprehensive questions. Another participant, P2, agreed with P5 regarding the personal preference of accepting students' oral responses. As stated by P2, "The best way for me, I feel is to have them read; to basically have a one-on-one reading session with a book at their instructional level." Another participant, P3, agreed with P2, P5, and P9 that oral responses would serve as a good demonstration of students' understanding. Specifically, P3 explained, "Students might have to demonstrate that they have a full understanding of the picture without a caption included." In this example, the students would, according to P3, offer an oral response explaining their understanding of what is happening in the picture and also explaining the scene to support their response.

In contrast to the other responses to the interview question asking participants to describe the method or strategy used to determine if reading intervention is needed for students, P1 said, "I'm sure there's other ways, but maybe something more hands-on other than just giving them a paper and a pencil, but at this point we have too much on our plate." In contrast to P1's response, P7 named several contributing factors used to determine if reading intervention is needed. Specifically, P7 said, "We look at the annual state assessment scores for students in fourth through sixth grade students and for third grade students, it's back to DRA's." Participant 7 named Istation as the intervention

program used for the whole third through sixth grade population of students along with the reading inventory assessment, which was described as a program that includes an assessment of students' inferencing skills and one that produces a Lexile score upon completion of the assessment.

### **Evidence of Quality**

To help ensure the credibility and interval validity of my findings of the data analysis process, I used two strategies common to qualitative research. The first strategy that was used to strengthen the credibility and interval validity of my findings was triangulation. According to Creswell (2013), "Typically, this process involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective" (p251). With this definition in mind, I justified themes during my data analysis process by cross-checking data collected during each participant interview. Merriam and Tisdell, (2016) referred to the participant review process as member checking or respondent validation interchangeably. Merriam and Tisdell described member checking as the single best way to eliminate misunderstandings between the researcher's findings and the intended meaning of participant's verbal or non-verbal communication. According to Thomas (2017), member checking involves offering participants an opportunity to correct inaccuracies. Maxwell (2013) explained that member checking helps researchers identify their own biases, which, according to Babbie (2017) referred to the quality of the interview protocol and the way in which the questions are worded with the intention to bring a specific response. To reduce bias, some authors and researchers suggest the inclusion of discrepant cases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

After I transcribed, coded, and identified themes, I constructed a preliminary draft of the findings. I sent the draft of the findings to the participants for their review. Participants received a draft copy of the summarized findings, and they were asked to review the draft and offer any corrections and suggestions they may have and respond within 7 days of receiving the preliminary findings. During the member checking process, I was available by telephone or email to answer participants' questions. Participants who responded to me by email or telephone regarding the draft findings by day 7, were contacted using their identified preferred method of contact to confirm their agreement with the draft findings or to gather any suggested changes. None of the participants responded to the draft findings. In the next section, I discuss discrepant cases.

### ***Systemic Process***

During the data collection process, my pre- and post-interview protocol process was consistent. The questions I asked participants were the same at the onset. However, to get deeper, richer responses, I used various probes. Then, I transcribed each audio-recorded interview using an online program called *Rev*. After transcribing each interview, I listened to each recorded interview several times as I also read the transcriptions to ensure each one has been transcribed accurately (Creswell, 2009). Next, I coded the participants' transcribed responses and my handwritten notes from my field journal. The codes, participants' transcribed responses, and my handwritten notes from my field journal were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. Data pertaining to this study were maintained on my personal computer, secured with a strong password.

### ***Field Journal***

I used my personal field journal to take handwritten notes during each participant's one-on-one interview. I used this process to record my thoughts and feelings in response to each participant's shared perspectives. Reviewing my notes served to keep me aware any potential biases. Yin (2016) suggested the use of field notes to acknowledge and respond to any biases that may surface. As shared by Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018), field notes were initially thought of as the private scratch notes of researchers during the data collection process, however, field notes are now considered valuable data needed to complete the analysis process. According to Phillippi and Lauderdale, "Field notes serve functions. Predominately, they aid in constructing thick, rich descriptions of the study context, encounter, interview, focus group, and document's valuable contextual data" (p. 381).

### ***Triangulation***

Triangulation is a method used to increase the credibility of research by comparing data from various sources. "Triangulation may be used not only to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives but also to enrich our understanding by allowing for new or deeper dimensions to emerge" (p. 603). Additionally, Noble and Heale (2019) offered, "Credibility refers to trustworthiness and how believable a study is" (p. 67). The purpose of triangulation offered by Turner et al. (2017) is, the intentional use of more than one approach or strategy to gain clarity of the phenomenon of a study. "Its purpose is to ensure that the research outputs are comprehensive and strongly grounded" (p. 110). In this study, I engaged in the process of

triangulation by using content analysis that encompassed a combination of qualitative and quantitative descriptive processes involving the use of a spreadsheet to examine the frequency of the assigned a priori and open codes after each round of coding (see Gibson, 2017). The deductive, or a priori, coding process involved the development of a set of codes based on the conceptual framework for this study. I immersed myself in the data collected from participants to identify which parts of the data fit my pre-established codes. The inductive, or open coding process involved reading and rereading the data collected during one-on-one interviews to identify codes most appropriate for the data collected. I used deductive and inductive coding, engaging in two different coding approaches to analyze a single source of data collected from participants of this study. Jick (1979) noted that “triangulation is a research strategy of convergent validation, both of multiple methods and multi-approach to data” (p. 602). Different levels of perception were facilitated by using content analysis and both an inductive and deductive coding approach in the data analysis. These approaches supported convergent validation of the phenomenon being studied (Flick et al., 2012). I compared the coding that resulted from the different coding approaches and observed some alignment with some of the a priori and open codes that served to validate Bandura’s (1971) assumptions related to SLT.

### ***Member Checking***

I elected to engage in member checking to give participants an opportunity to confirm that my transcriptions of their interview responses were documented with accuracy. At the conclusion of each interview, I informed participants that they would receive a password protected email of their transcribed interview along with a request



that they would review it and respond within seven days. I followed the member checking steps suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2012) and Merriam and Tisdell, (2016):

- Transcribe and summarize each interview within 24-72 hours of each interview appointment
- Member checking to ensure internal validity and credibility
- Examine the data for patterns, similarities, and differences
- Coding and triangulating emerging concepts and themes
- Summarization of each category of coded data
- Synthesizing the coded data and the conceptual framework to offer an understanding of the presented phenomenon gleaned from this study

In the email sent to participants, I explained that this review was required to ensure their responses were captured and represented accurately and are free from error and any researcher bias. I also asked participants to identify text, email, or telephone call as their preferred method of contact in case I had not received any response by the seventh day. Participants did not ask questions, request changes, or request that any clarifications be made. The participants accepted the draft findings as written.

### ***Discrepant Cases***

To reduce potential bias during my analysis of the data, I conducted a discrepant case analysis. During this analysis, I closely studied and cross-check themes to ensure the accuracy of my interpretations of the data collected during each interview and that my understandings did not present an obvious conflict against the participants' intended message. Ravitch and Carl (2016) suggest rechecking data in search of any contradictory

patterns or responses that do not fit with the identified themes, understandings, or interpretations of the data. If discrepant cases had been realized, I would have contacted the appropriate participant, request that he or she perform a second review my drafts of the transcripts and findings and offer corrections or clarifications of their responses and intended perspectives.

### **Summary of Findings**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. Guided by Bandura's (1971) SLT, this study investigated educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade students who are the target population of this study. To answer the sole research question of this study and share valuable insight regarding the perspectives of educators who provide reading intervention instruction to the target population, I collected qualitative data by conducting semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with 10 participants who self-selected to participate in this study. All 10 participants met the inclusion criteria described as: (a) educators who are currently teaching reading or who have previously taught reading to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources, and (b) educators who have experience with reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. All 10 one-on-one interviews were conducted by telephone, based on each participant's choice, and all 10 interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of each participant.

The interview questions were designed to explore the perspectives of educators around this study's topic of reading intervention instruction. The interview questions directly addressed each area of Bandura's (1971) SLT, which serves as the conceptual framework for this study. Reflecting on the SLT, the interview questions were constructed to gain responses that would offer an understanding of participants' intentionality to capture students' attention during reading intervention session, improve students' ability to retain strategies and facts, increase students' ability to reproduce demonstrated strategies and outcomes, and ignite the motivation of students during reading intervention. Additionally, reflecting on the SLT while constructing the interview questions helped to ensure the interview questions purposefully addressed each area of the theory. In addition to using interview questions to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of this study, I used the questions to "give a voice to non-researchers" (Thelwall & Nevill, 2021, p. 1), that may often go unheard. In the next section, I logically summarize outcomes in relation to the stated problem, research question, conceptual framework, and literature presented on the topic. I conclude with a description of the project genre, a 3-day PD project focused on the findings of this study.

### **Research Question 1**

What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district? Three themes developed from the qualitative data collected from research participants. The first theme was that educators perceived the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention

instruction, uniformity among web-based reading intervention, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading interventions lesson planning, and academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions. Theme two was that educators perceived prioritizing the foundations of reading will strengthen reading interventions. Theme three was that participants perceived consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

Regarding the first theme, participants indicated a combination of a need and desire for PD focused on increasing the knowledge and skills needed by educators to effectively prepare and implement reading interventions with third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. McMaster, Baker, et al. (2021) explained the need for educators to engage in intensive intervention preparation exists because even with an abundance of research-based programs or curriculums available, students continue to underperform and show an inability to perform well in response to Tier 1 instruction. Further, Fuchs et al. (2018) developed a “Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity” that is made up of seven specific components needed to help educators create and assess their interventions: (a) strength, (b) number of learning opportunities, (c) connectedness, (d) focus on transfer, (e) behavior management, (f) comprehensiveness, and (g) individual progress monitoring. These components support an effective and intensive intervention program (Fuchs, et al., 2018). Researchers, Brownell et al. (2017), conducted a study and findings showed that teachers

who received ongoing PD outperformed teachers who did not. Regarding a timeframe for teachers to engage in PD sessions, Pasquini and Eaton (2019) suggested educators receive PD on a schedule of 6 months – 1 year. However, Vernon-Feagans et al. (2018) explained that 2 years of PD are required to promote student gains and preferred over just 1 year. Further, regarding ongoing PD, Vernon-Feagans et al. (2018), explained, “Ongoing literacy coaching support provided to classroom teachers has been shown to be a critical element in helping teachers improve their instructional practices for struggling readers” (p. 4). A point of clarity was suggested by Kelley et al. (2020), who reported teachers’ self-efficacy improved following PD and after purposeful changes in their classroom practices based on their PD training. In the next section, I discuss the second theme.

In the second theme, participants indicated prioritizing foundational reading skills will strengthen the implementation of reading interventions. While the lower elementary years are often described as the learn to read years, one challenging characteristic of teaching and learning the English language is, according to Sucena et al. (2021), that the language offers these difficulties: “English is an opaque orthography, with 44 phonemes (with more than 1,100 possible pronunciations), and 229 graphemes. During the interviews, participants shared their perspectives about their experiences with the difficulties students exhibit when reading in English. Data collected during participants’ one-on-one telephone interviews unearthed educators’ descriptions of students’ stressful struggles with the action of reading. whether alone or in small group sessions. Participants described students’ struggles to read as one of the reasons that support the

need for an instructional prioritization on foundational reading. The need for teachers to receive consistent opportunities to engage in PD has been shown to be beneficial in studies conducted by various researchers (Brownell et al., 2017; Budge & Parrett, 2018; Phillips, 2021; Seglem et al., 2017; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2018).

In a study conducted by Sucena et al. (2021), researchers identified the combination of phonological awareness training along with explicit instruction are needed for successful readers to emerge. According to Hall and Burns (2018), reading intervention instruction is more effective when the lessons are focused on a specific foundational skill than when students are offered a comprehensive lesson inclusive of multiple skills at once. However, the research of Keller et al. (2019) and Donegan and Wanzek (2021) found though students' assessments may show a need for reading intervention instruction focused on a specific foundational reading skill, a higher positive effect was found when intervention instruction included a foundational skill along with another reading skill. The contrast in research findings suggests a need for PD to provide teachers with this knowledge to help guide their instructional practices. Donegan and Wanzek (2021) discussed the increased challenges and academic expectations upon students as they move from the kindergarten – second grade, and the foundational learning needed to read at higher, more challenging read-to-learn levels. The third theme is discussed in the final section that follows.

The third theme of this study was that participants perceived consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions. Participants indicated they perceived that consistency in

the use of these evaluations will strengthen reading interventions, which would lead to improvements in students' academic performance in reading. Filderman et al. (2019) explained the process of providing intensive reading interventions for students becomes increasingly challenging as students matriculate upward through elementary grade levels. Even with the increase in rigor, according to Filderman et al. the four steps to effective intervention that work for students at both the elementary and secondary levels include: (a) selection of a research-based assessment tool, (b) pre-determine the frequency of data collection during the intervention session, (c) establish an academic goal, and (d) close evaluation of the data collected to make informed instructional decisions. Placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments are avenues to determine students' abilities and their level of mastery. Immediately after each assessment, a review of the data and an instructional decision are the next sequential steps to determine students' strengths and any areas of weakness. As described by Filderman et al. (2019), some potential areas of students' strengths and weaknesses in reading include "decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension" (p. 9). While most teachers referenced placement assessments, or assessments offered prior to starting intervention instruction, and summative assessments, or assessments offered at the end of a lesson, several missed identifying formative assessments, or assessments offered during the lesson to gauge learning. While assessments are highly valuable, a single source of data is not suggested. Noble and Heale (2019) explained triangulation is most connected to research but can also be used by educators to validate data from students' assessments. A triangulation of data taken from multiple sources is the best choice and will provide the

ideal support for instructional decision-making as related to students' reading progress. The design and delivery of reading intervention instruction should be guided by data collected to identify students' levels of mastery and gaps in understanding by grade level and by skill (Filderman et al., 2019; Filderman & Toste, 2022; Karst et al., 2022; Schmitterer & Brod, 2021; Wanzek, et al., 2021).

### **Conclusion**

In Section 2, I reviewed and described the basic qualitative design, participants, data collection, data analysis, and summary of the findings that emerged from the themes of this study. I also answered the single research question and synthesized the themes, aligning literature, and Bandura's (1971) SLT, which served as the conceptual framework that guided my collection and analysis of data from the 10 volunteer participants of this study. The findings suggest current reading interventions did not work because of a need for PD, lack of instructional focus on foundational reading skills, and inconsistency in the use of assessments to guide next instructional steps. These findings represent the three themes that emerged from the data.

A close analysis of the three themes of this study suggests the need for PD for campus-based third through sixth grade reading teachers and off-site educators who provide on-campus reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources enrolled at the target site. A 3-day PD, based upon the themes and findings of this study, was designed to help enhance educators' level of knowledge and skills to better support the reading academic needs of the target population. The PD includes instruction and clarification regarding each



segment of Bandura's (1971) SLT: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Campus leaders' failure to implement the 3-day PD, *Intervention Transformation*, may result in a continuation of the current intervention instructional practices of educators and a continuation of the current academic performance of third through sixth grade students in the content of reading at the target site. Thus, the most effective response to the findings of this study is a 3-day PD, which could benefit students at the target site and eventually those across the district. Next, I discuss the project deliverable.

### **Project Deliverable**

In Section 3, I describe this basic qualitative study and the project genre that is based on the finding of the data collected, conceptual framework, and supporting literature. The project for this study is *Intervention Transformation*, a 3-day PD. This PD project was created to support educators' knowledge and skills in response to the findings of this study. Participants indicated a need for PD support regarding the preparation of intervention instruction, lesson planning, resource and materials planning, and using assessments to guide their instructional choices. In response to participants' shared perspectives, the 3-day PD was developed using Guskey's (2014) five critical levels of PD and based on the train-the-trainer (TTT) model. Guided by the TTT model, the Reading *Intervention Transformation* Team (RITT) receives the initial training. The RITT is then responsible to organize follow-up campus-based trainings and provide intervention instruction support to on-campus educators who provide reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students. This approach to designing the 3-day PD supports the goal to enhance educators' knowledge and skills needed to support the

reading needs of third through sixth grade students in the target population. Next, I describe the rationale for the 3-day PD project, the literature review focused on the genre choice, and the analyzed findings of this study. Further, I discuss the description, evaluation, and implications of the PD project.

### Section 3: The Project

In this basic qualitative study, I focused on the problem of elementary educators struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources. That focus led me to consider the gap in practice, or the space between the desired outcome of student performance and the present reality of their performance. After considering the gap in practice, I focused on the unknown perspectives of educators regarding the implementation of reading intervention with the target population. To discover those unknown perspectives of educators, I conducted semistructured interviews with 10 participants who met the inclusion criteria. While analyzing the data collected, three themes emerged. The three themes reflected the participants' perspectives regarding the implementation of reading intervention. The three themes are the basis for the creation of a 3-day PD project, entitled *Intervention Transformation*. The three themes are (a) participants perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading intervention lesson planning, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions; (b) participants perceive prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions; and (c) participants perceive consistency in the use of placement

assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

The purpose of the 3-day PD project is to respond to the findings of this study by meeting the PD needs of campus-based educators of the target site and educators across the district who provide reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. *Intervention Transformation* was designed based on the findings of this study. Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change served as the conceptual framework for *Intervention Transformation*. Guskey's model was chosen because it provides a realistic flow for researchers and non-researchers regarding the end-result of a desired change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes. In the model, Guskey also infers the necessity of PD as a precursor to any change, increase, progress, or improvement in teachers' practices and in student learning. According to Guskey, "Policy-makers increasingly recognize that schools can be no better than the teachers and administrators who work within them" (p. 381). In other words, academically equipped teachers, precede academically equipped students. Guskey's model includes a sequential teacher change process that consists of (a) PD, (b) change in teacher classroom practice, (c) change in student learning outcomes, and (d) change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes. Next, I list and describe the five goals for the 3-day PD project, *Intervention Transformation*.

- Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus Reading *Intervention Transformation* Team (RITT).

- Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of the change process of Guskey's (2014) model PD evaluation.
- Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources
- Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design
- Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments.

Each goal was created to help ensure the PD project is purposefully focused (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) and to increase the likelihood of its success. Goal 1 is listed first goal because the establishment of a well-trained, on-campus team is an excellent way to build on-campus capacity and it is crucial to the success of the PD project. Goal 2 will ensure teachers learn about and discuss Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change and how the four-part flow of the model will influence their perceptions as well as their beliefs and attitudes regarding the implementation of reading intervention instruction. Goal 3 will ensure teachers better understand the research behind data-use along with active engagement opportunities using data to guide next steps in determining lessons and methods of instruction, creating intervention lesson plans, and aligning the most effective independent practice activities (see Datnow et al., 2021). Goal 4 will

enhance teachers' knowledge and skills regarding the cognitive foundations framework (Tunmer & Hoover, 2019), which is based on the foundational reading skills that serve as the beginning levels of reading instruction. Goal 5 is designed to help teachers discuss and differentiate among the three assessments used with students before, during, and after instruction. PD attendees will also engage in discussions regarding the possibility that "The ultimate causes of individual differences in learning to read are the biological and environmental factors that shape the development of brain systems underlying reading" (Hulme & Snowling, 2013, p. 1). In the next section, I present a research-supported rationale which is inclusive of how the PD project will address the problem of this study.

### **Rationale**

I conducted a basic qualitative study focused on the problem of elementary educators struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources. I investigated educators' perspectives of why reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students in the target population. Insights of the phenomenon were gained from participants' shared perspectives.

My research was guided by a single research question: *What are educators' perspectives of the implementation of reading interventions for third through sixth grade elementary students from families having limited access to economic resources in the target district?* To answer the stated research question, I conducted semistructured, one-on-one interviews with 10 participants who met the inclusion criteria. I collected data to better understand the phenomenon that was the focus of this study. The findings of this

study revealed the emergence of three themes: (a) participants perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading intervention lesson planning, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions; (b) participants perceive prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions; and (c) participants perceive consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

In my review of literature and findings related to Theme 1, researchers' findings related to preparing for reading intervention sessions confirmed the findings of this study which revealed participants perceive a need for PD focused on intervention preparation and intervention planning are needed to strengthen reading interventions. Educators' participation in PD sessions focused on preparing for reading interventions would enhance the engagement and learning of students from families having limited access to economic resources. The findings of Ekinici and Acar (2019) confirmed educators' participation in PD should originate from their own desire for PD, which is reflected in the findings of this study. Ekinici and Acar explained, PD is the process of session trainers professionally engaging with teachers to enhance their professional knowledge and skills. The findings of this study include teachers' desire to witness improved academic

performance during reading intervention and they simultaneously expressed a need for on-campus support to adequately prepare intervention lessons based on students' academic needs. According to McMaster, Lembke, et al. (2019) it is a lack of adequate professional preparation focused on data-based instruction that prevents teachers from being able to prepare individualized intervention lessons. The findings of McMaster et al. (2019) are supported by Bigsby and Firestone (2017), who suggested that even with an abundance of PD sessions available to teachers, far too many PD sessions are ineffective and are not structured in a way that offers any lasting benefit to participants. A possible solution to the problem of ineffective, unstructured PD is what Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) calls the seven features of effective PD: (a) PD is focused, (b) PD incorporates active learning, (c) PD supports collaboration, (d) PD uses models of effective practices, (e) PD provides coaching and expert support, (f) PD offers feedback and reflection, and (g) PD is of a sustained duration. Next, I discuss the findings related to Theme 2.

In my review of literature and findings related to Theme 2, researchers' findings related to foundational reading skills confirmed the findings of this study which revealed participants' perspectives that foundational reading skills should be prioritized during the intervention lesson to strengthen reading interventions. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2017), even with billions of dollars being dedicated to K-12 education, 65% of students in Grade 4 have not successfully demonstrated proficiency in reading. The reason for the large percentage of students underperforming in reading is, according to Paige et al. (2019), that students are struggling to read with under-developed foundational reading skills. According to Rasinski et al. (2009), another



reason upper elementary students struggle with reading is that too many students are exiting third grade with underdeveloped foundational reading skills. These researchers' findings confirm the findings of the participants of this study who used words and terms like *struggle*, or *they just sit there* to describe students' interactions with reading throughout the intervention time. Next, I discuss the findings related to Theme 3.

In my review of literature and findings related to Theme 3, researchers' findings related to the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments confirmed the findings of this study which revealed participants' perspectives that consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions. The findings of this study revealed participants' perspectives regarding the inconsistency in teachers' offering of placement, formative, and summative assessments to guide next instructional steps. In a study conducted by Kippers et al. (2018), participants reported using data to guide their next instructional steps in just 25% to 50% of lessons, which confirms the findings of this study related to a lack of consistency in the use of data to guide instruction. Kippers et al. (2018) found some teachers fail to collect data to regularly track students' progress which confirmed what participants of this study revealed regarding a need for PD related to the consistent use of data to guide next instructional steps.

My study may create social change by improving how educators prepare for third through sixth grade reading intervention, how they prioritize intervention instruction, and how they use data to guide next intervention instructional steps with students from families having limited access to economic resources.

In response to the findings and specifically, the three themes that emerged, I considered each of these doctoral capstone project genre options: (a) program evaluation, (b) curriculum plan, (c) PD/training curriculum and materials, and (d) policy recommendation. Since my project was not in response to an examined effect on a program, program evaluation is not an appropriate project genre for this study (see Pryczak & Tcherni-Buzzeo, 2019). Additionally, this qualitative study did not focus on classroom instruction, thus, the project genre curriculum plan is not an appropriate project genre choice for this study (see Weimer, 2017). Finally, since the purpose of this study was not an analysis of inequalities in educational opportunities, the project genre policy recommendations is not an appropriate project genre choice (see Horsford et al., 2019).

In contrast to the other three project genre options, PD was chosen because the problem of this study led to a collection of data that revealed participants' perspectives regarding a need for PD to enhance educators' knowledge and skills to better support the reading academic needs of their third through sixth grade students during reading intervention. According to McMaster, Baker, et al. (2021), the need for PD focused on reading intervention exists because of a lack in teachers' knowledge and skills regarding critical reading intervention. Effective PD, according to Bates and Morgan (2018), offers an improvement to the knowledge and skills of the attendees. Guskey (2002) described quality PD as being the familiar root of modern efforts to improve the state of education and Czyz (2017) suggested, "The best PD is aligned not only to the needs of an

individual school but also to those of specific educators and helps both meet their goals” (p. 6). In the next section, I will review present the review of the literature.

### **Review of the Literature**

In the literature review section, I explain the project genre selected for this study, which is PD, and an analysis of peer-reviewed resources focused on the themes that emerged from the findings of this study. This review of literature focuses on the project genre PD, planning effective PD, TTT model of PD, and evaluation methods of PD. In this section, I introduce the analysis of peer-reviewed articles that support the benefits of PD as an effective option to address the problem and purpose of this study. The findings were the result of data collected from participants of this study.

If educators at the target site could learn about Guskey’s (2002) model for teacher change, they could gain clarification on the four-step process toward teacher change that includes (a) engaging in PD, (b) changing teacher classroom practices, (c) changing student learning outcomes, and (d) changing teachers’ beliefs and attitudes. This new knowledge could lead to an increase in teachers’ active participation in PD and an increase in the implementation of new knowledge and skills following PD sessions. Next, I discuss the project genre, conceptual framework, literature search strategy, and the literature that supports the project genre, which is PD.

### **Project Genre: PD**

Based on the findings of this study, a PD project based on the three themes that emerged from the data will be beneficial to support reading intervention delivered to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

The three themes that emerged were (a) PD, (b) foundational reading skills, and (c) assessments. To plan and deliver high-quality PD, I have searched and analyzed samples of similar research regarding effective PD. The findings of this basic qualitative study will be discussed during the *Intervention Transformation* PD. To construct this 3-day PD project, I will use Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change.

High-quality PD is essential to the effectiveness of educators toward students' academic achievement (Andrews-Larson et al., 2017; Brion, 2020; Coldwell, 2017; Collin et al., 2021; Crowley, 2017; Guskey, 2002; Lillge, 2019; Martin et al., 2019; Penner-Williams et al., 2019; Pharis et al., 2019; Postholm, 2018). The findings of McMaster, Baker, et al. (2021) included an increase in intervention implementation and in the performance of students whose teachers engaged in PD. High quality PD also prepares teachers for planned lessons, spontaneous reading lesson discussions, and any necessary reading lesson clarifications (Collin et al., 2021). According to Griffith and Lacina (2018), "Those who possess a vast knowledge of reading instruction, and who are able to articulate how that knowledge informs instruction, are the teachers who make the most powerful teaching decisions, both planned and in-the-moment" (p. 502). Diamond (2019) agreed with Griffith and Lacina and added that when teachers are without vast knowledge in a particular subject, they can still effectively reach learning transfer by approaching the instruction from a procedural fluency instead of a conceptual standpoint. Teacher knowledge, as described by Griffith and Lacina, includes content knowledge, instructional knowledge, knowledge of the student population, and knowledge of the content's educational goals. PD is most effective when it addresses ways teachers can

consider the learning styles, learning preferences of the students represented in the room, and students' learning gaps when planning and delivering instruction (Figland et al., 2019). Additionally, though not specifically identified by Guskey (2014) as a necessary component of PD, teacher collaboration groups, according to Weddle (2022), De Neve and Devos (2017), and Lockton (2019), can also lead to improvement in the academic performance of students while also having the potential to support teachers' improvement in practice. Thus, several opportunities for teacher collaboration will be included in the PD project so that teachers are able to obtain knowledge from me, as the presenter, and from each other.

While educators and leaders in education might agree on the critical need for effective PD, the massive amount of money spend on PD across the United States each year has yielded unfavorable results as students' performance outcomes continue to remain unchanged or they have experienced an unfortunate decline (Bowe & Gore, 2017; Brion, 2020; Germuth, 2018; Gore et al., 2017). This outcome could be due to campus leaders not realizing the issue of the lack of learning transfer. According to Brion (2020), PD that results in learning transfer only occurs following about 10% of PD sessions. However, this trend can be changed through the provision of high-quality PD aimed at an intentional transfer of knowledge. As explained by Koonce et al. (2019), intentional PD is invaluable and is essential to improving the skills and strategies of teachers and leaders and will ultimately affect students' academic progress. Simply attending PD is not the goal; PD must be focused (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Additionally, when educators participate in PD that is well planned with a clearly articulated purpose and sense of

direction, attendees stand to reap the best opportunity to experience an increase in knowledge and skills along with a high likelihood of immediate and long-term implementation (Guskey, 2014).

The participants of the 3-day PD project, *Intervention Transformation*, will be limited to include educators selected by campus administrators to be a part of the RITT. Following the *Intervention Transformation* PD, members of the RITT will conduct independently planned and prepared PD sessions to share their *Intervention Transformation* learning with other on and off-campus educators responsible to provide reading intervention to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Additionally, the RITT will be responsible to provide observation, evaluation, and ongoing support related to the implementation and effectiveness of reading intervention.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. The findings from the data collected during one-on-one interviews revealed the need for the creation of an on-campus cadre to provide immediate on-demand professional guidance related to reading intervention and the need to implement ongoing PD that leads to (a) a thorough understanding of how to prepare and implement reading intervention instruction, (b) a thorough understanding of the why behind prioritizing the foundational reading skills, and (c) a thorough understanding of the three types of assessments: placement assessments, formative

assessments, and summative assessments. In response to these findings, a 3-day PD project comprised of 16 hours of synchronous and 8 hours of asynchronous learning will be designed. In preparation to design the PD project, I considered original works connected to reading intervention preparation and instruction, the foundational reading skills, and appropriately using the three types of assessments.

To support the proposed PD project, I used Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change as the conceptual framework. In designing the PD project, I address the findings discussed in Section 2. The success of the PD project, from delivery to implementation and even beyond implementation, is dependent on the support and active engagement of all involved stakeholders. Specifically, the stakeholders who are connected to this PD project include district and campus leaders, RITT members, campus-based educators, and third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources who receive reading intervention support at the target site.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

To compile this literature review related to the PD project, I explored several educational databases within the Walden University Library. The databases explored included SAGE, ERIC, Education Source, and ProQuest. Additionally, I explored Google Scholar on each topic. To conduct each literature search, I used the keywords *lesson planning, lesson preparation, data analysis, data driven instruction, foundations of reading, foundational reading skills, five foundations of reading, phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, student assessments, assessments for learning, assessments to determine learning, assessments of learning,*

*formative assessments, summative assessments, placement test, universal screener, effective PD, planning effective PD, effective PD, train the trainer, train the trainer model, TTT, and professional development evaluation, PD evaluation.* My review presents a review of the literature around the three themes that emerged from the data analysis process of this study: (a) participants perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading intervention lesson planning, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions, (b) participants perceive prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions, (c) participants perceive consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

### **Planning Effective PD**

With the recent changes in the way schools are delivering classroom instruction and with increasing expectations of educators to increase students' performance, leaders are turning to effective PD as a way to simultaneously support the learning of teachers and students. According to Guskey (2014), "The effectiveness of any professional learning activity, regardless of its content, structure, or format, depends mainly on how well it is planned" (p. 12). Additionally, Desimone and Pak (2017) suggests the effectiveness of PD can be based on the learning outcomes of PD participants and of



academic performance of students. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) described the effectiveness of PD as, “Effective professional development involves teachers in their role as both students and teachers and enables them to struggle with the uncertainties peculiar to each role” (p. 1). Regarding the planning of effective PD, researchers suggested PD planning that is primarily focused on the instructional practices of teachers without considering the non-instructional factors that could result in teachers having problems that remain unresolved (Nawab & Sharar, 2022). Specifically, Nawab and Sharar (2022) identified “school structures, cultures, and other aspects” as examples of non-instructional factors that should be included in the planning of effective PD. (p. 2). In contrast, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) recognized seven characteristics of effective PD that do not include a focus on any non-instructional factors, yet the seven factors are described as “collaborative practices that underlie powerful teacher PD” (p. 4). The seven characteristics identified by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) include: (a) focuses on a specific content or subject matter, (b) incorporates active learning, which addresses what and how teachers will learn during the PD session, (c) supports collaboration of one-on-one, small group, or campus-wide interactions, (d) uses physical, audio/video, or live models of effective practice, (e) provides coaching and expert support to guide participants’ learning, (f) offers feedback and reflection to help create richer, more favorable learning environments for teachers, and (g) is of sustained duration, offering multiple times to engage and focus on a particular topic.

In addition to the practices suggested by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), Guskey (2014) suggests backward planning, or beginning with the end in mind to reach the most

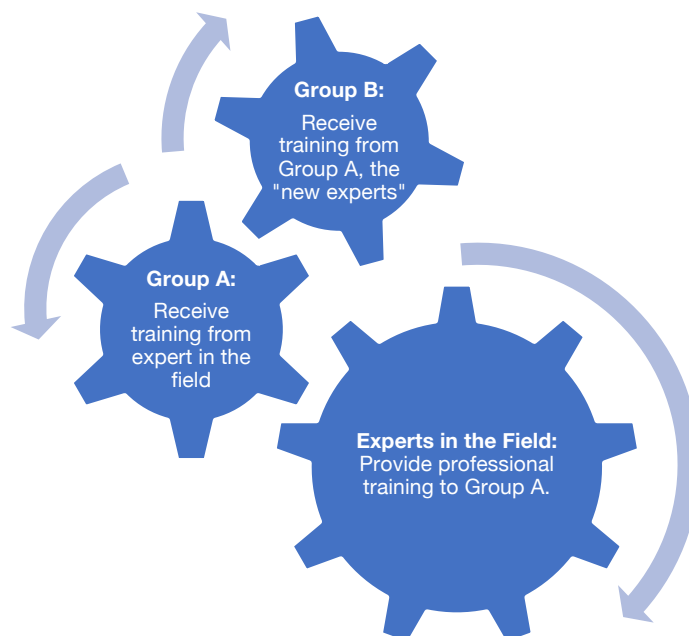
effective PD outcome. This backward look at planning effective PD is the reverse order representation of Guskey's (2002) five crucial levels of evaluating PD. Specifically, Guskey (2014) suggests the planning of effective PD to occur in this sequence: (a) identify the student learning outcomes and the evidence that will support this learning, (b) identify research-based instructional practices to be implemented, (c) identify the needed organizational support to implement the desired practices and policies, (d) identify the specific knowledge and skills teachers need to know before they can effectively implement new practices or policies following the PD session, and (e) identify optimal professional learning activities. According to Guskey (2014), all or most of these professional learning characteristics are found in effective professional learning. In the end, explains Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), well-designed PD should be a required component of all educational programs committed to providing quality teaching and learning to improve students' academic outcomes.

### **PD Model: TTT**

The success of educators' efforts to plan and implement effective instruction is rooted in many factors. According Tonna and Bugeja (2018), one factor for effective instruction success is in the way district or campus leaders accept change and choose to grow in their independent capacities. One suggested solution to support instructional growth among teachers and academic growth among students is through research-based PD (Andrews-Larson et al., 2017; Brion, 2020; Coldwell, 2017; Collin et al., 2021; Crowley, 2017; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2002; Lillge, 2019; Martin et al., 2019; Penner-Williams et al., 2019; Pharis et al., 2019; Postholm, 2018). However, with

potential financial limitations of district and campus budgets, PD could be overlooked. However, an option to the obstacle of a low budget is presented by Woda et al. (2022), who suggested the TTT model as a viable solution to provide quality training within respective professional fields. The TTT model is, according to Triplett et al. (2020), structured to increase the numbers of available persons to locally train others in need of support. Additionally, Triplett et al. (2020) explained, an advantage of the TTT model is that “Local trainers may also have more direct access to the communities they are training within and have a better understanding of contextual issues” (p. 190). Peterson et al. (2017) added, the TTT model has been proven to be an adequate training option to support educational PD needs by providing ongoing support to PD attendees. The process of implementing the TTT model, according to Woda et al. (2022), is described as training that initiates with an expert in the field providing an initial professional training to a group of individuals, Group A, who become the new experts and follow-up by providing the same training to others in need of local professional support or training, Group B. The goals of the TTT model are, according to Servey et al. (2019), to “(a) increase content knowledge, (b) develop the skills of future trainers, and (c) build a community of competent trainers.” (p. 322). The connecting line from TTT to the K-12 arena is that the purposeful building of a professional learning community among campus-based educators can lead to improvements in collaboration and in the design of instructional methods (Tonna & Bugeja, 2018). Figure 2 is an illustration of the TTT model.

**Figure 2**  
Illustration of the TTT model.



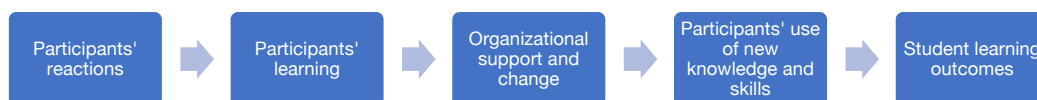
### PD Evaluation

Effective PD is often the topic of discussion among educators and researchers. According to Rodriguez et al. (2022), “Throughout their careers, teachers face the challenge of improving their own practice through various programs, including teacher development” (p. 1). However, the number of published works regarding the evaluation of PD and their levels of effectiveness are few (Fredericks & Bosanquet, 2017). Considering the absence of research on the evaluation of PD, Guskey (2014), pointed out the need for the evaluation of PD initiatives (PDI’s) to obtain more knowledge about their ability to offer change or improvement. When evaluating any PD, it is important to note that PD can be delivered using various platforms. According to Desimone (2009), some examples of PD initiatives can include workshops, seminars, and conferences. Also, the

evaluation of any form of PD can be individually focused on the planning, formative evaluation, or summative evaluation aspects (Guskey, 2014). According to Merchie et al. (2018), “A first important step in evaluating a PDI is determining which outcomes are aspired to and which outcomes can be expected after following a PDI” (p. 144). Another perspective of how to engage in the evaluation of PD was represented via Guskey’s (2014) five stages of evaluation in which the following would be evaluated to discern the effectiveness of PD: (a) participants’ reactions, (b) participants’ learning, (c) organizational support and change, (d) participants’ use of new knowledge and skills, and (e) student learning outcomes. These five steps are Guskey’s (2014) suggestion for evaluation and, in reverse order, the same five steps are Guskey’s (2002) suggestion for the planning of effective PD. Figure 3 is an illustration of Guskey’s (2014) five stages of evaluation.

### Figure 3

*Illustration of Guskey’s five stages of evaluation*



### Reading Intervention Preparation and Instruction

In many schools, reading intervention is part of the daily master schedule because data results have shown some students need extra academic support. Sancar et al. (2021) found “Teachers’ PD is crucial to improving student outcomes” (p. 1). However, according to McMaster, Baker, et al. (2021) many educators tasked with the responsibility of preparing and implementing reading interventions are not adequately

equipped to support students at critical levels of reading academic need. Germuth (2018) agreed with the need for PD to support teachers and students, but suggests even when PD is provided, teachers rarely implement the new skills learned in PD sessions.

McMaster, Baker, et al. (2021) suggested one way to better prepare teachers to support students during reading intervention is to provide more helpful PD that would aid in their effort to support students who have demonstrated the most significant academic learning gaps in reading. According to McMaster, Baker, et al., “To help teachers gain knowledge and skills needed to intensify instruction, it is imperative to support them in ways that make the process understandable and feasible” (p. 330). Another possible solution to the problem of teachers being underprepared, according to Germuth (2018), is “professional development must be structured in such a manner that it inspires teachers to change their practice” (p. 77). This suggestion is captured in Guskey’s (2002) model of teacher change, that offers this progression: (a) PD, (b) change in teacher’s classroom practices, (c) change in student learning outcomes, and (d) change in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes.

Beyond providing PD that enhances or builds teachers’ knowledge and skills regarding reading intervention, Austin et al. (2017) identified focusing on the time frame, or duration needed to improve each student’s reading growth, as a critically important aspect to consider in preparing for reading intervention. The topic of duration is also referenced by Fuchs et al. (2018), who suggested teachers might also find support in preparing for reading interventions by focusing on the intervention’s dosage, strength, learning transfer, and individualization. As framed by Fuchs et al., there are many

components to examine when planning for reading intervention.

A third possible solution to the problem of teachers being underprepared is an intentional focus on differentiation, which is often misaligned due to a lack of data-use and instead, opting for whole-group generalizations (Callahan et al., 2017; Dack, 2019). According to Dack (2019), “Without a substantive understanding of why and how differentiation works, teachers may envision challenges of implementing differentiation that seem insurmountable” (p. 23). To better understand differentiation, we must seek to understand more about the consistent use of data and how it must be seen as a repetitious process toward improving the practices of teachers and the academic outcomes of students instead of viewing it as an arduous, useless task. Though data-use is part of the process of preparing for all manner of classroom instruction, inclusive of intervention, Kippers et al. (2018) found teachers rarely used data to guide their next intervention instruction steps.

### **Prioritizing Foundational Reading**

The need for reading interventions has been described as necessary to improve the academic performance of students who have not demonstrated reading proficiency. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), a great number of students enrolled in U.S. schools do not proficiently read at their enrolled grade level. Further, the National Center for Education Statistics (2018) explained, the gap that separates high and low performance scores has *not* positively changed over time. Toste and Ciullo (2017) suggested for upper elementary students, though they face reading academic expectations that are more challenging, their foundational reading skills are

also still being developed. Among educators, the K-2 years are commonly referred to as the learn-to-read years (Toste & Ciullo, 2017). However, student performance reveals many students in upper elementary grade levels exhibit signs of struggle to master those learn-to-read skills (Toste & Ciullo, 2017). For these older elementary students, reaching reading proficiency is key to their ability to access general education learning (Contessee et al., 2021). Paige et al. (2019) suggested one possible cause of upper elementary students' struggle to read is that they lack the foundational reading skills needed to reach proficiency. Regarding this lack of reading skills, Donegan and Wanzek (2021) offered, teachers of upper elementary students not reading at grade-level proficiency could be facing a combination of foundational reading learning gaps.

The issue of upper elementary students needing the support of reading intervention to close reading learning gaps has existed for several years. Paige et al. (2019) explained, "Considerable evidence supports that close to two thirds of all fourth-grade students read at less than adequate levels on reading achievement tests and that the problem has persisted for decades" (p. 1). Paige et al. (2019) and Wanzek et al. (2018) found the foundational skills of reading to be the most critical in the development of reading proficiency as they move from lower to higher levels of education. These findings are critical resources, especially for teachers as they prepare to engage with students via reading intervention lessons and activities.

To begin supporting the academic needs of underperforming upper elementary students, according to Contessee et al. (2021), students should receive a literacy screening assessment. Contessee et al. defined the literacy screening assessment as a tool



used to “identify which students are performing below grade level expectations or are not making adequate progress on important skills” (p. 234). For students who demonstrate the need, prioritizing foundational reading skills would include intentional instruction in phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, word work, and comprehension (Contessee et al., 2021). Researchers, Vaughn et al. (2019), revealed that by fourth grade, students should be able to read and comprehend grade-level text, higher level vocabulary words, and text that is more complex. The prioritization of comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary may better support upper elementary students since, according to Toste and Ciullo (2017), “Even as students become proficient word readers, they often continue to struggle with making meaning from text” (p. 260). This matter of fluent readers who lack comprehension skills is one of reasons regular assessments are necessary to track student growth and guide next instructional steps.

### **Consistent use of Placement, Formative, and Summative Assessments**

The challenge of designing effective instruction can be traced back to the ways in which instruction is assessed. According to Houston and Thompson (2017), “Of all the key aspects of the learning process, assessment practices remain some of the most contentious” (p. 1). According to Baird et al. (2017), assessments are commonly used by classroom teachers and are essential to support teaching and learning.

Assessing students to prior to instruction, during the lesson, and at the conclusion of a lesson should be an ongoing part of supporting students in the realm of reading intervention. This continuous evaluation begins with early screening or placement evaluation to identify any possible reading difficulties that might require reading

intervention (Zugarramurdi et al., 2022). Researchers have shown teachers who work with students to establish academic goals at the start of a lesson see greater outcomes (Hammerschmidt-Snidarich et al., 2019).

After the initial placement assessment, which determines if a student might need to receive extra academic support via reading intervention, comes the formative assessment. According to Bergeson (2019), “The purpose of formative assessments is to provide ongoing monitoring and feedback during reading instruction so teachers can target instruction to the needs of students” (p. 187). Ismail et al. (2022) added, the formative assessment is intended to gather feedback and *improve* students’ learning, but is commonly used to *measure* students’ learning. Beyond providing immediate feedback, formative assessments could also be used to provide students with immediate support to help improve their understanding and academic progress (Gustafson et al., 2019). According to Ismail et al. (2022), “Formative assessment helps students gain an understanding of the assessment process and provides them with feedback on how to refine their efforts for improvement” (p. 2). Moreover, formative assessments can be used to determine students’ strengths and weaknesses (Ismail et al., 2022). A definition of summative assessment, as offered by Houston and Thompson (2017), is “Traditional summative assessment is a well-established tool for documenting and communicating student achievement” (p. 2). The documentation provided via summative assessments helps educators know if students have reached the intended learning by the end of the lesson.

While placement, formative, and summative assessments are invaluable to the intervention process collectively, they offer individual benefits too. According to Ismail et al. (2022), “Formative assessment allows for feedback which improves learning while summative assessment measures learning” (Ismail, p. 2). Further, summative assessment measures what students have learned and mostly is conducted at the end of a course of instruction” (Ontong, 2021). According to Connors (2021), in some cases, the ways in which formative and summative data are used is the greatest distinguishing factor. The proper use of a placement assessments, formative assessments (assessment *for* learning), and summative assessments (assessment *of* learning), will greatly benefit teachers and students.

### **Project Description**

The PD project, *Intervention Transformation*, is a 3-day hybrid PD project created in response to the problem of this study. This PD project is focused on the findings of this basic qualitative study. The goal of this PD project is to improve educators’ knowledge and skills to in a way that leads to improved support of the reading academic needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. This goal will be met through the *Intervention Transformation* PD project, created according to Guskey’s (2002) model of teacher change, which includes: (a) PD, (b) change in teachers’ classroom practices, (c) change in student learning outcomes, and (d) change in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes. During the *Intervention Transformation* PD, participating educators will experience what Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) refers to as the seven features of effective PD. The seven features include PD that: (a) is focused, (b)

incorporates active learning, (c) supports collaboration, (d) uses models of effective practice, (e) provides coaching and expert support, (f) offers feedback and reflection, and (g) is of sustained duration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). I will serve as the education consultant and PD presenter of *Intervention Transformation*, the 3-day PD hybrid project. The in-person portion of the PD project will be held at the target site, starting at 8:30am CST and ending at 3:30pm CST. The daily in-person schedule, inclusive of a one-hour lunch break, totals six hours of PD. Considering the additional two-hour hybrid portion of the PD project totals eight hours of PD per day.

With the approval and support of district leaders and campus administrators, the members of the RITT will be determined and individually notified by Thursday of the first week teachers return for PD and classroom preparation. The identification of individual notification of RITT members will occur before September 2023. Then, during the following mornings' staff meeting, a campus administrator will introduce the members of the newly formed RITT, which will include one campus administrator, one on-campus content leader, an on-campus SPED teacher of third through sixth grade students, and one to two regular program educators per grade level, from third through sixth grade. Then, during my opportunity to address the entire staff, I will orally introduce *Intervention Transformation* as a new, more systemic pathway to enhance educators' knowledge and skills while simultaneously improving the reading academic performance of third through sixth grade students in the content of reading. Specifically, I will share *Intervention Transformation* bi-annual PD training dates, goals, and objectives of the 3-day training. The bi-annual PD will be created for and offered exclusively to the

members of the RITT. I will explain that the RITT membership will be responsible to collectively plan and schedule regular, in-person observations of live, in-class reading intervention instruction provided to third through sixth grade students. The observations will occur to allow the RITT to evaluate the effectiveness of third through sixth grade reading intervention sessions using Guskey's (2014) five levels of PD evaluation.

Additionally, the RITT will be responsible to provide in-person PD and ongoing, on-campus support to educators responsible to deliver reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. On the following Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the *Intervention Transformation* PD will be delivered to the RITT members. The PD sessions will be held at the target site over the entire three days, after requesting and securing a single spacious classroom or the campus library. Anticipated PD materials for this PD project include poster-sized Post-it paper, small Post-it notes, composition notebooks, large markers, highlighters, pens, pencils, bottled water, and candies.

### **Needed Resources and Existing Supports**

The resources needed for this PD project, *Intervention Transformation*, include approval-support from district and campus leaders along with general support from campus-based reading specialists, reading interventionists, instructional coaches, and educators on the campus of the target site. The attendance of these individuals at PD sessions organized by the RITT will serve to fortify the implementation of *Intervention Transformation* among all staff across the campus. Additionally, support materials will be needed, which are those materials typically needed and used during campus-based and

hybrid PD sessions. Specifically, support materials could include access to note pads, composition notebooks, pencils, ink pens, a white board, white board markers, electronic devices, chargers, charging stations, Internet access, Wi-Fi access, printers, copy machines, copy paper, chart paper, folders, and a space reserved exclusively for full-day PD over the 3 days. Access to the individual or department responsible to receive the training room request and followup with the identification of a campus-based meeting space will be needed.

### **Potential Barriers and Solutions**

The enhancement of any in-place program or the implementation of any new program, such as this PD, requires the support and cooperation of all stakeholders. Though the presentation and implementation of this PD stands to bring a substantial academic return on investment, nation-wide budgetary restrictions highlight a potential barrier to the implementation of this PD. A reduction in the available spending of campus and district leaders could present a barrier. However, if the funds are unavailable at the campus or district level, other stakeholders, like local businesses or local institutions of higher learning, could be asked to sponsor the PD.

Another potential barrier to the implementation of this PD, *Intervention Transformation*, include the obtaining the support of the district superintendent and area superintendent. Though these educational leaders are aware of the instructional struggles of classroom teachers and of the potential value of the implementation of the proposed PD, they may have made other decisions or choices for PD related to the topic. A possible solution could be to request a presentation meeting to share the purpose, goals,

and objectives of *Intervention Transformation* and request implementation as a pilot program at a single campus.

Financial support for the 3-day PD is another potential barrier that may surface. The suggestion is for the PD sessions to begin with the RITT at the start of the new school year and for the RITT to create and implement reading intervention PD training schedules for on-campus educators. If the RITT should schedule PD sessions to be held before or after the educators' contracted work schedules or during educators' vacation time, district leaders could offer RITT members and educators who attend the PD sessions hours or points needed for recertification.

One final potential barrier to the implementation to this PD is educators who oppose any changes to the way they approach or carry-out reading intervention. However, since *Intervention Transformation* is in response to the perspectives of their peers, their willingness may be different than anticipated. It is more likely that those who may have been reluctant will choose to support the PD for the benefit of their students and in support of their peers.

### **Project Implementation and Timetable**

*Intervention Transformation* PD is recommended to occur during the first full week of staff development at the start of the 2023-2024 school year. The entire PD session will be guided by Guskey's (2014) 5 levels of PD. The PD will be focused on increasing the knowledge and skills of teachers who deliver reading intervention to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The first day of PD with the campus RITT will begin with a welcome, introductions,

sharing the objectives, agenda, and norms. The remainder of the first day of the 3-day PD will include a presentation of the findings of this study, a scholarly presentation of the need for PD to support enhance teachers' knowledge and skills regarding reading intervention instruction, an introduction to the TTT model, a presentation of the skill sets educators need to plan and deliver effective reading interventions, and a review of systems and routines that increase student engagement. Participants will be offered several opportunities to ask clarifying questions based on discussions and previously presented information. The first day will end with a question-and-answer session, a time of reflection, delivery of instructions for the asynchronous session, and a formative survey. The schedule for the first day will be 8:30 – 3:30 for the synchronous session, inclusive of one hour for lunch-on-your-own, and a two-hour asynchronous session after 3:30pm. The first day's PD totals eight hours.

The second day of PD will begin with a welcome, introductions, sharing the objectives, agenda, and norms. Next, participants will engage in a review of the learning from Day 1 and a review of their completed asynchronous session assignment. Participants will be able to use their notes and the PD handout to remember specific information discussed the previous day. This review will be followed up with a review and analysis of students' most recent reading assessment. Day 2 will also include an active creation of intervention groups and intervention lesson planning. The lesson planning activity will include an introduction to the *Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan* template. Following the creation of intervention lesson plans, PD participants will engage in practicing the delivery of the lessons they created. Participants will watch



learning videos, share their thoughts, and engage in open discussions about how to more positively influence their reading intervention students toward improved academic performance in reading. The schedule for the second day will be 8:30 – 3:30 for the synchronous session, inclusive of one hour for lunch on-your-own, and a two-hour asynchronous session. The second day's PD totals eight hours.

The third day of PD will begin with a welcome, introductions, sharing the objectives, agenda, and norms. Next, participants will engage in a review of their learning from the first and second day, and a review of their completed asynchronous session assignments. Next, participants will spend time observing third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classes during their intervention hours. After each observation, the RITT will gather outside the class to share their thoughts of the pros and cons of each class's intervention session based on their learnings from the first and second day of the *Intervention Transformation* PD. Participants will engage in a review of the five powerful classroom practices of Budge and Parrett (2018) that support an intentional focus on supporting the needs of students and creating social change by disrupting poverty from the classroom. The final activity will include a review of Guskey's (2002) teacher change model and Guskey's (2014) PD evaluation model. Participants will begin creating the first PD session for third through sixth grade educators who provide reading intervention support. The schedule for the third day will be 8:30 – 3:30 for the synchronous session, inclusive of one hour for lunch on-your-own, and a two-hour asynchronous session. The third day's PD totals eight hours. Table 13 is an illustration of the implementation of the 3-day PD project.

**Table 13***PD Implementation By Day and Activity*

Day	Objectives	Activity
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will describe the knowledge and skills educators need to plan and deliver reading interventions.</li> <li>Participants will identify systems and routines that increase student engagement.</li> <li>Participants will create a list of the benefits of the TTT PD model.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcome, introductions, objectives, agenda, and norms</li> <li>a presentation of the findings of this study</li> <li>an introduction to the TTT model</li> <li>a review of the skill sets educators need to plan and deliver effective reading interventions</li> <li>a review of the systems and routines needed to increase student engagement</li> <li>open discussions and Q&amp;A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivery of instructions for the asynchronous session (creation of open / close systems and routines for lessons and activities, individual and group work expectations, work submission routines, and posted or automated routine schedule)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will list the considerations for planning the reading interventions.</li> <li>Participants will list the reasons skills-based intervention groups are preferred over ability-based groups.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcome, introductions, objectives, agenda, and norms</li> <li>a review of the learning from the Day 1, including a time for Q&amp;A</li> <li>a review of the asynchronous session assignments regarding systems and routines</li> <li>a review and analysis of students' most recent Istation (ISIP) assessment</li> <li>creation of intervention groups based on analyzed Istation data, followed by an introduction to the <i>Intervention Transformation</i> Lesson Plan template</li> <li>create reading intervention lesson plans using the analyzed data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in groups of two, participants will practice delivering one of the reading intervention lessons created on day two</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Day 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will differentiate between Guskey's (2014) PD evaluation model and Guskey's (2002) teacher change model.</li> <li>Participants will describe how focusing on disrupting poverty from the classroom can link to supporting the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcome, introductions, objectives, agenda, and norms</li> <li>a review of the learning from the first two days, including a time for Q&amp;A</li> <li>observe the reading intervention blocks of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms</li> <li>observing the students and teachers in action will offer the RITT an opportunity to better understand each groups strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>a review of the five powerful classroom practices of Budge and Parrett (2018) that support an intentional focus on supporting the needs of students and creating social change by disrupting poverty from the classroom</li> <li>a presentation of Guskey's (2014) Five Critical Levels of PD Evaluation</li> </ul> <p>a presentation of Guskey's (2002) Teacher Change Model</p>

If district and campus leaders approve *Intervention Transformation* as an acceptable PD to be implemented at the target site. The *Intervention Transformation* PD will be listed on the district's normal PD registration site for the campus RITT to register. The RITT will be required to register to attend the 3-day PD. A single registration registers attendees for all three days for a total of 24 hours of PD (18 synchronous hours and six asynchronous hours).

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

*Intervention Transformation* will be designed to enhance educators' knowledge and skills needed to better support the reading academic needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. My role and responsibilities include creating and facilitating this 3-day PD project and consulting campus administrators regarding the formation of the campus RITT. It is also my responsibility to prepare the campus RITT to engage in their responsibilities to train, evaluate, and support on-campus educators regarding reading intervention provided to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

This 3-day PD project will require the support and participation of the campus-based RITT and campus and district educators who provide reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade educators from families having limited access to economic resources. The responsibility of RITT members will be to fully participate in PD sessions, offering oral engagement, input, and constructive feedback. RITT members will also have the responsibility to train campus and district educators based on their

biannual, *Intervention Transformation* training. Campus and district educators will be responsible to implement the systems and procedures shared during their training with the RITT. Educators' intentional implementation of the knowledge and skills obtained during training sessions with the RITT will directly affect the reading academic progress of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

### **Project Evaluation Plan**

The evaluation plan of *Intervention Transformation* will be both formative and summative. Formative evaluations are assessments offered on a frequent basis to determine each person's level of understanding of specific skills prior to the end of the lesson (Connors, 2021). Summative evaluations are assessments offered to individuals to determine the level of mastery achieved at the end of a lesson or course and do not consider the instructional resources available to teachers or learners (Connors, 2021). Both formative and summative assessments are vital components of student learning (Kibble, 2017).

### **Formative and Summative Assessments**

I used Guskey's (2014) PD evaluation model to evaluate the 3-day *Intervention Transformation* PD. After closely considering Guskey's PD evaluation model, I decided Level 1, participants' reactions, and Level 2, participants' learning, will be appropriate measures for this project. To capture the most effective feedback, according to Guskey, participants will receive an evaluation of the PD at the end of each day. Though I will be able to evaluate participants' understanding during the synchronous sessions by their facial expressions and gestures, formal evaluations will be provided. Participants will

receive an exit ticket at the conclusion of the asynchronous portion of the PD to *measure* their understanding and provide feedback to *guide* their understanding (Admiraal, et al., 2020). The summative exit tickets will review the PD topics and activities shared during that day. The exit ticket responses will be used to measure Guskey's (2014) Level 2, participants' learning. Additionally, at the conclusion of the asynchronous portion of the PD on the first two days, participants will receive an electronic link to complete a formative evaluation of each day's PD session. Day 3 will conclude with participants receiving an electronic link to complete a summative evaluation to gain an understanding of the participants' knowledge and skills obtained throughout the 3-day *Intervention Transformation* PD. The summative evaluation responses will be used to measure Guskey's Level 1 learning of PD participants.

### **Evaluation Goals**

The evaluation of *Intervention Transformation* is to determine the effectiveness of the 3-day PD from the participants' perspective. The evaluation of the proposed PD project will be used to make enhancements and adjustments toward improving the 3-day PD based on participant's perspectives and experiences, as documented in their completed and submitted formative and summative evaluations. The overall goal of the 3-day *Intervention Transformation* PD is to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators in response to the findings of this study that revealed participants' perspectives regarding a need for PD to strengthen the reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Guskey's (2014) PD evaluation model is used to evaluate the *Intervention Transformation* PD,

which focuses on five distinctive goals to support educators' efforts to prepare and deliver effective reading interventions with third through sixth grade students of the target population. The five goals are connected to the three themes that emerged from the findings of this study. The five goals of the *Intervention Transformation* PD include:

Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus reading *Intervention Transformation* Team (RITT).

Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of Guskey's (2002) teacher change model.

Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources.

Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design.

Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments.

### **Key Stakeholders**

The key stakeholders to benefit from the proposed 3-day PD project, *Intervention Transformation*, include the educators at the target site, campus administrators, campus leaders, and district leaders. Campus administrators and campus leaders will have an opportunity to observe and support the campus RITT and other educators as they implement *Intervention Transformation* in third through sixth grade classrooms.

Ultimately, the stakeholders who will benefit most are third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources receiving reading intervention support.

## **Project Implications**

### **Social Change Implications**

The proposed PD project is in response to the findings of Section 2 of this basic qualitative study which represent the perspectives of the participants. Their perspectives presented a need for PD to enhance their efforts to better support third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. An appropriate response to the findings is this 3-day PD project, entitled *Intervention Transformation*, which includes the formation of a campus-based intervention support team organized by campus administrators of the target site. With the formation of the RITT, the goal is that teachers and students would experience intervention reform via the implementation and follow through of *Intervention Transformation*. According to Tonna and Bugeja (2018), “In all successful reforms, the professional learning of educators becomes a top priority of education leaders” (p. 503).

When I considered the best way to construct *Intervention Transformation* and support the professional learning for educators at the target site, I concluded TTT model will provide the best method to build capacity and offer ongoing support to stakeholders providing reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students who are included in the target population of this study. Servey et al. (2019) describes TTT as mentor training model or a training that has a ripple effect. According to Woda et al.

(2022),” As a first step in transforming novices to experts, TTT models increase the collective wealth of knowledge and provide a sustainable conduit for deploying information efficiently and effectively” (p. 322). The TTT model also increases opportunities for educators to quickly receive what Anderson and Taira (2018) describes as just-in-time educational opportunities when questions or concerns arise. The creation of the RITT and the sharing of information with other educators will lead to the social change that manifests as improved academic performance of the students who are the target population of this study. This anticipated academic performance change could look like a simultaneous reduction in the numbers of students who perform at Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels and an increase in the numbers of students performing at Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels. Additionally, the anticipated academic performance change could, according to Muir (2022), increase graduation rates and the skilled workforce community while also decreasing the school-to-prison pipeline.

### **Local Stakeholders and Larger Context**

The local problem investigated in this basic qualitative study is that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. *Intervention Transformation* is the 3-day PD project that is the response to the findings of this study. If target site campus administrators choose to implement the 3-day PD, *Intervention Transformation*, they have the potential to create an in-house cadre to receive research-based PD focused on strengthening reading intervention. Following the TTT model, as described by Servey et al. (2019), the cadre will support capacity building and provide just-in-time learning



opportunities (Anderson & Taira, 2018) to on-campus educators providing reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students who are the target population of this study. With the implementation of the 3-day PD, the cadre will collaborate to implement changes to third through sixth grade reading intervention instructional practices based on students' academic needs. The cadre will also design and lead campus-based reading intervention PD guided by Guskey's (2014) five critical levels of PD evaluation. Choosing to implement the 3-day PD increases the potential for campus and district educators who serve the target population of students to demonstrate an understanding of Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change, which include (a) PD, (b) change in teachers' classroom practices, (c) change in students' learning outcomes, and (d) change in teacher's beliefs and attitudes. Implementing *Intervention Transformation* will demonstrate campus leaders' support and buy-in of the need for PD based on the findings of this study.

### **Conclusion**

In Section 3, I discussed the project goals and the rationale for choosing a 3-day PD project as the project genre for this study. I presented a literature review focused on the three themes that emerged from the data analysis of the one-on-one semi-structured interviews and I discussed an outline of how the 3-day PD, *Intervention Transformation*, will be implemented at the target site if district and campus leaders approve this project. This 3-day PD project is based on the findings of this basic qualitative study, discussed in section 2. The proposed 3-day PD follows the TTT model and is guided by the seminal work of Guskey's (2014) five critical levels of evaluating PD.

In Section 4, I will discuss the project's strengths in enhancing the knowledge and skills of campus and district educators to better support third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. I will also discuss ways in which my academic knowledge has developed and what I have learned about leadership throughout the process of creating this 3-day PD project as a part of my doctoral journey. I will include a reflection of the significance of my doctoral study and my recommendations for future research.

#### Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

In an urban school district in a southwestern state, the problem investigated was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. After analyzing the data collected during one-on-one interviews with volunteer participants, I determined that a 3-day PD, entitled *Intervention Transformation*, would appropriately address participants' perspectives that emerged from the data.

#### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

One strength that can be linked to this project study is the variety of data collection methods use. In a study conducted by Noble and Heale (2019), researchers reveal triangulation is a process researchers use to offer richness and clarity, while also increasing credibility of the study. In this study, I used qualitative and quantitative descriptive processes to triangulate data. The demographic questionnaire was used to identify the participants who met the inclusion criteria and have the professional experiences needed to offer insight into the phenomenon of this study. The interview protocol included a combination of open-ended and clarifying questions designed to answer the research question of this study.

Another strength of the project is the 3-day PD that was created based on the perspectives and themes that emerged during the data analysis process. The three themes

that emerged include: (a) participants perceive the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading intervention lesson planning, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions; (b) participants perceive prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions; and (c) participants perceive consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions. The planning and evaluation of *Intervention Transformation*, the 3-day PD, was developed using Guskey's (2014) five critical levels of PD. The goal of *Intervention Transformation* is to support the enhancement of the knowledge and skills of educators responsible to provide reading intervention to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Participants of *Intervention Transformation* will review PD session goals and objectives and participate in discussions, activities, and reflections related to the findings of this study. Each PD session will conclude with an opportunity for participants to complete and submit a formative evaluation. The collective responses received on participants' evaluations after the third day of the PD will benefit educators at the district and campus level. The proposed start date of *Intervention Transformation* is September 2023.

One limitation of *Intervention Transformation* could be if district or campus leaders do not approve the proposed PD project. A decision not to approve the implementation of *Intervention Transformation* will mean educators responsible to provide reading intervention instruction to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources will not receive the knowledge and skills to better support the reading needs of their students. A denial of this PD project could result in a continuation of third through sixth grade students failing to meet the state's grade-level standards in the content of reading.

A second limitation of *Intervention Transformation* could be related to the campus' budget for educators' PD. If district or campus leaders should determine the proposed PD is not within the approved district budget for teacher PD, this would interfere with the implementation of the PD. This interference could result in educators not receiving the knowledge and skills provided via *Intervention Transformation* along with a continuation of third through sixth grade students' underperformance in reading.

### **Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

An alternative approach to the current 3-day PD project would be to require district reading specialists and campus reading instructional coaches to organize reading intervention PD sessions. Leaders of the PD sessions could create each session based on educators' reading intervention instructional needs, on students' data-based reading academic needs, and on student's personal learning styles. Allowing district and campus leaders to lead the PD sessions would increase the likelihood of educators gaining the knowledge and skills needed to better support students' academic needs.

### **Scholarship, Leadership, and Change**

My academic journey through Walden University's doctoral program with a specialization in curriculum, instruction, and assessment has afforded me many opportunities to grow and expand as a scholar and as an expert in my field. Four years ago, in 2018, I started this journey as an elementary school reading teacher with a high level of passion toward the literacy education of marginalized students, but a low level of self-efficacy regarding my ability to successfully complete this doctoral journey. However, through the learning objectives I faced each term, my confidence and my effectiveness as a researcher and scholarly writer increased tremendously. Additionally, as I continued through my doctoral program, my content knowledge and instructional understandings of reading and reading intervention for third through sixth grade students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading academic support significantly improved across the categories of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

This doctoral journey has included many moments of question, confirmation, curiosity, and surprise. While working my way through each set of courses over each 11-week term, I continued to work with third through sixth grade students, other educators, educational leaders, and parents. I served as a reading teacher and eventually as the campus reading interventionist. Almost daily, I found myself saying, "I knew it!" or being surprised by the findings of the resources I had discovered. I also noticed I began implementing the findings of researchers and adjusting my systems and procedures based on their findings and my daily reflections. I recall when I noticed patterns within research and the commonalities among researchers. My daily reflections on my new knowledge

and my daily teaching experiences increased as I pondered the phenomenon of this study and as I considered the reading academic struggles of my students. One of my greatest accomplishments regarding research is that I grew to look *within* the research instead of merely superficially looking *at* it.

Aside from my growth as a practitioner and a researcher, I also improved in my ability to produce meaningful post-graduate level scholarly writing. Learning to engage in academic writing was not an easy road, at first. However, over time and with lots of encouragement and support from my committee chairperson, I became more confident in my ability to produce academic writing fitting the capacity of a Doctor of Education. I learned to write without bias, and I learned to follow the research. Following the research over the past 4 years has improved my position as an expert in the field and in my ability to effectively write about the research of others regarding teaching reading at the levels of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

In addition to becoming an improved practitioner, an enthusiastic researcher, and a stronger academic writer, I also experienced an expansion in my understanding of the value and necessity of qualitative and quantitative methods of research, having a strong conceptual framework, and how triangulation improves the trustworthiness of research. My challenges and successes throughout this doctoral experience have helped me become a better leader in the realm of reading instruction and implementation of reading intervention for third through sixth grade marginalized students and other learners in need of intervention support in reading. My experiences throughout the required doctoral coursework, the prospectus, the proposal, and the final project study have all supported

my transition into a stronger, more knowledgeable learner, teacher, coach, trainer, and servant leader. As a stronger leader, I will continue my educational journey by engaging in educational research that contributes to social change for the marginalized community of students and other learners in need of reading academic support. By engaging in research, I will contribute to increasing the numbers of third through sixth graders able to read on-level and decrease of numbers of students in need of reading intervention.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

In response to the local problem and the findings of this study, a 3-day PD project was developed. As an alternative to the PD project, I considered the other three project genre options: evaluation report, curriculum plan, and policy recommendation. However, I found the alternatives lacked the connectedness and the alignment necessary to support either as an ideal genre choice as the final project. The 3-day PD project directly aligns with the findings of this study and with the participants' expressed needs as described in section two. The *Intervention Transformation* PD project focuses on five specific goals, which are rooted in the three themes that emerged from the findings of this study. I used Guskey's (2014) five critical levels of PD as the conceptual framework to guide this PD project. I also reviewed the research of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) regarding effective PD while designing this project. Participants will benefit from this PD experience as they actively engage in group discussions and activities, developing reading intervention lessons, and reflecting on their own learning. The PD project includes a daily formative evaluation and a summative evaluation at the end of the 3-day



PD to ensure participants' thoughts and specific feedback are collected. The evaluation data collected will be used to improve the PD session over time.

### **Reflection on Importance of the Work**

I believe my doctoral work is important. The data I collected provides critical understandings of educators' perspectives regarding the implementation of reading intervention for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. This basic qualitative study is also important because the findings and the response to the findings can be used to create dynamic systemic and social change for the academic benefit of the students who are the target population of this study. Change has to begin somewhere. According to Guskey (2002), improving the academic achievement of students begins with improving the understandings of their teachers. This study focuses on collecting and analyzing participants' perspectives and using their perspectives to help support their efforts regarding the implementation of reading intervention. In response to the findings of this study, a 3-day PD project was developed for implementation at the target site.

My doctoral work is also important because my successful completion will serve as a form of encouragement to my family members, friends, coworkers, and to my students. To my knowledge, I am the first in my paternal family members to earn a doctorate and the second in my maternal family. I am elated and humbled to know that I am the manifestation of my ancestors' wildest dreams. Through every level of personal and academic achievement, I learned that I really *can* achieve anything I set my mind to do. I am a proud woman of color, raised in a community of marginalized youngsters

predicted to fail. However, my intrinsic desires to succeed propelled me forward. It was that same intrinsic desire that compelled me to press throughout this doctoral experience. I could never have reached this destination without constantly remembering I am only here, at the point of completion, because of God's unstoppable plan for me to lead others from a new position of knowledge and influence.

Becoming Dr. Antoinette Laura Matthews will open professional doors that may otherwise be remain closed or out of reach. My continued work as a learner and a servant leader will benefit educational leaders, elementary educators, and third through sixth grade students from marginalized communities and other learners in need of reading academic support. My continued support of elementary reading teacher will be available as I transition into educational consulting, providing *Intervention Transformation* PD to campus leaders and classroom teachers across, and even beyond, the United States.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

The 3-day PD project described includes a discussion of the benefits and the proposed implementation schedule of the PD. Considering the many potential positive social change possibilities, the most impactful change has occurred within me. As I faced times of self-doubt, I began to better understand the inner-challenge students face regarding their individual strengths and weaknesses in reading. I am hopeful that my unwillingness to give up will motivate my students and the adult stakeholders around me to pursue their dreams with passion and perseverance. Our dreams and goals are worth pursuing, even with the required payments of effort, frustration, tears, and self-doubt. For me, the goal was to experience the journey, overcome the challenges, and enjoy the

accomplishment of becoming a Doctor of Education, *an expert* in my field. For my third through sixth grade students, the goal might simply be to learn how to read or to improve in reading. However, accomplishing even those simple goals could change the trajectory of their lives forever. An increase in the literacy rate among the K-12 population will positively influence the crime rate and on-time graduation rates in marginalized communities everywhere.

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. The PD project, *Intervention Transformation*, in Appendix A was designed in response to the findings of this study, which detailed the perspectives of the participants regarding the implementation of reading intervention. *Intervention Transformation* has the capacity to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators who participate in the 3-day PD. The enhancement of educators' knowledge and skill levels will influence positive changes in the academic performance levels of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. *Intervention Transformation* was developed using Guskey's (2014) model for professional learning. I also considered the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

Further research could focus on the perspectives of educators at high performing elementary campus sites to gain an understanding of their existing practices and procedures related to reading and reading intervention. Additionally, further research could focus on the perspectives of third through sixth grade students receiving reading

intervention support. Ultimately, any lens of research that increases educators' ability to better support upper elementary students exhibiting signs of struggle in reading is worth pursuing.

### **Conclusion**

In an urban school district in a southwestern state, the problem investigated was that elementary educators are struggling to support the reading needs of third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate educators' perspectives of why current reading interventions have not been successful for third through sixth grade students at the target site. Despite the administrators' decision to implement daily reading intervention for students in need of extra support, third through sixth grade students did not meet the state's grade-level standard between 2016 – 2021 (TEA, 2020a). Ten educators who met the inclusion criteria, agreed to participate in semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. All 10 interviews occurred by phone, per each participants' request. Each interview was audio-recorded with each participant's permission. The inclusion criteria used included: (a) educators who are currently teaching reading or who have previously taught reading to third through sixth students from families having limited access to economic resources, and (b) educators who have experience with reading interventions for third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The findings of this study, resulting from the data collected from the 10 participants, revealed these three themes: (a) participants perceived the need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity

among web-based intervention programs, uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus guidance for reading intervention lesson planning, and the reading academic needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources will strengthen reading interventions, (b) participants perceived prioritizing instruction focused on the foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will strengthen reading interventions, (c) participants perceived consistency in the use of placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will strengthen reading interventions.

In response to the problem and the findings of this study, I designed a 3-day, *Intervention Transformation*, PD for implementation at the target site beginning in September 2023. The 3-day PD will enhance educators' knowledge and skills to better support the reading academic needs of third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. The 3-day PD is presented in Appendix A.

Throughout this academic journey, I experienced personal and professional growth. My level of knowledge and skills increased with each new term, research exploration, and writing assignment. I became a more impactful practitioner, a more enthusiastic researcher, and a stronger scholarly writer. I grew in my commitment and passion as an agent for social change and as an authentic servant leader in the field of education for the cause of increasing the reading proficiency of marginalized students and other learners in need of reading academic support.

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## Intervention Transformation

*A 3-day professional development session focused on enhancing educators' knowledge and skills regarding the planning and delivery of third through sixth reading interventions*



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### **Overview of Goals for the 3-Day Intervention Transformation PD**

The goal of this 3-day PD project is to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators who provide reading intervention support to third through sixth grade students from families having limited access to economic resources. Three themes emerged from the findings of study. There are five goals for this 3-day PD project, Intervention Transformation:

Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus Reading Intervention Transformation Team (RITT).

Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of the change process of Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change.

Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources.

Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design.

Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) GOALS DAY 1 AGENDA

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Intervention Transformation PD  
RITT Session

Facilitator: Dr. Antoinette L. Matthews

### Goals

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Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus Reading Intervention Transformation Team (RITT).

Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of the change process of Guskey's (2002) model PD evaluation. (Day 3)

Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources. (Day 2)

Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design. (Day 2)

Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. (Days 1 & 2)

### Agenda

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September 2023

8:30 – 8:40	10 min.	Welcome and introductions
8:40 – 8:50	10 min.	PD goals, today's objectives, materials, session norms, review of the agenda
8:50 – 8:55	5 min.	Pre-assessment   Self-assessment

8:55 – 9:30	35 min.	Review of the research and gallery walk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Research findings – Theme 1</li> <li>o TTT – Woda et al. (2022)</li> <li>o McMaster et al. (2019)</li> </ul>
9:30 – 9:35	5 min.	Reflection
9:35 – 10:30	55 min.	Skill sets educators need to plan and deliver effective reading interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Possess strong content knowledge</li> <li>o Uses placement, formative, and summative assessments regularly</li> <li>o Incorporates students’ learning styles into every lesson</li> <li>o Prioritizes building student/teacher relationships</li> <li>o Connects lessons and activities to students’ needs</li> <li>o Understands when it’s time to move on or give more time</li> </ul>
10:30 – 10:45	15 min.	Break
10:45 – 11:00	15 min.	Review / Q & A
11:00 – 12:00	60 min.	Systems and procedures to increase student engagement (part I): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Organization of students’ materials / intervention packet</li> <li>o Use of consistent open / close routines for each lesson or activity</li> </ul>
12:00 – 1:00	60 min.	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	90 min.	Systems and procedures to increase student engagement (part II): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Daily requirement to complete or submit intervention assignment(s)</li> <li>o Daily review of individual and group work expectations</li> <li>o Daily use of posted or automated rotation schedule</li> </ul>
2:30 – 2:45	15 min.	Break
2:45 – 3:00	15 min.	Review / Q & A
3:00 – 3:30	30 min.	Wrap – up / close: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Delivery of asynchronous session instructions</li> <li>o Delivery of exit ticket instructions</li> <li>o Delivery of formative survey instructions</li> <li>o Reminder of start time for the Day 2 session</li> <li>o Clean workspace</li> <li>o Exit</li> </ul>

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) GOALS DAY 2 AGENDA

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Intervention Transformation PD  
RITT Session

Facilitator: Dr. Antoinette L. Matthews

### Goals

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Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus Reading Intervention Transformation Team (RITT).

Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of the change process of Guskey's (2002) model PD evaluation. (Day 3)

Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources. (Day 2)

Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design. (Day 2)

Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. (Days 1 & 2)

### Agenda

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September 2023

8:30 – 8:40	10 min.	Welcome and introductions
8:40 – 8:50	10 min.	PD goals, today's objectives, materials, session norms, review of the agenda
8:50 – 9:00	10min.	Review and gallery walk of yesterday's asynchronous activity

9:00 – 10:00	60 min.	<p>Considerations for an effective reading intervention block (part I):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use data from a placement, formative, or summative assessment.</li> <li>o Focus on the standard and how students will show their learning.</li> <li>o Note any needed materials, if applicable.</li> <li>o Connect students’ learning styles within each practice activity.</li> <li>o Regarding activities: prioritize effectiveness over efficiency.</li> <li>o Choose skills-based groups over ability-based groups.</li> <li>o Ensure all lessons have a systematic opening to capture students’ attention and participation.</li> <li>o Ensure all lessons have a systematic closure to discuss, self-assess, and clarify any confusion.</li> </ul>
10:00 – 10:45	45 min	<p>Preparing for intervention – Analyzing data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Video: After ISIP, what reports do I use?</li> </ul>
10:45 – 11:00	15 min.	Break
11:00 – 11:30	30 min.	<p>Preparing for intervention – Grouping students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Video: How to group students for reading intervention</li> </ul>
11:30 – 12:00	30 min.	<p>Preparing for intervention – Collecting data “during” intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Video: How to EASILY collect data from reading centers and differentiate instruction   Upper elementary</li> </ul>
12:00 – 12:15	15 min.	Reflect / Record / Share
12:15 – 1:15	60 min.	Lunch
1:15 – 1:35	20 min.	Independent practice: Analyze your class’s ISIP data
1:35 – 1:55	20 min.	Independent practice: Use your class’s ISIP data to create intervention groups
1:55 – 2:00	5 min.	Review / Q & A
2:00 – 2:15	15 min.	Introduction and review of the Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template
2:15 – 2:40	25 min.	Independent practice: Creating a weekly reading intervention lesson
2:40 – 2:45	5 min.	Review / Q & A
2:45 – 3:10	25 min.	Independent practice: Deliver your reading intervention lesson (Includes an intro to the Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures.)
3:10 – 3:15	5 min.	Reflection
3:15 – 3:20	5 min.	Reflection
3:20 – 3:30	10 min.	<p>Wrap – up / Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Delivery of asynchronous session instructions</li> <li>o Delivery of exit ticket instructions</li> <li>o Delivery of formative survey instructions</li> </ul>



- o Reminder of start time for the Day 3 session
- o Clean workspace
- o Exit

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) GOALS DAY 3 AGENDA

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Intervention Transformation PD  
RITT Session

Facilitator: Dr. Antoinette L. Matthews

### Goals

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Goal 1: Administrators will establish an on-campus Reading Intervention Transformation Team (RITT).

Goal 2: Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of the change process of Guskey's (2002) model PD evaluation. (Day 3)

Goal 3: Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources. (Day 2)

Goal 4: Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design. (Day 2)

Goal 5: Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. (Days 1 & 2)

### Day 3 Agenda

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September 2023

8:30 – 8:35	5 min.	Welcome and introductions
8:35 – 8:40	5 min.	PD goals, today's objectives, materials, session norms, review of the agenda
8:40 – 8:50	10 min.	Review and discuss: Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures

The goal of the observations is to prepare the RITT to create and deliver targeted PD based on the students' areas of need, based on classroom observations.

8:50 – 9:50	60 min.	Transition to 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade class Reading intervention observations – 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade
9:50 – 10:50	60 min.	Debrief Transition to 4 <sup>th</sup> grade class Reading intervention observations – 4 <sup>th</sup> grade
10:50 – 11:50	60 min.	Debrief Transition to 5 <sup>th</sup> grade class Reading intervention observations – 5 <sup>th</sup> grade
11:50 – 12:00	10 min.	Debrief
12:00 – 1:00	60 min.	Lunch
1:00 – 1:50	50 min.	Reading intervention observations – 6 <sup>th</sup> grade
1:50 – 2:00	10 min.	Debrief Transition back to training space
2:00 – 2:15	15 min.	Introduce: & discuss: Disrupting poverty by meeting students' needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Building caring relationships</li> <li>o Having high expectations and immediate support</li> <li>o Having a commitment to equity</li> <li>o Possessing a professional accountability for learning</li> <li>o Having courage and a willingness to take action</li> </ul>
2:15 – 2:35	15 min.	Participants will record strategies to meet students' needs related to Budge & Parrett's (2018) 5 tenets to disrupt poverty. Recordings will be placed on each group's wall chart.
2:35 – 2:45	10 min.	Gallery Walk
2:45 – 2:50	5 min.	Discuss: How do you feel about meeting students' needs with an intention to disrupt poverty?
2:50 – 3:00	10 min.	Introducing: Guskey's (2002) Teacher Change Model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Video: Guskey's Model of Teacher Change</li> <li>o Discussion: How can this new knowledge help you better support other educators on your campus?</li> </ul>
3:00 – 3:10	10 min.	Introducing Guskey's (2014) PD Evaluation Model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Video: Excerpt 3: Guskey's Model of Professional Development Evaluation</li> <li>o Discussion: Which parts of the model most resonated with you? What are the benefits of using this model to plan PD sessions focused on reading intervention?</li> </ul>

3:10 – 3:25	15 min.	Begin talking about planning a PD session per grade level based on what you learned during today’s intervention observations. Choose some major topics, responsibilities of each participant, and next RITT meeting date/time/place.
3:25 – 3:30	5 min.	Wrap – up / Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Delivery of asynchronous session instructions</li><li>o Delivery of exit ticket instructions</li><li>o Delivery of formative survey instructions</li><li>o Clean workspace</li><li>o Exit</li></ul>

## **Intervention Transformation PD – Activities for Day 1**

### **Day 1 – Activity #1: Welcome / Introductions (slide 2)**

- Directions: Share your current role and a bit about your professional background.
- Directions: Share one thing you're excited about and one thing you're worried about when it comes to Reading Interventions.

### **Day 1 – Activity #2: Self-Assessment (slide 12)**

- Directions: One a scale from 1 to 5, rate yourself in the five areas listed below. Then, share/discuss your responses at your table group.

### **Day 1 – Activity #3: Making the Case for Intervention – Review the Research (slide 15)**

- Directions: Read the theme 1 data findings.
- Directions: In whole group discussion, what are your thoughts of the findings? Any surprises?

### **Day 1 – Activity #4: TTT – Review the Research (slide 17)**

- Directions: In whole group, let's name 5 benefits of train the trainer model for your campus.

### **Day 1 – Activity #5: Teachers are Unprepared – Review the Research (slide 19)**

- Directions: Independently read the McMaster et al. (2019) article in the folder provided. As a group, discuss and record\* your thoughts regarding:
  1. Major takeaway(s)
  2. The purpose of the research
  3. The research findings

### **Day 1 – Activity #6: Gallery Walk (slide 20)**

- Directions: Review the charts around the room and use the designated annotations as your review.

### **Day 1 – Activity #7: Reflection (slide 21)**

- Directions: Based on what you read and heard, what affirmations or questions do you have about Reading Intervention? Record your responses in your PD spiral notebook provided.

### **Day 1 – Activity #8: Introduction of Skill Sets Needed by Educators Who Deliver Reading Interventions (slides 24 – 29)**

- Directions: In whole group form, we will review 4 of 6 skill sets. Participants will name examples of the skill sets, discuss the differences between assessment types,

discuss how they address/include every learning style in every intervention lesson.

**Day 1 – Activity #9: Reflection (slide #30)**

- Directions: Regarding skills 1 – 4, discuss at your table group:
  1. Which skills are current strengths for you?
  2. Which skills are areas for improvement?

**Day 1 – Activity #10: Continuation of Activity #8 (slides 31-33)**

- Directions: In whole group form, participants we will review the remaining two skill sets. Participants will identify and discuss ways to build relationships with students, discuss ways a new teacher can connect lessons and activities to students' academic needs, and discuss how to recognize when it's time to move on or offer more time to a skill.

**Day 1 – Activity #11: Reflection (slide 34)**

- Directions: Regarding skills 5 and 6, discuss at your # group:
  1. Which skills are current strengths for you?
  2. Which skills are areas for improvement?

**Day 1 – Activity #12: Introduction of Five Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement (slides 36 – 48)**

- Directions: Participants will engage in whole group, table group, and paired discussions on how to use an intervention packet to help support an efficient class.
- Directions: Participants will create packets during this time.
- Directions: Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your open and close routines at your table group.
- Directions: Take 5 minutes to list out the steps you use to start and end reading intervention lessons and activities.
- Directions: Record your responses in your PD spiral.
- Directions: Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your individual and group work-station expectations.
- Directions: Take 5 minutes to list out your expectations.
- Directions: Record your responses in your PD spiral.
- Directions: Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your daily work submission procedures.
- Directions: Take 5 minutes to list out your daily work submission procedures.
- Directions: Record your responses in your PD spiral.
- Directions: Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your daily work submission procedures.
- Directions: Take 5 minutes to list out your daily work submission procedures.
- Directions: Record your responses in your PD spiral.

**Day 1 – Activity #13: Reflection (slide #49)**

- Directions for group discussion: Considering our review and your discussions within the group:
  1. What are your next steps for your systems and procedures?
  2. Do you need to add or adjust any systems or procedures?

**Day 1 – Activity #14: “I Have a Dream” Reflection (slide #51)**

- Direction: Take 3 minutes to reflect on our time together and finish the statements below: “I have a dream for my intervention hour to.....”

## **Intervention Transformation PD – Activities for Day 2**

### **Day 2 – Activity #15: Welcome / Introductions (no slide)**

- Directions: Remind others of your name, role, and professional background.
- Directions: Share one thing you're glad you learned yesterday.
- Directions: Present yesterday's asynchronous activity to your table group.
- Directions: Gallery walk to each table group with cameras.

### **Day 2 – Activity #16: Introduction of *Considerations for an Effective Reading Interventions Block*. (slides 65 – 66)**

- Directions: After learning about these 8 considerations, what are your thoughts about each one? Which one(s) do you struggle with? Share out!

### **Day 2 – Activity #17: Preparing for Intervention: After ISIP, what reports do I use? – Video (slides 67 – 68)**

- Directions: Based on the video and our discussion, what will you begin doing to get the most from your ISIP report? Record your response in your PD spiral and share at your table group.

### **Day 2 – Activity #18: Preparing for Intervention: Grouping Students – Video (slides 69 – 70)**

- Directions: In # groups, discuss how your grouping practices are similar and different than the ones shared in the video? Record your response in your PD spiral notebook.

### **Day 2 – Activity #19: Preparing for Intervention: Collecting Data from Reading Centers and Differentiating Instruction – Video (slides 72 – 72)**

- Directions: In your # group, discuss the ways you collect data DURING intervention? How can you enhance your current practices?
- Directions: Record the new ideas you hear in your PD spiral notebook.

### **Day 2 – Activity #20: Reflection (slide 73)**

- Directions: Take the next 10 minutes to think about what you saw in the videos and what you discussed in your groups. Then, record your takeaways to improve your practice of collecting data, analyzing data, and forming groups.

### **Day 2 – Activity #21: Time to Review and Analyze YOUR ISIP data! (slide #74)**

- Directions: Take the next 20 minutes to analyze your students' most recent ISIP reading assessment data.



**Day 2 – Activity #22: Time to use YOUR ISPS data to create reading intervention groups! (slide 75 – 76)**

- Directions: Take the next 30 minutes to create your students’ reading intervention groups based on your analyzed data.
- Directions: How do you feel about your analysis and your groups?
- Directions: Share Out!

**Day 2 – Activity #23: The Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template (slide 77 – 78)**

- Directions: How do you feel about the Lesson Plan Template? How could campus-wide use of this template support uniformity?
- Directions: Share Out!

**Day 2 – Activity #24: Time to Plan a Lesson! (slide 79)**

- Directions: Let’s take the next 30 minutes to start planning a reading intervention lesson based on your analyzed data and using the Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template.
- Directions: Ensure your lesson plan includes activity times and descriptions that align to students’ needs. Each day’s reading intervention session MUST include activities focused on the five foundational reading skills.

**Day 2 – Activity #25: Reflection (slide 80)**

- Directions: How do you feel after planning intervention lessons based on your analyzed data? Share Out!

**Day 2 – Activity #26: Independent Practice Delivering your Reading Intervention Plan (slide 82 – 83)**

- Directions: Get into pair groups and let’s practice for 25 minutes. With the reading intervention evaluation measures in mind, let’s practice delivering your intervention lesson.

**Day 2 – Activity #27: Whole Group Reflection. Share out! (slide 84)**

- Directions: What felt easy about executing the lesson?
- Directions: What felt challenging?
- Directions: What are your next steps?

**Day 2 – Activity #28: Another Reflection (slide 86)**

- Directions: At your table group, take 5 minutes to reflect on our time together and finish the statement below.

Regarding intervention planning, I used to think \_\_\_\_\_ but now I think \_\_\_\_\_.

- Directions: Record your responses in your PD spiral notebook AND on your group's REFLECTIONS chart paper.

### **Intervention Transformation PD – Activities for Day 3**

#### **Day 3 – Activity #29: Welcome / Introductions (no slide)**

- Directions: Remind others of your name, role, and professional background.
- Directions: Share one thing you're glad you learned yesterday.
- Directions: Present yesterday's asynchronous activity to your table group.
- Directions: Gallery walk to each table group with cameras.

#### **Day 3 – Activity #30: Let's Observe 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Intervention in Action? (slides 98 – 99)**

- Directions: In your PD spiral notebook, take notes of what the teacher is doing, what students are doing, transitions, engagement, structure, ect. (Refer to the Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures.)

#### **Day 3 – Activity #31: Whole Group Discussion (slide 101)**

- Directions: What were some of the strengths you observed in the intervention classes? Weaknesses? How can our observation support your PD planning? Share out!

#### **Day 3 – Activity #32: Disrupting Poverty / Supporting Student's Needs (slides 103 – 105)**

- Directions: With your table group, take the next 15 minutes to document one strategy you can use to meet students' needs related to Budge & Parrett's (2018) five tenets to disrupt poverty.
- Directions: Record your group's responses on the wall chart.

#### **Day 3 – Activity #33: Gallery Walk (slide 106)**

- Directions: Review the wall charts of other groups to get ideas! Use the designated annotations.)

#### **Day 3 – Activity #34: Reflection (slide 107)**

- Directions: In # groups, discuss how you feel about meeting students' needs with an intention to disrupt poverty?

#### **Day 3 – Activity #35 – Guskey's (2002) Teacher Change Model – Video (slide 109)**

- Directions: At your table group, discuss your thoughts about
- Guskey's teacher change model. How can this new knowledge help you help other educators on your campus?

**Day 3 – Activity #36 – Guskey’s (2014) Profession Development Evaluation Model – Video (slide 111)**

- Directions: In your # groups, discuss the parts of Guskey’s (2014) model that resonated with you most. Then, discuss the benefits of using this model to plan your future PD sessions focused on reading intervention.

**Day 3 – Activity #37 – Time to Plan PD (slide 113)**

- Direction: Get into grade-level groups to begin talking about planning a PD session for each grade level based on what you learned during today’s intervention observations. Choose some major topics, responsibilities of each participant, and next meeting date/time/place.

### **Exit Ticket for Day 1 – Intervention Transformation PD Formative Evaluation**

Date:

- 1.) Which skill set did you find most interesting to learn about or discuss today? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2.) Identify three reading intervention systems and procedures you appreciated learning or discussing today.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3.) What did you learn from today's review and discussion of the train the trainer model?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4.) What are the three assessments we discussed today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5.) Was today's PD session well-planned and well-presented?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6.) What suggestions or recommendations do you have to help improve the next Intervention Transformation PD?

**Exit Ticket for Day 2 – Intervention Transformation PD Formative Evaluation**

Date:

- 1.) Name and describe the five foundational reading skills.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2.) Name AND describe the assessment types we discussed today (and yesterday).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3.) Did you like the Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4.) What 3 things did you learn about planning reading intervention lessons?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5.) Was today’s PD session well-planned and well-presented?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6.) What suggestions or recommendations do you have to help improve the next Intervention Transformation PD?

**Exit Ticket for Day 3 – Intervention Transformation PD Formative Evaluation**

Date:

- 1.) In the space below, create an illustration to demonstrate your understanding of Guskey's (2002) teacher change model. Be creative!

### Day 3 – Intervention Transformation PD Formative Evaluation

Thank you for participating in the 3-day Intervention Transformation PD. During your asynchronous session, please complete this summative evaluation for the entire 3-day PD. Your feedback will provide valuable information to help us improve our planning and preparation for future PD sessions.

**Use the following rating scale when selecting your response:**

**5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree**

The 3-day PD goals were clearly stated.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, each day's PD objectives were met.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, the opportunities for discussion were included.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, opportunities to learn via the four learning styles (visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic) were woven into each PD activity.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, the structure included time for collaboration.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, multiple opportunities were provided to ask clarifying questions.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, the entire experience enhanced my knowledge and skills regarding the planning and implementation of reading intervention for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from families having limited access to economic resources.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Over the 3-day PD, the presenter was knowledgeable about the subject of the training.

5 = Strongly Agree   4 = Agree   3 = Neutral   2=Disagree   1 = Strongly Disagree

Please provide any suggestions you have for improving PD.



# *alm* Intervention Transformation

*a 3-day professional development session focused on enhancing educators' knowledge and skills regarding the planning and delivery of 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> reading interventions*



## Welcome to Day 1

### Introduce yourself to your group!

- Share your current role and a bit about your background.
- Share one thing you're excited about and one thing you're worried about when it comes to Reading Interventions.



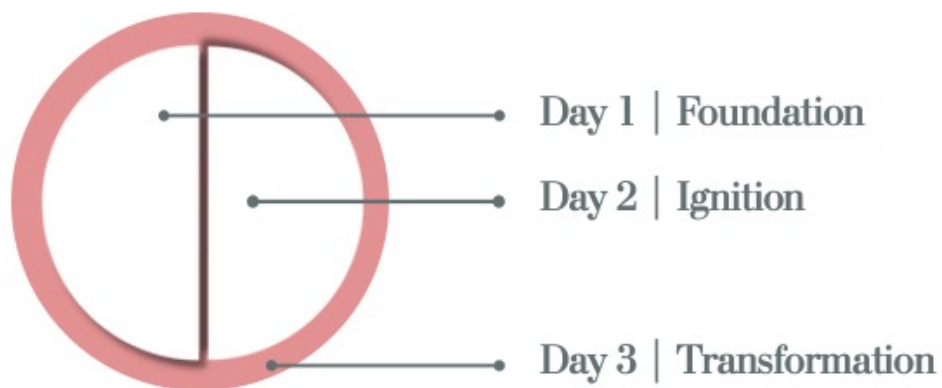
**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

## Hi, I'm Dr. Matthews!

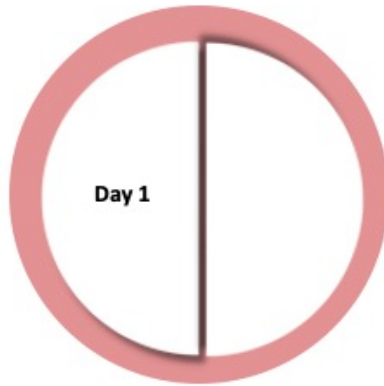
- As an education consultant and an expert in my field, I provide research-based PD to educators.
- I am most excited about contributing to the enhancement of your knowledge and skills.
- I do what I do to support the reading academic needs of 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade marginalized students and other learners in need of reading academic support.
- My fear is that I will run out of time during this PD session!

**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

**Intervention Transformation | *Foundation* Defined**



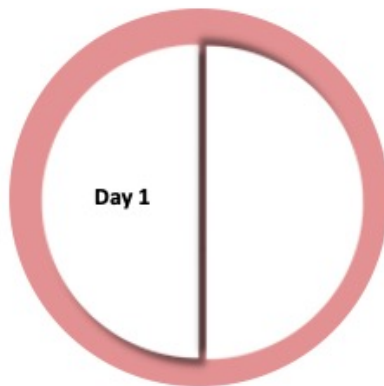
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Review of the PD Goals (part I)

1. Administration will establish an on-campus reading intervention transformation team (RITT).
2. Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change. (Day 3)
3. Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and to the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources. (Day 2)

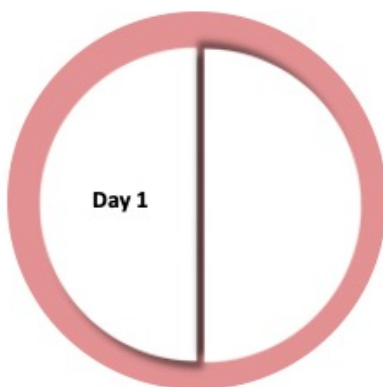
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Review of the PD Goals (part II)

1. Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design. (Day 2)
2. Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. (Days 1 & 2)

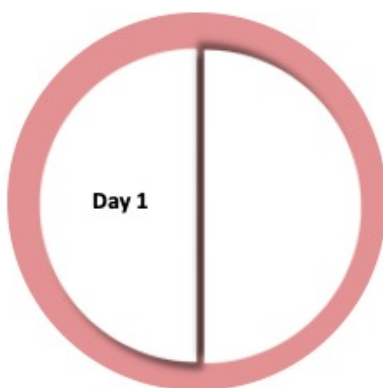
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Review of the PD Goals (part I)

1. Administration will establish an on-campus reading intervention transformation team (RITT).
2. Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change. (Day 3)
3. Participants will develop a reading intervention lesson plan demonstrating an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction, instruction to independent practice activities, and to the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources. (Day 2)

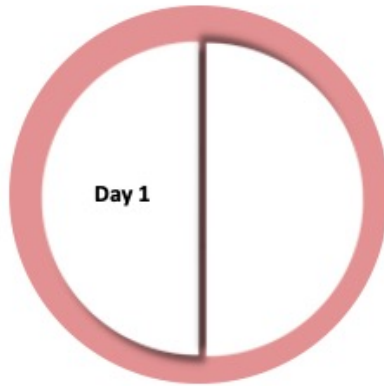
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Review of the PD Goals (part II)

1. Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design. (Day 2)
2. Participants will define/describe the three types of reading assessments: placement assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments. (Days 1 & 2)

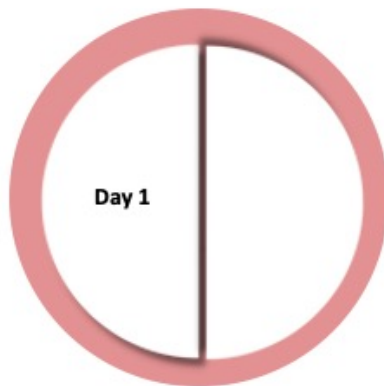
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Objectives

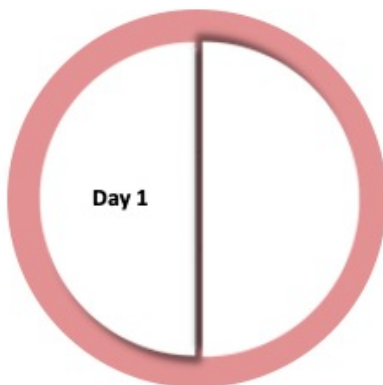
1. Participant's will discuss and describe the knowledge and skills educators need to plan and deliver 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading interventions.
2. Participant's will identify systems and routines needed to increase student engagement during reading intervention.
3. Participants will create a list of the benefits of the train the trainer PD model.

## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Materials

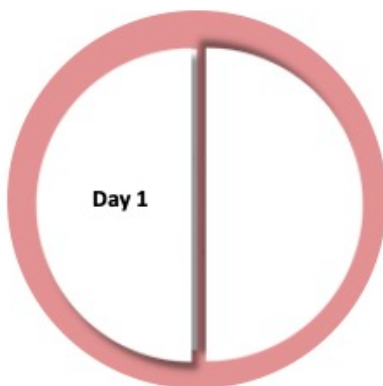
1. PD spiral notebook (provided for you)
2. Writing tool
3. Technology (laptop, Chromebook, ect.)



### Day 1 | Session Norms\*

1. Stay Engaged
2. Experience Discomfort
3. Speak Your Truth
4. Accept and Expect Non-Closure

\* Norms adapted from Courageous Conversations about Race (Singleton, 2021)



### Day 1 | Session Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. Making a Case for Reading Intervention:  
A presentation of the research
3. Skill Sets Educators Need to Plan and Deliver Effective Reading Intervention
4. Systems and Routines to Increase Student Engagement
5. Closing

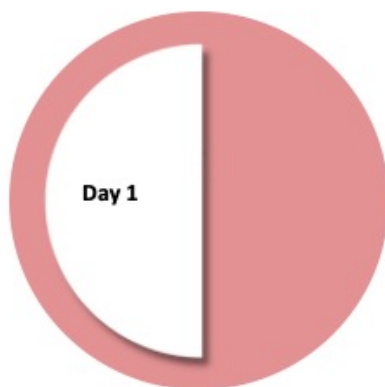
"The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see."

*Alexandra K. Trenfor*

### Self-Assessment | Day 1 Pre-Assessment

On a scale from 1 to 5, rate yourself in the 5 areas listed below. Then, share your responses within your table group.

1. Reading Intervention Block Overall
2. Planning/preparation of Reading Intervention Block
3. Implementation of Reading Intervention Block
4. In-class Data Tracking of Reading Intervention Data
5. Student Behavior during Reading Intervention Block



### Day 1 | Session Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. **Making a Case for Reading Intervention:  
Review of the Findings and other Research**
3. What Skill Sets Do I Need to Deliver  
Effective Reading Intervention?
4. Systems and Routines to Increase  
Student Engagement
5. Closing

## Making a Case for Reading Intervention: A Review of the Research



### Theme 1 (from the data findings):

Participants perceive a need for PD focused on reading intervention preparation, reading intervention instruction, uniformity among web-based reading intervention programs. Uniformity of reading intervention programs and resources, on-campus support for reading intervention lesson planning, and needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources..

What are your thoughts of the findings? Any surprises?  
Let's discuss your thoughts (aloud) in whole group.



### **Train the Trainer**

According to Woda et al. (2022), "As a first step in transforming novices to experts, TTT models increase the collective wealth of knowledge and provide a sustainable conduit for deploying information efficiently and effectively" (p. 322).

What are the benefits of train the trainer?





## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Activity 1 | Directions:

Independently read the McMaster et al. (2019) article in the folder provided. As a group, discuss and record\* your thoughts regarding:

1. Major takeaway(s)
2. The purpose of the research
3. The research findings

\* Record your group's responses on the chart paper labeled with your table number.



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Activity 2 | Gallery Walk:

Review the charts around the room and use the following annotations as your review.

- ① For a point that you have a question about
- ② For a point that surprised you
- ③ The research findings

### Activity 3 | Let's Summarize Together:

Based on the research. Call out and I'll type the agreed upon response.

- Major takeaway?
- The purpose of the research?
- The research finding?

### Let's Discuss:

- What are the pros of using the Intervention Packet?
- How can the intervention packet contribute to efficiency and uniformity among your 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade intervention classes??



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Let's Practice Making the Packets!



- On a table, lay out stacks of each of the pages you want included in the packet.
- Instruct students to form a line.
- One person at a time, walks past the table.
- As they walk past, each person will pick up each of the numbered pages.
- When all students have a packet, offer some reward for everyone who has all pages.
- Staple each packet.
- Ask a helper to create packets for absent students.

## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Creating the Intervention Packet - In-Class!



- On a table, lay out stacks of each of the pages you want included in the packet.
- Instruct students to form a line.
- One person at a time, walks past the table.
- As they walk past, each person will pick up each of the numbered pages.
- When all students have a packet, offer some reward for everyone who has all pages.
- Staple each packet.
- Ask a helper to create packets for absent students.

### “Intervention Packet”

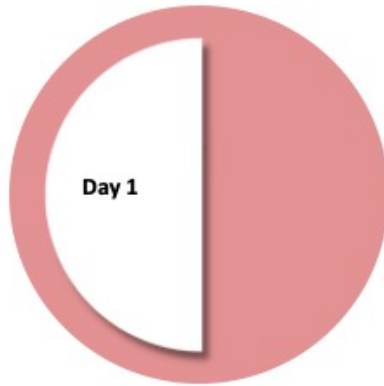
An intervention packet is one way to create or enhance efficiency in your reading intervention classroom..

An intervention packet is a great way to keep all intervention assignments together for review, or grading.

An intervention packet is an easy way to help absent students jump back in without disruption.

### Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement:

1. **Organization of Students’ Materials / Intervention Packet**
2. Use of Consistent Open / Close Routines for Each Lesson or Activity
3. Daily requirement to complete or submit intervention assignment(s)
4. Daily Review of Individual and Group Work Expectations
5. Daily Use of Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule



### Day 1 | Session Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Making a Case for Reading Intervention:  
Review the Research
3. Skill Sets Educators Need to Plan and  
Deliver Effective Reading Intervention
4. **Systems and Routines to Increase  
Student Engagement**
5. Closing

### 3 min Reflection and Discuss With Your # Group

- What skills are a current strength?
- What skills are areas for improvement?



### Recognize When It's Time to Move on or Give More Time.

Example:  
Non-tangible assessing,  
taking cues from students



Whole Group:  
How do you recognize when  
it's time to move on or offer  
more time on a skill?

### 3 min Reflection and Discuss at Your Group

- What skills are a current strength for you?
- What skills are areas for improvement?





## Prioritize Building Relationships

Example:  
Community Meetings

Whole-group:  
What are some other ways  
to build relationships with  
students?



## Connect Lessons and Activities with Students' Needs

Example:  
Sight Words vs. Decoding

Whole Group:  
How can a new intervention teacher  
connect lessons and activities to  
students' academic needs?



## Possess Strong Content Knowledge

Example:

Fiction vs. Non-Fiction

Whole group: Let's name a few other samples:



What are the differences and purposes of the placement, formative, and/or summative assessments? Share Out!



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Regularly Use of Placement, Formative, & Summative Assessments

Example:  
Universal screener  
Exit tickets



Whole-Group:  
Let's name more examples of each  
type of assessment.

## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Knowledge of Placement, Formative, & Summative Assessments

In your # group, differentiate  
between the placement,  
formative, and summative  
assessment. Be sure to use  
language that include



"The purpose of \_\_\_\_\_ is  
\_\_\_\_\_."

### Incorporate Students' Learning Styles in Every Lesson

Example:  
Auditory only vs. Auditory,  
Visual and  
Kinesthetic



Whole-Group:  
How do you address every learning style  
in your class?

### Skill Sets Needed by Educators:

- Possess Strong Content Knowledge
- Uses Placement, Formative, & Summative Assessments Regularly
- Incorporates Students' Learning Styles into Every Lesson
- Prioritizes Building Student/Teacher Relationships
- Connects Lessons and Activities to Students' Needs
- Understands When It's Time to Move on or Give More Time

## Skill Sets Educators Need to Plan and Deliver Effective Reading Intervention



### Day 1 | Session Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Making a Case for Reading Intervention:  
Review the Research
3. **Skill Sets Educators Need to Plan and  
Deliver Effective Reading Intervention**
4. Systems and Routines to Increase  
Student Engagement
5. Closing

#### Activity 4 | Reflection:

Based on what you read and heard, what affirmations or questions do you have about Reading Intervention? Record your responses in your PD spiral notebook provided.

### Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement:

1. Organization of Students' Materials / Intervention Packet
2. **Consistent Open / Close Routines for Each Lesson or Activity**
3. Review of Individual and Group Work Expectations
4. Daily Work Submission Procedure
5. Daily Use of Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule

### What Are Your Open & Close Routines?

- Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your open and close routines at your table group.
- Take 5 minutes to list out the steps you use to start and end reading intervention lessons and activities.
- Record your responses in your PD spiral.



### Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement :

1. Organization of Students' Materials / Intervention Packet
2. Consistent Open / Close Routines for Each Lesson or Activity
3. **Review of Individual and Group Work-Station Expectations**
4. Daily Work Submission Procedure
5. Daily Use of Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule

### What Are Your Work-Station Expectations?

- Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your individual and group work-station expectations.
- Take 5 minutes to list out your expectations.
- Record your responses in your PD spiral.





### Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement :

1. Organization of Students' Materials / Intervention Packet
2. Consistent Open / Close Routines for Each Lesson or Activity
3. Review of Individual and Group Work Expectations
4. **Daily Work Submission Procedure**
5. Daily Use of Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule

### What Are Your Procedures to Submit Work?

- Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your daily work submission procedures..
- Take 5 minutes to list out your daily work submission procedures.
- Record your responses in your PD spiral.



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Systems and Procedures to Increase Student Engagement :

1. Organization of Students' Materials / Intervention Packet
2. Consistent Open / Close Routines for Each Lesson or Activity
3. Review of Individual and Group Work Expectations
4. Daily Work Submission Procedure
5. **Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule (Consistently Updated)**

## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### What Are Your Expectations for Transitioning?

- Take the next 5 minutes to discuss (with your # group) your expectations for transitioning between intervention work-stations.
- Take 5 minutes to list out your expectations for transitioning.
- Record your responses in your PD spiral.



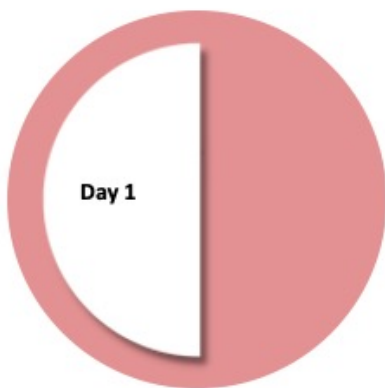
## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### 3 min Reflection and Group Discussion:

- What are your next steps for your systems and routines?
- Do you need to add or adjust any systems or routines?



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation



### Day 1 | Session Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Making a Case for Reading Intervention:  
Review the Research
3. Skill Sets Educators Need to Plan and  
Deliver Effective Reading Intervention
4. Systems and Routines to Increase  
Student Engagement
5. **Closing**



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### 3 min “I Have A Dream” Reflection:

Take 3 minutes to reflect on our time together and finish the statements below:

I have a dream for my intervention hour to.....

*share your response within your group*



## Intervention Transformation | Foundation

### Q & A:

Consider all we've reviewed and discussed today.

Do you have any questions?

### Asynchronous Session Instructions:

Based on our discussions and your reflections, create:

- ✓ Open / Close Systems and Routines
- ✓ Individual and Group Work Expectations
- ✓ Work Submission Routines
- ✓ Posted or Automated Rotation Schedule

*Tomorrow's session will begin with a review of these items.*

### Exit Ticket (via Google Form):

- On your exit ticket, answer the 6 questions listed.

The link to the exit ticket will be sent electronically,  
by email, during your asynchronous session.



### Formative Survey (via Google Form):

Please take 5-10 minutes to share your feedback, learnings and next steps from our time together.

The link to the survey be sent electronically, by email, during your asynchronous session.



  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

*Thank you!*

Tomorrow' synchronous  
session time:  
8:30am to 3:30pm

# *alm* Intervention Transformation



## Welcome to Day 2!

### Introduce yourself to your group!

- Share your current role and a bit about your background.
- Share one thing you're excited about and one thing you're worried about when it comes to Reading Interventions.





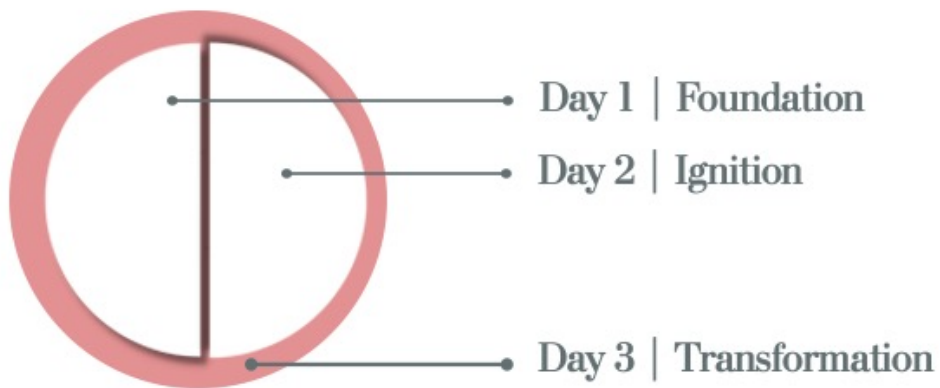
**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L. MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

### Hi, I'm Dr. Matthews!

- As an education consultant and an expert in my field, I provide research-based PD to educational leaders.
- I am most excited about the opportunity to exchange knowledge and skills among educators today!
- I do what I do to support the reading academic needs of 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade marginalized students and other learners in need of reading academic support.
- My fear is that I will run out of time during this PD session.

**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L. MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

## Intervention Transformation | *Ignition Defined*





## Intervention Transformation | Ignition



### Day 2 | Objectives

1. Participants will identify the five foundational reading skills and demonstrate knowledge of them in a lesson plan design.
2. Participants will define/describe placement, formative, and summative assessments.
3. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the alignment of data to instruction to activities based on students needs.

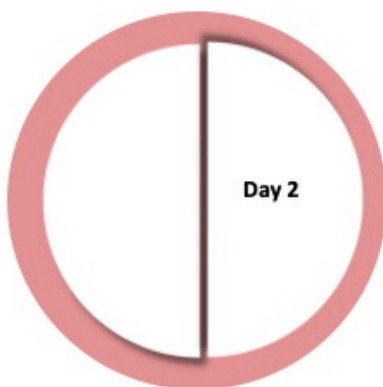
## Intervention Transformation | Ignition



### Day 2 | Materials

1. PD spiral notebook (provided for you)
2. Writing tool
3. Technology (laptop, Chromebook, ect.)

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

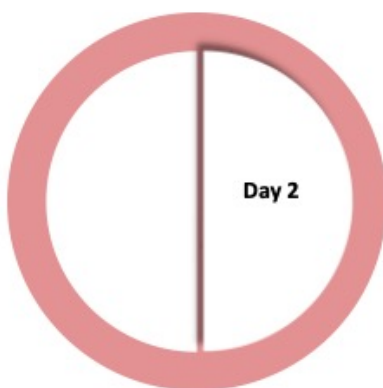


### Day 2 | Session Norms\*

1. Stay Engaged
2. Experience Discomfort
3. Speak Your Truth
4. Accept and Expect Non-Closure

\* Norms adapted from *Courageous Conversations about Race*

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition



### Day 2: Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. **Planning your Reading Intervention Block**
3. Executing your Intervention Block
4. Closing

### Considerations for an effective reading intervention block:

1. Use data from a placement, formative, or summative assessment
2. Focus on the standard and how students will show their learning
3. Note any needed lesson materials, if applicable
4. Connect students' learning styles within each practice activity
5. Regarding activities: prioritize effective over efficient
6. Choose skills-based groups over ability-based groups
7. Ensure all lessons have a systematic opening to capture students' attention and participation.
7. Ensure all lessons have a systematic closure to discuss, self-assess, and clarify any confusion.

What are your thoughts about each item on the list?  
Which one(s) do you struggle with? Share Out!



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Preparing for Intervention: After ISIP, what reports do I use?

Before we begin our day of planning your intervention block, let's watch a video focused on correctly using the Istation reports. (29 min.)

<https://youtu.be/ltOa77J225g>

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

Based on the video, what will you begin doing to get the most from your ISIP report? Record your response in your PD spiral and share at your table group.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Preparing for Intervention: Grouping Students

Before we begin our day of planning your intervention block, let's watch a video focused on creating intervention groups. (7.25 min)

<https://youtu.be/Gqz3J9YGDQ8>

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

**In # groups, discuss how your grouping practices are similar and different than the ones shared in the video? Record your response in your PD spiral notebook.**



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Preparing for Intervention:

#### Collecting Data from Reading Centers and Differentiating Instruction:

Before we begin our day of planning your intervention block, let's watch a video focused on collecting data DURING intervention. (4.25 min.)

<https://youtu.be/n06a6ZZqwUw>

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

In your # group, discuss the ways you collect data DURING intervention? How can you enhance your current practices? Record the new ideas you hear in your PD spiral notebook.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Time to Reflect / Record Your Thoughts / Share Out

Take the next 10 minutes to think about what you way in the videos and what you discussed in your groups. Then, record your takeaways to improve your practice of collecting data, analyzing data, and forming groups.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Time to review and analyze YOUR data!

Take the next 20 minutes to analyze your students' most recent ISIP reading assessment data.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

**Time to use YOUR data to create groups !**

Take the next 30 minutes to create your students' reading intervention groups based on the analyzed data.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

**How do you feel about your analysis and your groups?  
Share Out!**





## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### The Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template

Let's take the next 10 minutes to  
independently review the Intervention  
Transformation Lesson Plan Template in  
Folder #3.



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

How do you feel about the Lesson Plan Template? How could  
campus-wide use of this template support uniformity?

Share Out!



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition



### Time to Plan to Lesson!

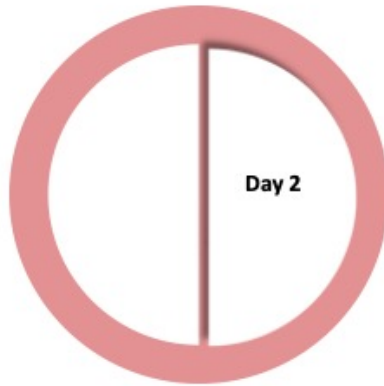
Let's take the next 30 minutes to start planning a reading intervention lessons based on your analyzed data and using the Intervention Transformation Lesson Plan Template.

Ensure your lesson plan includes activity times and descriptions that align to students' needs. Each day's reading intervention session **MUST** include activities focused on the five foundational reading skills.

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

**Reflect.** How do you feel after planning intervention lessons based on your analyzed data? **Share Out!**





### Day 2: Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Planning your Reading Intervention Block
3. **Executing your Intervention Block**
4. Closing

### Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures:

1. Teacher and students were prepared and organized.
2. Teacher followed the lesson plan.
3. Seamless transitions.
4. Obvious systems and procedures.
5. Students were engaged.

### Impact of a Well-Executed Intervention Block:

1. Student achievement increases.
2. Distractions/behavior challenges decrease.
3. Less stress on the teacher.

### Independent Practice: Delivering Your Reading Intervention Lesson!

Get into pair groups and let's practice for 25 minutes. With the reading intervention evaluation measures in mind, let's practice delivering your intervention lesson.

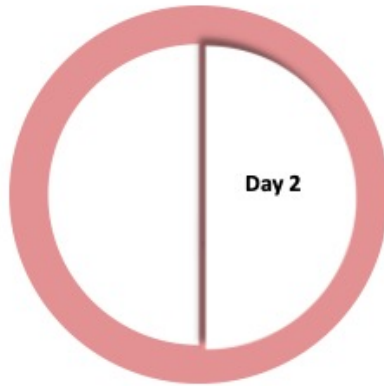


### Whole Group Reflection:

1. What felt easy about executing this lesson?
2. What felt challenging?
3. What are your next steps?



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition



### Day 2: Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Planning your Reading Intervention Block
3. Executing your Intervention Block
4. **Closing**

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Another Reflect!



At your table group, take 5 minutes to reflect on our time together and finish the statement below.

Regarding intervention planning, I used to think \_\_\_\_\_  
but now I think \_\_\_\_\_.

Record your responses in your PD spiral notebook **AND** on your group's REFLECTIONS chart paper.

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Asynchronous Session Instructions:

Based on our discussions and your reflections:

- ✓ Every person at each table group will create (and bring in) one intervention activity for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. No duplicate activities, please.
- ✓ Table 1 – Phonemic awareness
- ✓ Table 2 – Phonological awareness
- ✓ Table 3 – Fluency
- ✓ Table 4 – Vocabulary
- ✓ Table 5 – Comprehension

## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Exit Ticket (via Google Form):

On your exit ticket, answer the 6 questions listed.

The link to the exit ticket will be sent electronically, by email, during your asynchronous session.

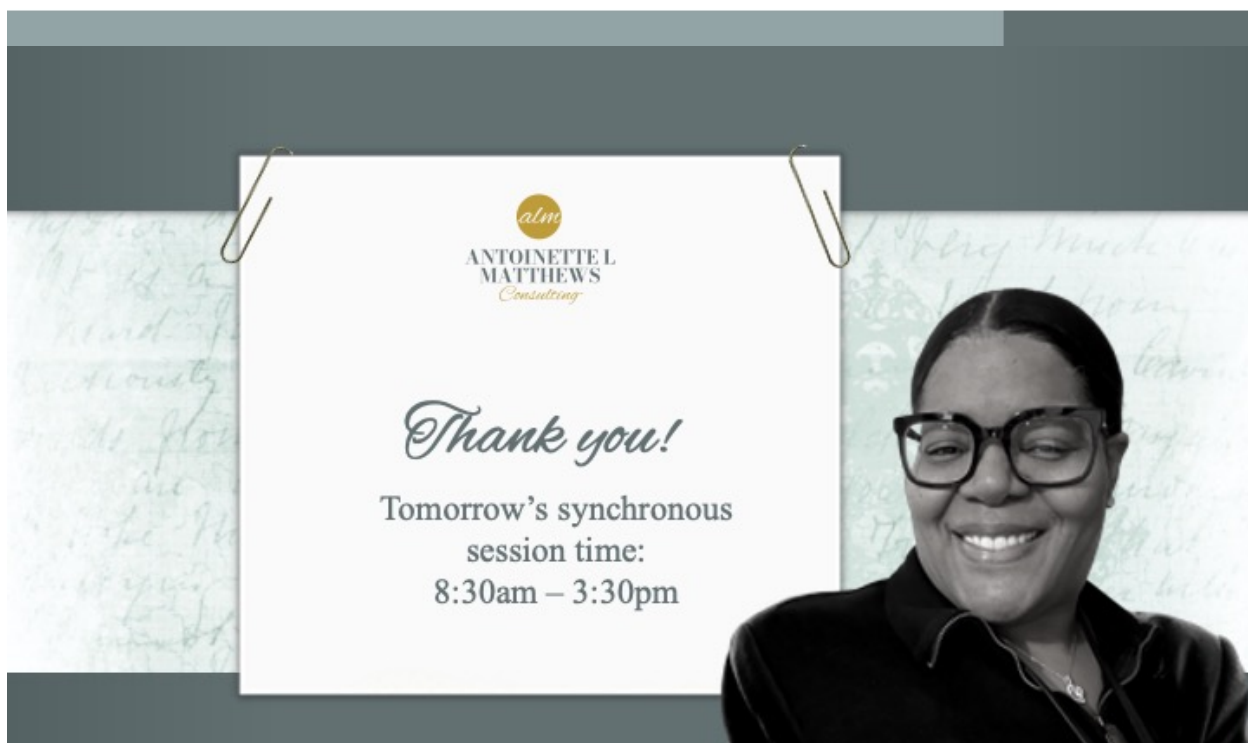



## Intervention Transformation | Ignition

### Formative Survey (via Google Form):

Please take 5-10 minutes to share your feedback, learnings and next steps from our time together.

The link to the survey be sent electronically, by email, during your asynchronous session.



  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

*Thank you!*

Tomorrow's synchronous  
session time:  
8:30am – 3:30pm

The logo features the lowercase letters 'alm' in a white, cursive font inside a white circle. To the right of the circle, the words 'Intervention' and 'Transformation' are stacked vertically in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

# alm Intervention Transformation



## Welcome to Day 3!

### Introduce yourself to your group!

- Share your current role and a bit about your background.
- Share one thing you're excited about and one thing you're worried about when it comes to Reading Interventions.





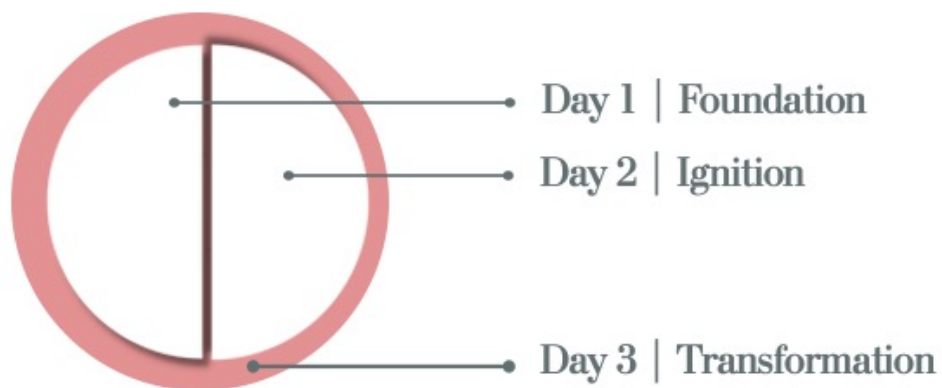
**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

## Hi, I'm Dr. Matthews!

- As an education consultant and an expert in my field, I provide research-based PD to educational leaders.
- I am most excited about the opportunity to exchange knowledge and skills among educators today!
- I do what I do to support the reading academic needs of 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade marginalized students and other learners in need of reading academic support.
- My fear is that I will run out of time during this PD session.

**alm**  
ANTOINETTE L.  
MATTHEWS  
*Consulting*

**Intervention Transformation | *Transformation***



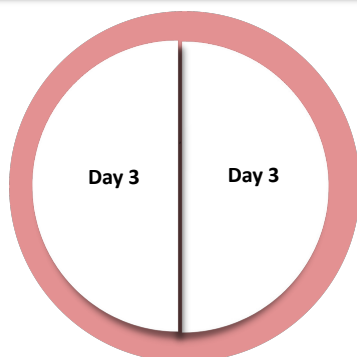
## Intervention Transformation | Transformation



### Day 3 | Objectives

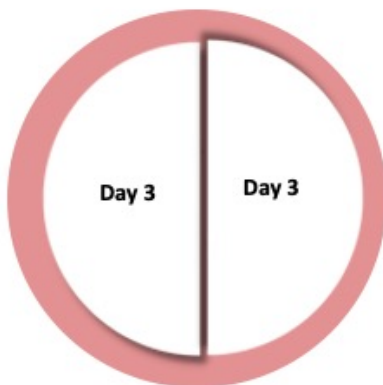
1. Participants will create an illustration to show understanding of Guskey's (2002) model for teacher change.
2. Participants will describe how focusing on disrupting poverty from the classroom can link to supporting the needs of students from families having limited access to economic resources.

## Intervention Transformation | Transformation



### Day 3 | Materials

1. PD spiral notebook (provided for you)
2. Writing tool
3. Technology (laptop, Chromebook, ect.)



### Day 3: Session Norms\*

1. Stay Engaged
2. Experience Discomfort
3. Speak Your Truth
4. Accept and Expect Non Closure

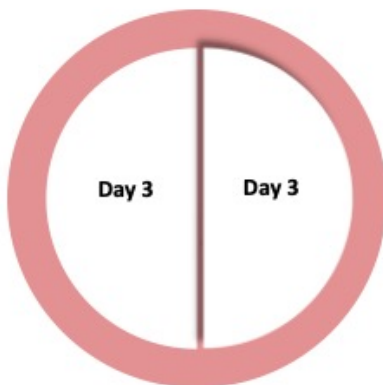
\* Norms adapted from *Courageous Conversations about Race*

### (Review) Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures:

1. Teacher and students were prepared and organized.
2. Teacher followed the lesson plan.
3. Seamless transition.
4. Systems and procedures work.
5. Students are engaged.

### Impact of a Well-Executed Intervention Block:

1. Student achievement increases.
2. Distractions/behavior challenges decrease.
3. Less stress and overwhelm for the teacher.



### Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. **Classroom Observations**
3. Supporting Students Needs
4. Planning
5. Close

Let's observe 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade interventions in actions!

In your PD spiral notebook, take notes of what the teacher is doing, what students are doing, transitions, engagement, structure, ect. (Refer to the Reading Intervention Evaluation Measures.)

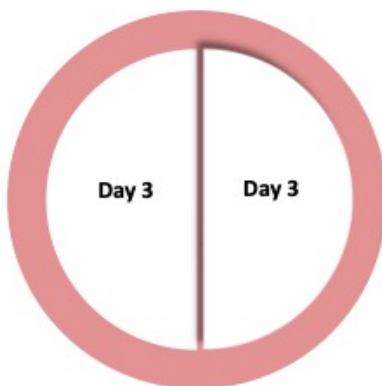


## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

Whole Group Discussion: What were some of the strengths you observed in the intervention classes? Weaknesses? How can our observation support your PD planning? Share out!



## Intervention Transformation | Transformation



### Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Classroom Observations
3. **Supporting Students Needs**
4. Planning
5. Close

### Disrupting Poverty / Supporting Students Needs

As teachers and educators, we have an extraordinary opportunity to influence the course of our students' lives and the future of the country. Disrupting poverty requires us to depart from our comfort zones, to ask the hard questions, and to examine not only our individual professional practices, but also our collective practices and the classroom and school conditions that create inequities.

(Budge & Parrett, 2018)

### Meeting Students Needs / Disrupting Poverty

According to Budge & Parrett (2018),

Educators Must Prioritize:

- Building Caring Relationships
- Having High Expectations and Immediate Support
- Having a Commitment to Equity
- Possessing a Professional Accountability for Learning
- Having Courage and a Willingness to Take Action

### Let's think about meeting students' needs!

With your table group, take the next 15 minutes to document one strategy you can use to meet students' needs related to Budge & Parrett's (2018) 5 tenets to disrupt poverty. Record your group's responses on the wall chart.



### Gallery Walk!

Review the wall charts of other groups to get ideas!  
Use these annotations:

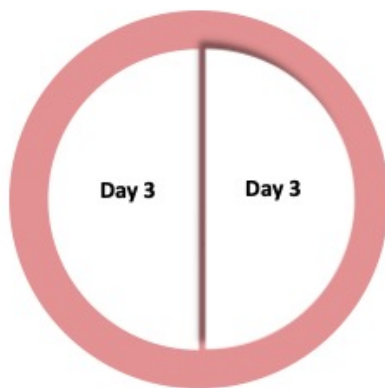
- ① For a point that you have a question about
- ② For a point that surprised you
- \* The research findings

## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

In # groups, discuss how you feel about meeting students' needs with an intention to disrupt poverty?



## Intervention Transformation | Transformation



### Day 3: Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Classroom Observations
3. Supporting Students Needs
4. **Planning**
5. Close



## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

### Guskey's (2002) Teacher Change Model

Before we discuss your responsibility to develop and provide PD to the educators on your campus, let's watch this video. (3.12 min)

<https://youtu.be/b8BqMLkeUaQ>

## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

At your table group, discuss your thoughts about Guskey's Teacher Change Model. How can this new knowledge help you help other educators on your campus?



### Guskey's (2014) Professional Development Evaluation Model

Before we discuss your responsibility to develop and provide PD to the educators on your campus, let's watch this video. (4.32 min)

<https://youtu.be/8iMXh6GJU3E>

In your # groups, discuss the parts of Guskey's (2014) model that resonated with you most. Then, discuss the benefits of using this model to plan your future PD sessions focused on reading intervention.



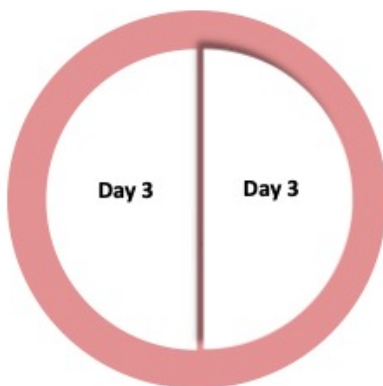
## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

### Time to Plan PD!

Get into grade-level groups to begin talking about planning a PD session for each grade level based on what you learned during today's intervention observations. Choose some major topics, responsibilities of each participant, and next meeting date/time/place.



## Intervention Transformation | Transformation



### Day 3: Session Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Classroom Observations
3. Supporting Students Needs
4. Planning
5. Close

## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

### Asynchronous Session Instructions:

Based on our discussions and your reflections::

- ✓ Review for accuracy the lesson plan you created yesterday. Use it as a model for teachers during your one-on-one sessions and during your whole group PD.
- ✓ Complete the design of grade-level PD based on Guskey's (2014) model for the PD.
- ✓ Keep Guskey's (2002) teacher change model in mind as you plan.

## Intervention Transformation | Transformation

### Exit Ticket (via Google Form):

Before exiting, create an illustration to demonstrate your understanding of Guskey's (2002) teacher change model. Leave your illustration at the table group.



### Summative Survey (via Google Form):

Please take 5-10 minutes to share your feedback, learnings and next steps from our time together.

The link to the survey be sent electronically, by email, during your asynchronous session.



### References:

- Budge, K. M. & Parrett, W. H. (2018). Disrupting poverty. ASCD.
- Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers & Teaching*, 8(3/4), 381–391.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/135406002100000512>
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<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/planning-professional-learning>
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- Woda, A., Hansen, J., Thomas Dreifuerst, K., Johnson, B. K., Loomis, A., Nolan, C., & Bradley, C. S. (2022). Debriefing for meaningful learning: Implementing a train-the-trainer program for debriefers. *Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 53(7), 321–327.  
<https://doi.org/10.3928/00220124-20220603-08>

