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Teachers' Perspectives on Reading Interventions Implemented to Low Achieving Second Graders

Kendra Yvette Coles-Hart
Walden University

Walden University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Kendra Yvette Hart

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Dr. Lynn Varner, Committee Member, Education Faculty
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Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
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Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

In a Mid-Atlantic school district, the administration of standardized assessments begins in third grade. Over the past 3 years, these assessments revealed that an average of 37% of third graders in the local district did not possess necessary reading skills, although over 86% of this group received intervention support in second and third grade. It is unclear how effective the implementations of various interventions are in instruction with struggling second graders to prepare them for the rigors of third grade. The purpose of this descriptive case study was to explore the perspectives of 9 second grade teachers on research-based interventions implemented to increase the reading skills of struggling second grade readers in 2 elementary schools. The bottom-up theory, which holds that reading is an automatic information process that allows readers to read fluently and comprehend without individual focus on any one reading element, guided this study. Research questions sought to identify research-based reading interventions and strategies participants implemented. Data collection occurred via semi-structured interviews, document review, and observational data obtained during second grade team meetings. Data were analyzed through descriptive and categorical coding to identify themes related to participants' perspectives on instructional practice. Results of the data analysis showed that the 9 teachers did not implement interventions according to the research-based guidelines. This finding led to a system-wide professional development focused on increasing teachers' capacities to implement interventions effectively. This study has the potential to promote positive social change by enhancing teachers' instructional delivery and increasing students' reading abilities.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Reading is a skill used across all academic disciplines. Students come to school with varying academic experiences, readiness skills, and levels of performance in reading. No matter the students' abilities, teachers are charged with teaching all students to read. This includes being able to identify deficits and implement instructional practices that will meet the needs of the learner. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to have the ability to provide appropriate reading instruction that will enhance the skills of struggling readers.

Reading skills taught in the primary grades have an impact on continued learning (Morgan, Fuchs, Compton, Cordray, & Fuchs, 2008). Therefore, it is important that all students acquire this crucial skill early in order to successfully progress through their academic career. Researchers have claimed that successful instructional practices that teachers implement to support struggling readers require consistent use of a multicomponent intervention (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2012), educators in all school districts have students who struggle with reading. Teachers must be knowledgeable and possess a repertoire of effective reading strategies to implement appropriate interventions to enhance the limited skills of struggling readers. If teachers lack the capacity to implement interventions properly to advance the skills of struggling readers, deficits in reading struggles will continue throughout a students' academic career. Limitations in reading contribute to poor

academic performance, individual course failure, and dropout (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

At the close of the 2013–2014 school year, two elementary schools in the Kedville School District (a pseudonym), located in a metropolitan area in the Mid-Atlantic United States, had 43% of third graders with low reading performance as measured by Maryland State Assessment (MSA) results. Over 82% of the third graders who were not successful on the state assessments were receiving intervention support because they were experiencing reading difficulty in the classroom according to teacher records and local assessments. Further research of the students' cumulative academic records revealed that they also received reading intervention support in second grade. Currently, second graders in this state do not participate in standardized state assessment; however, the students received intervention support based on outcomes originating from local assessments that align to state standards. The data showed there was a deficit before students reach the third grade in Kedville School District. The data also indicated students who struggled in reading received intervention support but continued to lack the necessary skills for success in reading. This raises a question about teachers' capacities when implementing interventions to increase the skills in struggling readers.

Once it has been determined that a student is below grade level in reading, teachers implement intervention practices to improve their skills. However, local data show, students received support but their abilities did not improve. There is a need to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions on interventions implemented to determine their capacities and if they are clear on what supports to provide.

As the current second graders transition to third grade, they will also transition to a grade academically measured by mandatory state standardized assessments. During the next two years, students will shift from participating in the MSA assessment to the Partnership for Assessments of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012). The PARCC assessment measures students' college and career readiness based on the new Common Core State Standards (PARCC, 2013). The purpose of the standards is to provide rigorous expectations and a well-defined and consistent framework to prepare all students for college and careers (PARCC, 2013). As the nation's education systems transition to full implementation of the Common Core State Standards, reading expectations are becoming more rigorous (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012; PARCC, 2013). Students in Kedville School District whose scores indicated reading challenges under MSA have the potential for a larger achievement gap if their reading weaknesses continue. Struggling readers need to gain the necessary prerequisite skills through appropriate academic support to enhance their reading. It is not clear what support teachers provide for struggling readers or if they are prepared to provide the appropriate academic support. There is no evidence or information on how well versed teachers in Kedville School District are in implementing interventions designed to support struggling readers. This lack of knowledge about teacher preparedness to support struggling readers limits the effectiveness of the professional development support provided to increase capacity in intervention support.

Through this qualitative case study, I built an understanding of teachers' perspective on the implementation of reading interventions. If teachers do not have the capacity to address the academic needs of struggling second graders in Kedville School District, there will be a continuation of reading deficits. This descriptive study collected an inventory of what specific groups of teachers say they do to address this problem. The outcome of this study has the potential to influence and support future instructional practices and professional development for teachers who work directly with struggling readers. The findings of this study will also allow educators to reflect on and increase their repertoire of intervention practices in order to improve student achievement beginning in the early years of a student's educational experience.

There will be many subsections throughout this section to explain and establish the foundation of this case study. This section will identify the significance of this study by pinpointing and discussing reading challenges encountered by second graders in two schools in Kedville School District. These challenges reinforce the need to address the problem of understanding teachers' capacity when implementing reading interventions. Lack of knowledge about teacher's abilities with intervention implementation has the potential to neglect the provision of adequate professional development for teachers that increases their capacity to address reading challenges appropriately in the early years of a student's education. The guiding questions included in this section formulated the heart of the study and reminded me of the information that needed to be collected and why (Yin, 2009). A review of the literature will elaborate on the efficacy of various research-based interventions while relating the broader and local problem. If teachers do not have

an understanding of appropriate intervention support and the capacity to implement

interventions successfully, students with reading deficits will continue to have low

reading performance. The implications will build an understanding of teachers'

perspectives of intervention implementations and determine the next steps for relevant

professional development to assist with future intervention practices. I will conclude

Section 1 with a summary of important ideas along with a transition to Section 2.

Definition of the Problem

Teachers encounter students with various academic experiences and abilities, and.

they are responsible for providing an appropriate education that meets the needs of their

students. Administrators in Kedville School District have not surveyed teachers to

understand their capacity to implement intervention practices. Instead, intervention

programs are purchased and disseminated to teachers without acquiring evidence to

understand and support their abilities or knowledge to facilitate student learning using the

tools available. School leaders in the district need to understand teachers' capacities to

implement the right interventions at the right time and in the right way. Multiple

engagements with intervention support and deficits in student data are evidence that there

is a need to gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives on intervention

implementation. There is a need to explore what teachers know about interventions used

in Kedville School District schools and what their capacity is when implementing

interventions.

There has been a consistent demand for commercially developed reading

interventions (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald, 2011). Educators receive research-

based reading intervention programs and materials to use in their classrooms to support struggling readers (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald, 2011). Teachers then implement these reading interventions to support struggling readers; however, there have been many public reports validating the assertion that a growing number of students continue to have reading difficulty in public school systems across the nation (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2007; National Council of Teachers of English, 2009; National Institute for Literacy, 2013).

In the local state, students begin participating in mandated standardized assessments in third grade (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012). The assessments measure student knowledge and the effectiveness of instruction provided by the local education agency (LEA). Local results over the last five years consistently confirm up to one third of third grade students in Kedville School District are not performing at grade level expectations (Maryland State Department of Education Report Card, 2013). This provides evidence that teachers' instructional practices in Kedville School District need to studied.

State assessments measure student knowledge of grade level standards and expectations (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012; 2013; PARCC, 2013). The local school district struggles to meet the needs of struggling readers who are not achieving academic success. Lack of success due to academic deficits amplifies the need for teachers to implement interventions to increase students' reading abilities (Vernon-Feagans, Kainz, Amendum, Ginsing, Wood, & Block, 2012). However, teachers' experience, training, knowledge, and repertoire of intervention strategies may interfere

with the quality and perception of intervention implementation (Moore, Westwater-Wood, & Kerry, 2015; Musanti, & Pence, 2010). Differences among teachers' skills has the potential to affect their ability to implement interventions to support struggling learners (Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009; Reynolds, Wheldall, & Madeline, 2011).

Student performance data aided me in creating the purpose for this study's investigation to build an understanding of teachers' perspectives on intervention implementations to help students acquire and sustain adequate reading skills and progress before reaching third grade. The purpose of this study was to discover what reading interventions teachers say they implement and gain an understanding of their perspective of the interventions they implement. It is imperative that leaders in Kedville School District gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives to assist with providing the appropriate professional development that will increase teachers' capacity in selecting and implementing research-based strategies earlier than third grade. If teachers investigate and address students' reading weaknesses before third grade, they may be able to provide proper support for students to acquire the necessary skills needed for reading resulting in success on standardized state assessments and throughout their academic career.

In a review of the local data, over 82% of the third graders who were not successful on the state assessments received support in various ways including whole group instruction and/or small groups using research-based interventions. Further investigation into these students' academic history revealed these third graders had experienced prior reading difficulty in second grade based on local assessments and

documentation of engagement in intervention support. The consistency and alignment of these data to the state outcomes suggest the reading deficit began before third grade and continued despite the students receiving intervention support. The local school district needs to explore teachers' capacities and address why interventions implemented are not enhancing students' reading abilities. This study provided an opportunity for me to discover interventions that second grade teachers' implement and gain an understanding of their perspectives of interventions they implement with struggling readers before the students reach the rigors of third grade and standardized assessments. The results of this study have the potential to guide future professional development to build teachers' capacities.

According to Foorman and Torgesen (2001), overall academic success is contingent upon success in reading. Their research found children who did not obtain the appropriate skills to become successful readers by middle school have the potential to underachieve for the remainder of their academic career and throughout life. Historical data confirmed that the reading abilities of struggling second graders in Kedville School District are not increasing with current exposure to reading interventions. This establishes the need for Kedville School District to explore teacher abilities and instructional practices implemented.

Currently, teachers in Kedville School District are using a number of research-based reading interventions to support struggling second grade readers. According to Reutzel and Cooter (2012), teachers make the difference in the success of the students. They found that teaching experiences, educational background, and engagement in

varying professional development builds teachers' understandings and knowledge about interventions and perceptions of implementation. Teachers with more than five years of teaching experience have in that time come across different students with varying academic struggles and have gained strategies to draw from and implement based on these experiences and student needs (Hall, 2009; Reutzel and Cooter, 2012). In addition, they have received more professional development opportunities. However, experienced teachers may challenge new learning because of their comfort and familiarity with past practices even if desired results are not achieved (Hall, 2009; Latham, 2013). In contrast, novice teachers have not had an opportunity to encounter different student challenges or build a repertoire of strategies to implement during instruction. However, new teachers are more willing to try non-conventional teaching approaches (Latham, 2013).

In addition, teachers attend different institutions of higher education that provide methods courses, hold differing views, and provide a gamut of training on instructional practices. This alters a teachers' range of preparedness to provide instruction (Reutzel & Cooter, 2012). The tentative insights gained from this study will inform Kedville School District leaders of teachers' capacities, perspectives, interpretations, and evaluations of the various research-based interventions currently used to increase the reading achievement of struggling readers. This study has the potential to promote positive social change through improving and informing professional development provided to teachers who implement interventions to struggling readers. The project that emerged from this project is an ongoing professional development for teachers. The professional development topics aligned to the teachers' needs discovered during this study. In this

professional development, teacher deficits will be addressed to increase their capacities and knowledge when implementing intervention practices that may increase reading abilities among struggling readers, thereby increasing students' academic achievement.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

In the Kedville School District, teachers have been providing intervention support to struggling readers: however, uneven results have been achieved by this tactic. There is no evidence that administrators in Kedville School District have a clear understanding of what support teachers provide to struggling readers. They also do not know teachers' capacities to implement interventions appropriately. To date, nothing has been done to investigate this problem. Yet, students identified as below grade level, based on local assessments and received intervention support during the instructional day to enhance their skills, did not possess the minimum academic skills needed to demonstrate success in reading (Maryland State Department of Education Report Card, 2013). Deeper investigation revealed 76% of the low performing students in the district received intervention support for two or more years prior to third grade. This lack of academic progress after receiving intervention support is concerning and needs to be addressed appropriately in order to solve the problem. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of what interventions teachers implement and their perspectives about these interventions. School leaders will use findings from the study to facilitate appropriate professional development to support local teachers with training on how to best work with struggling readers.

Reading deficiency is an educational challenge schools throughout the United States are facing (Denton, 2012; Perrachione, Petersen, & Rosser, 2008). Specific factors causing reading deficiency across the nation have not been determined or understood; however, it will have a large impact (Denton, 2012). The U.S. Department of Education (2012) released information on the impact of illiterate individuals on themselves and society as a whole over the course of a lifetime. First, the discrepancy of salary for those having a college degree versus those who do not can have an effect on independence, resulting in a high need for and drain upon public assistance programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Secondly, students with continued academic struggles have a higher dropout rate than their peers (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Often, these students encounter the correctional system and other social institutions, which affect public programs and facilitates the need for the financial burdens of jails, courts, and police presence (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Students who experience reading difficulty will be challenged throughout their educational career and when faced with making college and career decisions. Weak grades and academic abilities will impede admission to, participation in, and completion of higher education programs, which could result in limitations in employment and the ability to compete in the job market. Trends in data show an increase each year in the number of students not making adequate yearly progress (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Teachers will need to have the capacity to implement interventions appropriately to increase the reading skills of struggling readers.

Teachers in the Kedville School District implement interventions to struggling readers to enhance skills; however, during 2012–2013 school year, 26 % of the third grade students did not achieve successful results on the MSA, while 19% received a score of Basic during the 2011–2012 school year. According to the report, a score of Basic signifies students have limited mastery of the knowledge and skills that are essential for proficient work at their grade level. If this trend in scores continues, the number of third graders not performing at grade level expectations will continue to increase each year. In addition, the current local data indicated there is an academic deficit in reading prior to third grade which results in a lack of success on mandatory standardized test. Administrators in Kedville School District need to understand teachers' capacities and the professional development needed to support teachers appropriately in order to combat these negative trends in academic achievement.

To date, Maryland Public School students have been experiencing a lack of adequate performance in reading based on the current MSA that was initiated because of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012). As education transitions from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to the Common Core State Standards, teachers are challenged with providing increased rigor in instructional practices and expectations to meet curriculum standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative Standards in Your State, 2012). This challenge involves delivering an appropriate education to meet the needs of all learners with a special emphasis on students struggling with learning and attainment of grade level content and skills.

There are approximately 33.2 million elementary students enrolled in public schools across the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The 2012 Digest of Education Statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 2012) conducted studies on the national and state levels concerning the long-term trend of American schools. Their national data showed 61% of elementary public school students throughout the United States attained a reading achievement level of proficient or higher. In turn, 39%, approximately 13 million students, fell below the required standards by receiving a Basic score (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The report also indicated some states' rates fell below the standards for reporting, and therefore, did not receive a rating. When compared to other countries, the United States was lower than the average score in reading literacy (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). National reports from the U.S. Department of Education have indicated school districts will not achieve 100% proficiency unless proficiency levels in reading escalate at a faster rate than is currently happening. Educators will need to implement instructional practices and interventions that will increase reading skills at a higher rate than is currently being achieved.

Common Core State Standards are rigorous literacy standards students must achieve in order to meet the demands of career and college expectations (Common Core State Standards Initiative Standards in Your State, 2012; U.S. State Department of Education, 2015). As the rigor of standards increase, the achievement gap for struggling readers has the potential to increase. In their research, Foorman & Torgesen (2001) determined children who do not obtain reading success in early grades strain local education and public agencies with large costs, including special education, intervention

resources, remediation, grade repetition, and/or delinquency. Due to low reading

performance, many public school district leaders are "turning to commercially developed

literacy reading interventions" (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald 2011, p. 184). This

holds true for Kedville School District. However, according to local reading assessment

results, nearly 87% of second grade students receiving intervention support continue to

struggle and have not attained adequate grade level achievement. These local results

drove me to take on this study in order to determine what teachers do instructionally with

struggling readers and how they perceive what they do.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

As with the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) used to address the academic

needs of students identified to receive special education support, teacher implemented

interventions are used to enhance the skills of struggling learners not receiving support

services via the special education process. The interventions allow teachers to provide

scaffolded grade level instruction to struggling learners, using a systematic approach that

includes specific strategies that support the intended learning and skills (Weiser &

Mathes, 2011). This support levels the playing field for struggling learners when

receiving instruction with their non-academically challenged peers.

According to the 1998 Maryland Reading First Task Force, in the past the

Maryland State Department of Education curriculum specialists have given minimal

guidance to LEA curriculum leaders when it comes to adopting and implementing

interventions and Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) programs. LEAs are

granted flexibility to implement programs and select materials aligned to the state content

standards (Maryland State Department of Education, 1998). Data from state and local assessments indicated some elementary students are making marginal achievement in reading with the programs and materials selected; however, their achievement is not meeting grade level standards or expectations. Due to marginal achievement, the U.S. Department of Education (2012) initiated and enforced reforms found in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program and the Reading Excellence Act (REA) continues to allow program and material flexibility in LEAs, but require the LEA leaders to adopt and teachers to implement research-based programs having a record of documented success. This has resulted in school district curriculum leaders "turning to commercially developed literacy reading interventions" (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald 2011, p. 184).

Students in upper elementary grades who struggle in reading frequently have deficits in decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge (Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, & Schatschneider, 2012). These deficits continuously obstruct instruction designed to improve reading comprehension (Edmonds, Vaughn, Wexler, Reutebuch, Cable, Klingler-Tackett, & Wick-Schnakenberg, 2009; Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, & Schatschneider, 2012). When traditional instructional practices do not increase deficits in reading, teachers implement research-based interventions to build student skills (Begeny, 2011; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). Research-based interventions focus on specific skills students need in order to become proficient in reading. They include specific guidelines for a systematic instructional delivery in order

for students to acquire academic achievement. The interventions are supported by historical theories.

There are two historical theories supporting the need for acquisition of specific skills to enhance reading progress using different approaches: the bottom-up theory and top-down theory (Reutzel & Cooter, 2010). According to the bottom-up theory, reading is a progression from learning phonemic awareness to comprehension as individual skills, then putting all the components together to understand the meaning of the text (Reutzel & Cooter). This approach is a gradual progression from part to whole (letter to words). The top-down theory is a whole word reading approach where students learn to read via immersion in text and print rich environments (Reutzel & Cooter). The emphasis is recognition of words by sight without breaking down letters or sounds (LaBerge, & Samuels, 1974; Reutzel & Cooter). National data show there is a large population of upper elementary students who did not acquire basic reading skills supported by these theories (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). These theories support the need for teachers to implement reading interventions that will address students' reading deficiencies and build their understanding of the elements of reading. Teachers are responsible for addressing student deficits by implementing appropriate interventions that will increase skills; however, they must have the capacity to provide the right intervention the right way.

In order to reduce academic achievement gaps among students of varying levels, administrators strategically select and implement programs that will effect progressive student growth. Vaughn, Wanzek Murray, Scammacca, Linan-Thompson, and Woodruff

(2009) found students who consistently received an intense intervention focused on building vocabulary, gained significantly in word reading and comprehension. According to their research, it is essential for reading intervention programs to be multicomponent in order to be effective. Teachers must receive proper training to carry out intervention implementation appropriately.

Multicomponent interventions delivered consistently by trained professionals influence academic growth (Fountas & Pinnell 2009). The research on reading strategies, supplemental reading programs, and research- based reading interventions supports the consensus that multicomponent interventions implemented with fidelity increase comprehension, phonemic awareness, word identification, vocabulary, and fluency. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of what interventions teachers' implement and teachers' perspectives on those interventions. The results of this study have the potential to assist school leaders with planning the right professional development to build teachers' capacities.

Definitions

Many educational terms used throughout this study need clarification to gain a clear understanding of their relevance to the problem:

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): A set of rigorous standards designed to provide a consistent and clear understanding of what knowledge and skills students need to learn to be successful in college and careers (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012).

Conceptual understanding: The combined and practical retention and understanding of skills, knowledge, and methods related to a specific content (Rupley, Nichols, Mraz, & Blair, 2012).

Intervention support: Programs provided to students struggling in a targeted academic subject(s) or skill(s). The support supplements an existing curriculum to increase students' academic ability in a specific content area. The programs are implemented within or outside of the traditional classroom environment, or as a combination (Vernon-Feagans, Kainz, Amendum, Ginsing, Wood, & Block, 2012).

Maryland School Assessments (MSA): The MSA is the assessment tool initiated in Maryland to support the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required local school districts to provide curriculum and instruction that will support the success of all students enrolled in a Maryland public school to achieve a score of proficient or advanced by the conclusion of the 2013–2014 school year. Successful achievement on the MSA determines students have the understanding and skills to be academically successful when engaged with grade level content (Maryland State Department of Education, 2012).

Multicomponent reading intervention: A research based supplemental program that includes multiple components to enhance reading skills for struggling learners. The common components of reading found in current research are phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (MacDonald & Figueredo, 2010).

Reading deficiency: A term used to describe a student's deficit of essential knowledge, skills, and processes to grasp reading. The deficiency often manifests in a

specific component of reading, causing the student to struggle with the content (Weir, 2011)

Research-based programs: Programs developed, implemented, and investigated over a course of time. Research- based programs demonstrate evidence of success, based on an investigative study over the course of time (Maryland State Task Force on Reading, 1998). The program has a recorded historical pattern of evidence in promoting positive academic achievement in a targeted skill within a content area. The research includes a designated population with specific and measurable academic needs.

Student learning objectives (SLOs): SLOs are a new component of the teacher evaluation tool developed in response to the new teacher framework in Maryland. The purpose of SLOs is to measure student growth, using a multicomponent framework targeting specific learning goals for a given population (Martin, 2007). Essential sections of the locally developed SLO document (Appendix B) include describing an objective summary statement aligned to state standards, evidence that supports the phenomenon of below reading, targeted instruction and strategies used that aligns to the reading supervisors directives on research based reading interventions.

Systematic approach: This is a strategically arranged planned sequence of instruction. The instruction includes well-planned lessons with appropriately aligned activities that build upon previous instruction. The design is usually simple to complex (Wanzek, Jeanne, & Cavanaugh, 2012).

Significance

Literacy is the capability of reading for information, writing clearly, and thinking critically about written words (National Council of Teachers of English, 2009). How educators support the reading progress of learners at a young age has lasting effects into adulthood (Begeny 2011; Begeny, Yeager, & Martinez, 2012). Instructional practices that foster high-level literacy abilities result in increased cognitive capacity, motivation to read, and academic retention and improved employment prospects and positive social inclusion over a person's lifetime (Reynolds, Wheldall, & Madeline, 2011).

Practices that result in low levels of literacy also have cumulative results over a lifetime. The growing number of illiterate adults continues to be a significant concern. Evidence from Begeny et al. (2012) suggested that young learners who struggle with low reading performance beyond elementary school have a greater possibility to continue to struggle in adulthood. Having limited or nonexistent acquisition of fundamental reading skills provides the opportunity for a continuous academic decline, as reading transitions from learning to read in the primary grades to reading to learn in the secondary stages of learning (Kragler, & Martin, 2012; Lo, Wang, Haskell, 2009; MacDonald, & Figueredo, 2010). Begeny et al. found academic success in reading can be obtained if the individual is exposed to "direct, intense, data-guided and evidence based instruction" consistently delivered in small groups (p. 59). I conducted this study to gain an understanding of teachers' perspective of intervention implementation used on struggling second grade readers in two schools in Kedville School District. The outcome of this qualitative case

study has the ability to have profound implications for building teachers' capacity in implementing interventions successfully with struggling readers.

Guiding/Research Questions

Educators in Kedville School District continue to grapple with enhancing reading achievement in struggling readers. However, curriculum leaders have not conducted a specific analysis of second grade students' data to gain an understanding of the reading interventions implemented. In addition, curriculum leaders have not surveyed teachers to gain an understanding of their perceptions of interventions implemented and how they influence reading performance of struggling learners.

Therefore, this qualitative case study was guided by the following two research questions:

1. What research-based reading interventions do teachers implement?
2. What are teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies?

Review of the Literature

According to information obtained from the National Institute for Literacy, (2013), many students struggle with reading in school resulting in long-term effects in later school performance. A report generated by the National Assessment of Education Progress (2007) supported the national concern of and need for enhancing the reading skills of struggling readers. There is an abundance of research on reading achievement, and the lack thereof, prompting this concern. In this literature review, I identified the

conceptual framework for assisting struggling readers. I also discussed research on

interventions used to enhance reading skills of students lacking adequate reading

competences.

I conducted a review of the literature to gain an understanding of research-based

practices included in multicomponent interventions implemented to assist low performing

second grade readers. I acquired information via a variety of research tactics to conduct

an extensive search of intervention studies. The research included electronic searches of

the ERIC database and the holdings of Walden University Library, Maryland Public

Libraries, The National Reading Council, and the National Institute for Literacy. In

addition, I conducted hand searches of major journals of the field (*Exceptional Children,*

School Psychology Review, Journal of Learning Disabilities, Journal of Special

Education, The Reading Teacher, and *Learning Disabilities Quarterly*). These methods

were used to locate current peer-reviewed journals that supported the initial inquiry of

this study and provide an exhaustive synthesis of research relevant to reading

interventions for struggling learners. Keyword searches for the terms: *reading*

interventions, struggling readers, multicomponent interventions, response to

interventions (RTI), low reading achievement, reading difficulties, and *effective reading*

strategies were used to exhaust the retrieval of studies and articles. This research

developed the foundation for the literature review in this study.

Conceptual Framework

Nationally and locally, students are struggling with reading (National Assessment

of Educational Progress, 2007). They are in need of support to improve their academic

deficit. To address this continuous dilemma, interventions are being implemented throughout school systems; however, improved results are limited (Espin, Wallace, Lembke, Campbell, & Long, 2010).

I conducted this case study to gain an understanding of a specific group of teachers' perspective of the reading interventions they used to support struggling second grade readers. Effective interventions are supplemental supports provided to assist identified struggling learners with gaining essential skills needed to be successful in school (Gibson, 2010). Two historical theories remain in practice in schools, and they are the bottom-up theory and the top-down theory.

The bottom-up theory, also called the traditional theory, is the conceptual framework surrounding this study. The foundation of this theory is that reading is a linear progression that begins with phonemic awareness and ends with comprehension (Gough, 1972; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Once essential elements of reading are understood and students' progress from accuracy to automatic, they begin to grasp comprehension (Gough, 1972). According to Reutzel and Cooter (2010), two bottom-up theories remain popular in education: the one second of reading theory by Gough (1972) and a theory of automatic information processing by LaBerge and Samuels (1974). The one second of reading theory by Gough is a sequential process that translates letters into sound (phonemic awareness). Then, the sounds are put together to form words (word identification), and once the words are put into phrases, understanding (comprehension) of an author's written message is obtained (Reutzel and Cooter, 2010). In LaBerge and Samuels's, theory of automatic information processing, automaticity is the process. This

theory relates the human mind to functions of a computer (Reutzel & Cooter, 2010). In LaBerge and Samuels's process, letters and words are sequentially understood, thus the reader is not distracted with sounding words out and thinking about the meaning simultaneously. The bottom-up theory supports the need for effective interventions to be multicomponent with an emphasis on scope and sequence for students who struggle in reading to achieve academic progress (Reutzel and Cooter, 2010).

In contrast, the top-down theory influenced the whole language approach to reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2010). The theory was based on the 1880s research of the cerebral portion of the brain conducted by German researcher, Dr. Cattell. Cattell's study found that adults could recognize words as quickly as they recognize letters therefore emphasizing an approach to reading called whole-word method (Reutzel & Cooter). This method evolved into the creation of a high frequency word list based on words used most often in print. In this approach, young learners are taught to memorize these words through guided practice in early reading books. After learners recognized sight words from memory, they are taught how letters make sounds within words.

The bottom-up and top-down theories both have extreme teaching methodologies. The conceptual framework surrounding this study is the bottom- up theory. The investigations of Reynolds, Wheldall, and Madeline (2010), and Reynolds and Madeline (2011) support this theory. Their research suggests reading interventions need to be multicomponent with an emphasis on two key components: decoding and comprehension. The evidence-based bottom-up theory supports the idea that inadequate word identification is the foundation for reading difficulty, which has a direct and

negative impact on comprehension (Reutzel & Cooter, 2010). However, interventions containing quality instruction on word recognition in the primary years of schooling have the potential to impact word recall and comprehension (Weiser & Mathes, 2011). Research by Weiser and Mathes (2011) found teachers must focus on decoding and encoding skills to enhance reading and spelling ability and give students a deep understanding of how words work within content.

Literature and public data clearly validate that there is a deficit in reading existing in school districts across the nation. According to Hall (2009), "struggling readers make up the majority of our nation's public school classrooms" (p. 286). In fourth grade alone, nearly one third do not have the fundamental skills to read at a minimal level (Rapp, Broek, McMaster, Kendeou, & Espin, 2007). Beyond educational institutions, reading difficulty has grown into a public concern as it often continues into adulthood with nearly 23% of the adult population in the United States having a reading ability of less than adequate levels according to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Therefore, teachers need to focus on skills, strategic instructional practices, and opportunities to read, discuss, and interact with various texts while applying the skills taught frequently in various subjects beginning in primary grades (Hall, 2009). These interactions need to be strategic and be comprised of multiple components, including decoding, word calling, and building understanding of comprehension through reading for information (Marinak, 2013).

Concern over acquiring the necessary skills to resolve issues associated with struggling readers remains a public issue. To manage this public concern, commercially-

developed reading interventions are purchased and implemented throughout schools

across the nation (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald, 2011), yet reports show students

are still not making adequate progress in reading (National Institute for Literacy, 2013;

U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Additionally, the same students continuously

receive intervention support but do not acquire the necessary skills to become successful

readers (Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009). A review of research found in peer-reviewed

journals reveals intervention delivery, time allocated for the interventions, materials used,

and educator commitment were factors having an impact in the success or lack of student

achievement and growth (Kragler & Martin, 2012; Wanzek & Cavanaugh, 2012). This

leaves one to question, whether it is the intervention or the intervention implementation

that is impeding the progress of the struggling student.

Due to the magnitude, impact, and significance of struggling readers nationally

and locally, I developed themes to discuss the literature found on interventions used to

support struggling readers across the nation. The themes are characteristics of effective

interventions, multicomponent scaffolding, application, and consistency and longevity.

According to the research and the bottom-up theory, these components must be addressed

in order to have an effective intervention that supports reading growth and success for

students. The overarching themes are discussed in the following subsection.

Characteristics of Effective Interventions

Researchers have conducted studies to elicit information concerning the intensity

and characteristics of effective reading interventions offered through general education to

students with reading difficulties (Kragler, & Martin, 2012; Lai, McNaughton,

Timperley, & Hsiao, 2009). Educators in school districts have attempted to meet state

mandates for early literacy but feel the mandates did not align with balanced reading

instruction (Kragler & Martin, 2012). This has resulted in the need to modify reading

instructional practices within schools.

There is not one definitive pedagogy that can be used to teach early reading,

instead there are characteristics of effective instruction that have emerged from meta-

analysis over the years (Denton, 2012; Kemple, Corrin, Nelson, Salinger, Hermann, &

Drummond, 2008; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007). These characteristics include instruction

that is purposeful and targeted towards important objectives, stresses mastery of key

skills and strategies, carefully monitored to maximize re-teaching opportunities,

encourages student responses to connected texts, and promotes active student

improvement. Denton's (2012) research revealed three important factors. First,

intervention instruction should be based on the individual needs to ensure students

receive instruction targeted to their learning styles. This will ensure that lack of progress

is not dependent upon poorly designed instruction instead of genuine need. Second, it is

imperative reading support begins in the early years, as early as kindergarten. This early

window of opportunity reflects the time when students are most receptive to needs-based

instruction and sustain the most long-term progress in reading (MacDonald, & Figueredo,

2010). Third, the instructional group size should be small to maximize student-teacher

interaction.

Motivation is also critical in reading performance by students (Marinak, 2013).

Both high and low ability readers become less motivated to read during school and

outside of school if not given opportunities to self-select text. This downward trend increases in severity from Grade 1 to Grade 5. This trend suggested the hypothesis that a reading intervention targeting student motivation might help curb this tendency in elementary readers (Marinak). Reading attitudes measured using the standardized ANOVA assessment of 76 fifth graders in two suburban elementary schools identified student choice, collaboration, challenge, and authenticity as characteristics that keep students motivated in reading (Marinak). This outcome confirmed student choice and collaboration on content provided ownership and meaning to the learning along with higher reading motivation and enjoyment of reading.

After obtaining information from the National Reading Panel that more than 20% of the nation's children will have some academic difficulties by Grade 3, Reynolds, Wheldall, and Madeline (2011) conducted a survey of current research in early literacy acquisition in an attempt to find common characteristics of programs that effectively help students who struggle with reading improvement. They first conceded reading instruction is most effective when students have an understanding of the alphabetic system in the early stages of schooling. Next, they found students must have proficient skill in word recognition (decoding) and language (listening) comprehension to avoid delays in reading levels as text becomes more complex. Their study concluded struggling readers who miss components of reading development in early years have the potential for gaps that will need to be remediated by deliberate, systematic reading instruction and multicomponent research based reading intervention support.

Multicomponent Scaffolding.

Separating components of reading is impossible when acquiring the skill of reading in its entirety (MacDonald & Figueredo, 2010); therefore, struggling readers need engagement with research-based supplemental programs that includes multiple components to enhance their reading skills. Current research suggests the inclusion of multicomponent scaffolding of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension sustainability before, during, and after an intervention is necessary for continuous student growth (Fulford, 2009); Greany, & Arrow, 2010); Kemple et al, 2008; Lai, McNaughton, Timperley, & Hsiao, 2009).

Instruction for below grade level students requires a systemic multicomponent scaffolding of lessons (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). The lessons need to be systematic with consideration of components to build and enhance skills progressively (Simmons, D., Coyne, Hagan-Burke, Kwok, Simmons, L., Johnson, Zou, Taylor, McAlenney, Ruby, & Crevecoeur, 2011). Each component of reading instruction from phonemic awareness to vocabulary acquisition to comprehension strategies is essential for students to read and have the practical skills to engage appropriately with complex text (Edmonds et al., 2009; Honig, Diamond, Cole, & Gutlohn, 2008; Pyle & Vaughn, 2012; Vaughn, Wexler, Leroux, Roberts, Denton, Barth, & Fletcher 2011).

Reynolds and Madeline (2011) and Reynolds, Whaldall, and Madeline (2010) investigated reading programs and reading interventions to find important commonalities in effective interventions that help teach struggling readers in the early years. They

selected six programs that were commissioned by the federal government and/or

supported by research institutions within the past 10 years (Reynolds & Madeline (2011);

Reynolds, Whaldall, & Madeline (2010). Their studies included data from federal

organizations such as The National Reading Panel, The National Inquiry into the

Teaching of Literacy, and The Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading.

Findings from their investigation concluded that there is a great deal of emphasis placed

on how to read and less information on ways to teach to read in practice. Their research

also found the important commonalities in effective programs include phonemic

awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This finding was

supported by a study conducted by Case et al. (2010). These researchers studied the

impact of supplemental reading interventions on first graders who struggled in reading

and found lessons including phonics, letter sound relationships, sight word manipulation,

reading fluency, and comprehension had a significant impact on reading skills. Skills-

based reading instruction is successful when the focus is on the art of readers taking

responsibility for what is being read, making decisions about what words mean, and

being involved in opportunities to engage in deep critical interactions with text beyond

comprehension as an isolated skill to master (Fulford, 2009).

Schiller, Wei, Thayer, Blackorby, Javitz, and Williamson (2012) conducted a

randomized controlled trial study on struggling readers in Grades 6 through 10. The

intervention group received support from the Fusion Reading Intervention while the

control group participated in non-literacy routine classroom instruction. Their study of

the research based intervention (Fusion Reading Intervention) found it is more practical if

the program is multicomponent, explicitly taught, teaches procedures to use while reading, focuses on understanding text, and targets multiple areas of reading, including concentration on vocabulary and word study. The study findings determined reading significantly improves when teaching follows a specific instructional routine.

Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, and Ciullo (2010) synthesized the research over the past 30 years, focusing on studies with treatment/comparison designs and single group or individual studies. The researchers determined older upper elementary students with reading difficulties have positive outcomes when explicit reading instruction provides "word study strategies to decode words, strategies for deriving the meanings of unknown words, and comprehension strategy instruction" (p.890). Conversely, continuing with comprehension strategies was not successful for older students who have not developed proficient decoding and fluency skills (Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, & Ciullo, 2010). Their study found neglect of missed skills accounted for lack of progress for participants in the study; 49% of fourth grade students were unable to read at proficient levels, with 36% of them unable to read at a basic level. Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, and Ciullo (2010) found explicit instruction focused on comprehension strategies for before, during, and after reading improves student performance, while fluency and vocabulary interventions show mixed results, and finally, multi-component interventions focused on the comprehensive needs of struggling older elementary students show the most promise.

Application.

True literacy instruction is "debased if it is seen solely as a tool to be taken up, whose use is to be mastered (as measured by specific grade levels) and which is to be laid

aside once the task is finished" (Fulford, 2009. p. 42). Instead, a reading-centered approach is the ability to apply skills mastered in various academic and non-academic situations (Fulford, 2009). This will allow students to continuously use, build, and possess the essential skills needed to become successful in reading. Research often addresses the effectiveness of interventions for low performing readers but fails to address the concern of effective ongoing practices for these struggling students (Corrin, Somers, Kemple, Nelson, & Sepanik, 2008; National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2005; Vaughn et al., 2011; Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, & Ciullo, 2009).

Research has determined students struggle with reading acquisition and growth beginning as early as kindergarten and first grade (Vernon-Feagans et al., 2012). Areas of complexity include phonological awareness and rapid naming of words, or fluency. Vernon et al. (2012) acknowledged reading difficulties in students, but sought to uncover the impact of better teacher training and supervised practice. They wanted to know if a coaching model for teachers would cause identified students to exhibit more growth and possibly progress as much as students without identified reading difficulties. Six elementary schools were randomly selected for their study. Three of them constituted the experimental focus group and three of them the control focus group. Teachers of students in the experimental control group received targeted reading intervention training including three days of pre-service instruction and bi-weekly sessions from a reading coach. These teachers delivered instruction to identified students four times a week, one-on-one, for 15 minutes per session. The number of total sessions delivered varied based

upon students' skill levels and progress. Rapid naming (timed and charted word fluency)

and word work (manipulation, pronunciation, and writing of targeted words) were the

developed strategies for targeted instruction. The results showed children in the

experimental focus group achieved better gains than those in the control group, as they

also did in the areas of rapid naming and phonological awareness. Above all, the study

demonstrated the powerful impact of on-going teacher training with targeted reading

intervention initiatives.

Direct interaction with students by highly trained instructors can significantly

affect at-risk students (MacDonald & Lauren, 2010). Minimizing worksheets, skill and

drill approaches, and increasing opportunities for engagement in literacy components

beginning in early literacy development results in high performance based on research

conducted by MacDonald & Lauren (2010). They used the Kindergarten Early Literacy

Tutoring, or KELT program to support students during their research. This program

provided on-going training for tutors in the areas of oral language, phonemic awareness,

print awareness, and alphabet knowledge. Teachers attended monthly training sessions

throughout the year and used standardized classroom lesson plans. The lesson plans

included common components covered during instruction, with an emphasis on oral

language, phonemic awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge. Retelling as a

means for developing comprehension was also on the lesson plan. Seven assessments

were used to measure student progress including: Oral Language, Concepts of Print,

Phonemic Awareness, Letter-Sound Knowledge, Letter-Sound Correspondence, Word

Knowledge, and Reading Ability. The KELT groups outperformed the control group on

almost every assessment, leading to the researchers' conclusion that direct interaction with highly trained instructors positively affects academic struggles and achievement gaps for students.

It is important to understand the relationship between teacher expertise in phonological awareness, word recognition, and comprehension strategies, along with how that expertise affects student performance through practical knowledge gained in the context of classroom experience (Gibson, 2010). Gibson conducted interviews with Reading Recovery-trained teachers who targeted students achieved significant academic growth. Gibson wanted to identify the teachers' instructional reasoning. The interview question responses were measured through comparison with previously established criteria in the areas of phonological awareness, word recognition strategies, and comprehension strategies. Twenty teachers were interviewed who had between 2–13 years of teaching experience using the Reading Recovery model. The results revealed advanced ratings for 40% of the teachers studied in word recognition, and 45% for those studied for comprehension. The findings of the study revealed the foundation for effective reading instruction is rooted in application of systematic and consistent instructional procedures along with implementation of shared best practices.

Wanzek and Cavanaugh (2012) used the RTI tiered model for reading interventions to study and understand patterns of current reading intervention practice in the early elementary classroom. Feedback from 1,759 teachers revealed 58% of teachers surveyed had students in their classrooms who received supplemental reading services at least five times per week. Additionally, over 50 % of classes had students receiving daily

intervention sessions of 21–30 minutes in duration, and 47% received 10–20 minutes in duration. Further, 74% of respondents reported students receiving supplemental services in the classroom, with 50% reporting student services received outside the classroom. In addition, 42% of students received services from a paraprofessional or assistant (mostly at the kindergarten level), with the balance receiving services from trained specialists. Overall, approximately 20% of students in the classes surveyed received reading interventions. The research concluded the intensity of the intervention related to the success reported by teachers. Small groups (approximately 4 students), specific systematic component approach (phonemic awareness, vocabulary and comprehension practice), and duration (20-30 minute sessions), along with instructor expertise were the critical factors noted.

Consistency and Longevity.

Research has documented that unsuccessful interventions lack consistency, fidelity in implementation, and integrity in monitoring of progress (Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). To assure reliability of implementation and use, Casey, Robertson, Williamson, Serio and Elswick (2011) recommended that school leaders provide continuous professional development to teachers on procedures, progress monitoring and outcomes usage, frequency of implementation, component implementation, and the overall boundaries and expectations of how to use interventions within the school district. In order to assure appropriate alignment of interventions based on individual student's needs and academic outcome expectations, they further recommend the use of brief intervention probes. These probes will assist with creating

valid educational plans that will result in student success (Casey, Robertson, Williamson, Serio, & Elswick, 2011). Interventions that are appropriate, specific, and implemented by professionally trained teachers and monitored for fidelity and consistency by school leaders have a positive impact on student achievement in reading (Vaughn, Wanzek, Wexler, Barth, Cirino, Fletcher, & Francis, 2010).

Students enter school at different readiness levels (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2010). This requires schools to allocate resources appropriately in an organized framework as soon as official enrollment and standard based instruction begins (Fuchs et. al., 2010). Reading delivery with an emphasis on integration of vocabulary and reading comprehension throughout the school day, implemented for multiple years by properly trained educators capitalizes on the effectiveness of the instruction and skill attainment (Fuchs et al., 2010). A multiyear study conducted by Roberts, Vaughn, Fletcher, Stuebing, and Barth (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of interventions for 768 struggling students. Their study was conducted to measure the acceleration of learning and growth throughout the student's middle school experience with interventions as compared to peers who received traditional intervention frameworks that removed the student from the intervention once they gained acceptable measured progress. Results determined students receiving consistent intervention support during a multiyear cycle outperformed students receiving the traditional intervention framework.

Systematic consistency combined with teacher preparation and duration increases basic literacy skills, reading progress and academic growth rates in students with reading deficiencies (Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009). Research has proved effective

implementation of early interventions in reading along with consistent engagement in reading various texts builds young learners' conceptual understanding of reading comprehension and reading fluency (Begeny, 2011; Fountas & Pinnell 2009). Begeny (2011) discovered approximately 40% of the nation's fourth grade students are non-fluent readers. Begeny studied the impact of the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) reading intervention that is based upon eight evidence based fluency building strategies; repeated reading, teacher modeling, phrase drill, error correction, verbal cuing procedures, student goal setting, performance feedback, and a motivation/reward system for student performance. The fluency strategies are merged into a systematic program. Begeny sought to compare the effectiveness of HELPS intervention at different frequencies over the course of the school year. Implementation intervals took place three times per week as compared to once or twice per week. The study results confirmed struggling readers receiving the intervention three times per week in addition to their core reading program increased their reading scores in 5 out of 8 evidence based fluency-building strategies.

Over 35% of fourth grade students in the United States perform at below-basic levels in reading, making it necessary to provide supplemental reading interventions that are authentic, explicit, systematic, effective and appropriately aligned to the learners needs (Ritchey et. al., 2012; Simmons et al., 2011). Ritchey et al. (2012) evaluated the effectiveness of a 24-session, multi-component supplemental intervention targeting fluency and expository comprehension of science texts. The intervention took place over a two-year period. It consisted of 24 scripted lessons, implemented over 12–15 weeks,

three times a week for 40 minutes. The intervention targeted skill development in the areas of fluency, vocabulary development in context, and explicit comprehension strategies for expository text. The mixed results showed students engaged in the intervention performed significantly higher on science knowledge and comprehension strategy knowledge and use. Students gained substantial growth in attainment of skills and fluency when they were engaged in consistent and systematic reading interventions over multiple years that have an emphasis on specific student needs (Lo, Wang, & Haskell, 2009; Vaughn, Cirino, Wanzek, Wexler, Fletcher, Denton, Barth, Romain, & Francis, 2010).

Students having a history of interacting with reading interventions have the potential to become lethargic or resistant to instruction due to repeated failure to read fluently or comprehend (Begeny, 2011). Reading interventions focused on motivation and delivered with fidelity by trained instructors in small groups or one-on-one, show success with early elementary students (Begeny, 2011; Begeny, Yeager, & Martinez, 2012). Not addressing early reading deficits can result in deficits compounding themselves into adulthood (Begeny, Yeager, & Martinez, 2012; Campbell & Long, 2010; Catts, Marguis, Mark, & Stribling, 2009; Deshler, 2009).

Implications

This case study built an understanding of teachers' perspective on the implementation of multicomponent reading interventions used on struggling second grade readers in elementary schools in Kedville School District. It was important for this study to focus on second grade for two reasons. First, MSA (standardized) assessments

begin in third grade: therefore, it is imperative to implement appropriate interventions to prevent academic casualties during the assessment years. Secondly, there are no assessment limits in second grade, which increases the possibility of intervention implementation to slack in rigor and process.

The results of this case study may influence future professional development foci for teachers. In addition, these results have the potential to influence instructional and resource allocation and decisions made at the district and individual school levels. For example, because of this study, the district reading supervisor may be able to develop needs based professional development for teachers providing direct instruction and support to struggling learners. The reading supervisor will also have data to communicate evidence-based instructional practices aligned to teacher gaps and weaknesses when implementing interventions. In addition, this study can be a basis for selection of material and allocation of resources that will directly influence student educational experiences in elementary schools in Kedville School District. School-based administrators also may use the data to make instructional decisions about classroom instruction and pull out support for struggling readers. This includes implementation of appropriate research based interventions along with assigning appropriate qualified staff to implement support programs.

The results of this study have the potential to provide the data needed to support and develop future individualized school master plan objectives, SLOs and the allotment of appropriately aligned supports and materials that will match the needs of struggling learners in schools within Kedville School District. Lastly, the data collected may

support the development of individualized or small group learning plans aligned to
teacher SLOs that are required as a part of the new teacher evaluation tool. The data may
allow teachers to improve reading achievement for second graders with low reading
performance as rigor increases with the new Common Core State Standards.

The information gained from the data may be used continuously throughout the
school year to monitor student growth and as a communication tool during
progress/report card communication to students and their parent(s). At the conclusion of
this study, teachers began to develop a clearer picture of what might be effective
practices based on their experience during this research. They had an opportunity to
share their perspective of interventions implemented and how it does or does not relate to
student performance. This was an important process to help professionals understand and
interpret what they do, why they do what they do, and possible outcomes of what they do.

Summary

Reading deficiency is and has been a major concern across the nation. Schools
are turning to commercially developed reading intervention programs to address this
academic need. However, there are students in every school district continuing to have
inadequate reading skills. This holds true for students in Kedville School District.

For many years, researchers have examined the impact of various
multicomponent research based reading interventions on struggling readers (Foorman &
Torgesen, 2001; Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; MacDonald & Figueredo, 2010; Tannenbaum,
Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). Successful reading interventions share common
components that include phonemic awareness, vocabulary, decoding, fluency, and

comprehension (Fountas & Pinnell, 2009; MacDonald & Figueredo, 2010). Development of these skills supports the overall process of acquiring the skill to read (Tannenbaum, Torgesen, & Wagner, 2006). Kedville School District is implementing interventions; however, students continue to have a repeated pattern of reading deficits throughout their school experience.

The elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District enforces the use of research-based reading interventions. Many components of the interventions are proven by experimental and empirical research by Fountas & Pinnell (2009). Lesson design includes a daily systematic approach to phonemic awareness, phonics, oral reading practice to build fluency, reading new text to apply learned skills, explicit comprehension instruction, writing, and vocabulary development. Although these components are common in reading interventions, there have been limited investigations in Kedville School District to gather teachers' perspective on interventions implemented to second graders who struggle in reading. This qualitative case study provided the opportunity to explore teachers' perspectives on the quality of their implementation of interventions in instructional practice and identify relevant professional development needs. The core of this section formulates the inquiry, which examined teacher's perspectives on multicomponent reading interventions used to increase reading achievement for low performing students.

In this section, I created the framework to introduce this case study that was conducted to gain an understanding of teacher's perspectives on reading interventions used to support struggling second grade learners. I described how deficits in reading

challenge public schools at the district, state, and national level and continue to grow across the nation. The problem was justified by literature and data that provided specific evidence and documentation that the problem exists and is important at the local and broader levels. I shared the potential effects that can occur when students do not acquire adequate reading skills. I also introduced research questions that guided the study.

In Section 2, I will introduce and describe the qualitative case study design and approach. I will describe the participants including the criteria for selection, procedures for gaining access and establishing relationships, and methods used for their ethical protection. The instruments, materials, and methods used for data collection will be identified and explained. A thorough explanation of the study duration, data collection process, and analysis will be included. I will share my role as the researcher, coding procedures, strategies used to assure best evidence of quality, and how discrepancies will be addressed if needed. In addition, I will explain the findings and provide a summary and conclusion.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

In Section 1, I provided evidence that a deficit in reading is a national problem that also affects local student success in Kedville School District. A variety of research was presented that explained and supported both short- and long-term personal and academic effects weak reading skills can have on a struggling reader and the global society. The problem of deficits in reading leads school systems throughout the nation to use research-based reading interventions to address this global problem. The reading interventions that I discussed in Section 1 opened opportunities to address the importance of appropriate instructional implementation. This latter crucial component of implementation molded the focus for this study.

In Section 2, I will describe the methodology used in this qualitative case study. This section on methodology includes many subsections that explain the research design and approach, participants, data collection, and data analysis. This section will also include the criteria for selecting participants, how they were approached, and methods used to establish relationships and protect the participants. The data collection subsection will include procedures, duration, appropriateness, systems for collecting data, and my role as the researcher. In the data analysis subsection, I explain the data analysis, coding procedures, evidence of quality, and procedures for addressing discrepancies.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

Merriam (2002) stated qualitative research design seeks to "understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and experiences and how they make sense of their experience" (p. 5). In a qualitative research model, the researcher is the primary data collector and analyzer. The researcher actively gathers data to build concepts rather than test a hypothesis (Merriam, 2002).

This case study used a qualitative research design. This was not an evaluation of an intervention; instead, this study was descriptive and exploratory in nature. I explored a particular set of participants' perspectives on practices they implement with students. Two research questions guided this study: What research-based reading interventions do teachers implement? What are teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies? Data were collected in an attempt to answer these questions by way of interviews, document review, and observations. Participants reviewed student reading levels at the beginning and end of the study. This served as a point of reference for participants in articulating and interpreting their perspectives of their intervention implementation. The purpose of this case study was to build an understanding of teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading interventions with struggling readers. Simultaneously, participants gained an understanding of their interpretation of struggling readers' academic achievement, and their development as practitioners to improve instructional practice for struggling readers.

As presented by Merriam (2002), I was the "primary instrument for data collection and data analysis" (p.179). As a school leader and researcher, the information

obtained from this qualitative study expanded my understanding of teacher skills, needs, patterns, concepts, and intervention implementation. Lastly, I was able to analyze and summarize the results of this study by using words directly derived from participants' perspectives during their audio-recorded interviews, information included in SLOs, and notes taken in my reflective journal during team meetings.

According to Merriam (2009), some researchers are interested in finding the meaning of a phenomenon directly from those involved instead of determining cause and effect. The design for this case study focused on one particular phenomenon, the implementation of reading interventions to struggling readers. The participants were two teams of second grade teachers who provided intervention support to second graders who struggle in reading based on local assessments and grade level expectations driven by the Maryland State Department of Education. In this design, participants reflected on their experiences both before and after they implemented research-based reading interventions to their struggling learners. The qualitative data consisted of three data sources. The data sources included interview data, document review, and observational data. The interview data were generated in semi structured teacher interviews. Document review was information obtained from SLOs. Observational data were noted in my reflective journal during team meetings. Seven experienced, Maryland-certified reading specialists and supervisors who were not a part of this study reviewed the guiding questions that I asked during the participant interviews to assure the questions were informative and unbiased.

The participants reviewed their students' reading levels at the beginning and end of the data collection period so they could determine the benefit of the interventions they

implemented. Saldaña (2009) defined this process as decoding, which allows reflection on the data to gain meaning. Reflection on the data allowed the participants to cogitate on their practices (Creswell, 2009) with respect to intervention implementation and how it helps their learners. The goal of this case study was to gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives on implementation of interventions on second grade struggling readers over a 6-week period.

I considered a number of research designs for this study. I investigated the quantitative research design. However, I chose not to use this method for the following reasons: The grounded theory continually compares data to derive a conceptual theory (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002). I did not compare any statistical data as you would in a quantitative study. I gathered textual data, not numerical data, to analyze and summarize my findings. Through this study, I searched for teachers' perspectives on implementation of reading interventions used to support struggling readers. Comparisons of other data sources were not essential for this inquiry.

The narrative analysis was another design I considered where stories (e.g., autobiographies, life narratives, oral histories) are data (Creswell, 2007). Stories were not relevant for this study because I did not intend on gathering data for an autobiography or life narrative. Instead, I investigated a phenomenon in the participants' natural setting. Critical qualitative research, which seeks to "empower human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them" by varying characteristics beyond their control, was also discarded (Creswell, 2007, p. 27). This study instead gave teachers the opportunity to

reflect on their implementation of intervention delivery and knowledge; however, it did not lend itself to empowerment issues or constraints related to race, gender, sex, etc.

I chose a case study to search "for meaning and understanding" (Merriam, 2002, p. 179). I wanted to gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives on the interventions they implemented to support struggling second grade readers. To accomplish this, I chose a basic, interpretive qualitative case study design.

The case study research design allowed me to study intervention implementation through the lens of two teams of second grade teachers at two different schools. Both second grade teacher teams implemented reading interventions to struggling second grade readers. I collected data from multiple resources including semi-structured teacher interviews, sections of the Student Learning Objectives (SLO) framework, and team-meeting observations. According to Yin (2009), interviews "are an essential source of case study evidence because they are about human affairs" (p. 108). SLOs provided physical artifacts that helped me develop a broader perspective on teachers' perspectives beyond what I obtained from interviews and observations (Yin, 2009). Observing team meetings created an opportunity to study the phenomena in the natural setting. The data from my observations provided information that was not predictable (Yin, 2009). Having more than one source of data increases the reliability of a case study (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2009). Using multiple data sources in a case study "develops converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation" (Yin, 2009, p. 116). Triangulation supports the likelihood of having valid and accurate case study conclusions.

Participants

In this subsection, I will describe and justify the criteria for selecting the participants of this case study. The subsection will also include a description of how I accessed the participants along with how I established a researcher-participant working relationship. Lastly, I will summarize the measures I took to protect the participants' rights.

Criteria and Justification for Selecting Participants

There were nine participants in this study. The participants were assigned to the second grade teams at two rural elementary schools within the Kedville School District. There were a minimum of six teachers assigned to second grade at each school. A minimum of four teachers on each team implemented reading strategies to struggling readers. All of the teachers participating in the study had a valid Maryland teaching certification. They also received training on reading instruction as required by the state and LEA. All of the teachers participating in this study were responsible for implementation of research-based reading interventions to students identified as below grade level as indicated by local and grade level assessments and expectations. The participating teachers reviewed their students' reading levels at the onset of the data collection of this study to determine students who were below grade level. As identified in the new teacher evaluation, teachers are required to develop a SLO to make a plan that will address student's reading deficiencies. Therefore, they did not complete any extra paperwork or have a need for any preparations beyond their normal duties.

There are two reasons to justify the small number of participants located at two of the elementary schools in Kedville School District. First, the two schools identified for this case study historically have the lowest state and local assessment outcomes in Kedville School District. There are special programs in each school to increase student achievement. These programs include Title 1 services, early learning programs (pre-k and Head Start), after school tutoring programs, extended school year programs, and additional content resource specialists assigned to each grade level. Data show these schools also have the highest number of students identified to receive special education services, 504 plans, and free and reduced meals.

Secondly, a small number of participants allowed for depth of the inquiry through small group interaction focused specifically on communicated individualized and team progress, reflections, needs, strengths, and weaknesses (Merriam, 2002). These discussions took place during team meetings. The team meetings were led by participant-created SLOs that were structured to concentrate on setting instructional goals for struggling students, monitoring progress, modifying practices, and collaborating as a team on a shared effort. I took notes in my reflective journal at the three-team meetings that I attended at each school. Since there are nonparticipants on each team, I allowed the participants to set the meeting dates based on the participants' agenda and schedule. This practice limited my attendance in meetings when nonparticipants were present and the discussion did not pertain to reading. Since there was a possibility that other school staff or teachers may occasionally attend a team meeting, I did not use an audio recorder to avoid recordings of nonparticipant members. I had access to the team meetings as they

occur regularly throughout elementary schools in Kedville School District. In addition,

SLOs and team meetings did not demand additional responsibilities from the participants.

Scheduling practices in Kedville School District allocates common planning time for

teacher collaboration. During common planning time, teachers collectively discuss

student's progress or lack of and share effective practices and resources among the grade

level team to meet the needs of students.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants and Establishing a Researcher-
Participant Relationship

After gaining approval (Walden IRB approval number 09-02-15-0147204) from

the Walden University Instructional Review Board (IRB) and the director of curriculum

and instruction of the Kedville School District, I began collecting data for the study.

Before I began the study and interacted with participants, I met with the building

principal of each of the schools to discuss details of the study including the purpose,

research questions, procedures, and durations. The next step after the approval process

and meeting with the principal was meeting with the second grade teams to share my

study both orally and in writing in order to build rapport with the participants, a necessary

condition for qualitative research. Merriam (2002) stated that "A good qualitative study

is one that has been conducted in an ethical manner….and the research must be highly

collaborative, trustworthy, and participatory" (p. 29). In further discussion, I explained

that their role as participants in the study would be protected by pseudonyms; the purpose

of the study; limited potential risks; the benefits of participation; how I would address

confidentiality of responses, discussions, and input during team meetings; and the

opportunity to withdraw without judgment. Participants could ask clarifying questions throughout the meeting.

Once the participants agreed to participate, I gave them consent to participate forms to read, review, and sign. The consent form aligned to my oral presentation of the study. I also signed the form as confirmation that I would uphold all components of the agreement. The consent form included descriptions of their roles and responsibilities as participants, maintenance of confidentiality of their personal identification, and their protection from harm. The consent form also highlighted the fact that they were voluntary participants that had the right to withdraw at any time. The participants received a copy of the signed consent form. I maintained my reflective notes in a journal that was present at team meetings and accessible if requested by a participant throughout the study. Participants selected pseudonym names that were used as needed to identify any notes. When not in use, the reflective journal; consent to participate forms; and audio recordings of semi-structured interviews and communicated processes, roles, and participant and researcher expectations were kept in a locked file cabinet in my home office. I reminded participants they could request, view, and/or destroy any data relevant to their participation upon their request.

The teachers were in their natural setting where they experienced the issue or problem being studied (Creswell, 2009). This contributed to establishing a participant – researcher relationship since the participants were in a familiar environment, which increased their comfort level with the study. I was able to draw upon this population because I am an employee of Kedville School District. I am a supervisor of elementary

instruction. Elementary supervisors actively participate in team meetings with teachers to discuss, collaborate, and address instructional deficits of students. With this inclusive access and common practice, I was able to continue building personal working relationships while participants continued practices without disruption.

During this study, I was one of six supervisors of elementary instruction. Each supervisor was assigned specific schools and content. I was not responsible for the second grade teachers' observations and/or evaluations at the specific schools identified for this study. Nor was I the supervisor responsible for the reading content they teach. I was responsible for observations and evaluations at four separate schools in various parts of the county. Before the onset of this study, I had never participated in a team meeting with these teams. In addition, I was responsible for elementary social studies content, not reading. All of these factors reassured the participants were not under pressure due to my position, nor did it influence the nature of the study. During the six-weeks of this study, I only observed while attending the second grade team meetings. This observational technique provided "a firsthand encounter with the interest of the study while providing a fresh perspective" on teacher's perspective on interventions implemented to struggling second graders (Merriam, 2002, p. 13). Being a nonverbal participant decreased the possibility of impeding the "credibility of the case study" (Yin, 2009, p. 113). The facts shared minimized or eliminated possible biases, interference with researcher-participant relationships, or influences that would affect the integrity of the study.

Methods for ethical protection of participants

As communicated orally and in writing, use of a variety of measures protected participants. I did not use or include real names during data collection or analysis any time before, during, or after this study. As an extra precaution, only the individual participant and I had knowledge of their pseudonym name. After gaining appropriate approval to begin this study, an information session for participants took place before any data collection began. I communicated details of the study verbally and in writing. A participant consent form reflecting the information shared was distributed and explained. The consent form included participant's roles and responsibilities, protection measures, confidentiality of their personal identification, and their protection from harm. The consent form highlights included participation is voluntarily with the right to withdraw at any time without personal or professional discrimination or judgment. I kept the signed consent form in a locked file cabinet in my home office to protect information and their identity before and after the study. Five years after completion of this dissertation and the doctoral program at Walden University, all of the information and data gathered for this study will be shredded.

<div align="center">

Data Collection Methods

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Two research questions were the focus of this study: What research-based reading interventions do teachers implement? What are teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies? The data collection addressed the two research questions presented. Yin (2009) state that "A major strength of case study data collection is it uses many different sources of evidence" (p. 114). Data collection from

multiple sources also allows the researcher to "address a broader range of historical and behavioral issues" (Yin, 2009, p. 115). I used multiple, data collection tools to address the questions that are the focal points of this case study and allow for cross case analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Description and justification of data collection

Data addressing the research questions of this case study were collected over a six-week period. Sources of data included semi structured audio-recorded teacher interviews, SLO documentation, and notes recorded in a reflective journal during team meetings. I collected and analyzed the data for patterns and themes to gain an understanding of the teachers' perspectives of interventions implemented to struggling readers.

This was a qualitative study. However, the participants reviewed their students' reading levels at the onset and conclusion of the study. It was necessary for the participants to review their students' reading levels at the onset of the study to identify students who were below second grade reading expectations and students who needed intervention support. At the conclusion of the study, participants again reviewed the reading levels of students identified as below grade reading expectations to determine the impact on the interventions they implemented, what interventions they used, and to explain their perspective of the interventions they implemented.

Interview data

Teachers participated in two 30 minute, one-on-one semi structured audio-recorded interviews that took place at the onset and conclusion of the study. Semi

structured interviews are "important sources of case study information" (Yin, 2009, p. 106) as they guide fluid conversations rather than rigid structured questions that allows the researcher to "satisfy the need of inquiry" (Yin, 2009, p. 107) about human events. The semi-structured interviews conducted were conversational in nature and led by questions to gather explicit information about teachers' perspectives on interventions implemented to struggling second grade readers (Merriam, 2009). The interview protocol (Appendix C) encompassed questions that required descriptive responses from the participants based on their experiences and knowledge of historical data (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009). The semi structured format allowed the researcher to probe for additional information or clarification when needed.

The interviews were audio recorded; this allowed me to conduct interviews that were conversational in nature while still being able to obtain data. Since the interviews were audio recorded, I was able to create a transcript of the discussions. In addition, I used the audio tape to confirm the accuracy of my transcript and accurate account of the participant's conversation during the interviews (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006; Yin, 2009).

The teacher interviews allowed participants to report their experiences and knowledge about their implementations of reading interventions used in instruction with struggling readers. Teachers described their instructional practices and articulated why they were doing what they were doing (Reutzel & Cooter, 2012). Teachers also reflected on the various interventions they implemented as they responded to guiding questions and clarified questions conversationally (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009). According to Yin

(2009), a researcher can obtain information to explain a situation along with how or why a phenomenon works by posing questions that elicit thoughtful responses. The interviews provided categorical rather than numerical responses to support the qualitative research design (Yin, 2003). The interview data addressed both research questions that guided this case study.

Document review

The SLO document (Appendix B), was a locally created document that teachers completed as a part of their evaluation process; therefore, it did not cause any extra duties or paperwork for the participants. The components of the SLO document included identification of struggling readers, specific teacher implementation strategies, and monitoring of student progress. The information in the SLO assisted with developing an understanding of the experience.

I analyzed the SLO documents for categorical patterns and themes across participants' interpretations. This data source addressed question one as it had a specific section where teachers document specific strategies they used to help students reach a targeted instructional outcome. It also addressed question two, as it allowed teachers to formulate a perspective of interventions they implemented.

Observational data

I attended three 30-minute team meetings at each school to document teacher's perspectives in real time (Yin, 2009). Attending team meetings allowed me to observe participants in their natural setting. During the team meetings, I took notes in a reflective journal based on input derived from the study participant's conversations. The reflective

journal included an Observation Protocol form I created (Appendix D). Note taking

during team meetings allowed me to document conversations specific to discussions

about practices used to address the academic needs of struggling readers. The notes

included teachers' discussions as they reviewed, monitored, and discussed research-based

components implemented; what they reported about their implementation; and their

perception of the implementation.

Notes in the reflective journal could also be reviewed repeatedly (Yin, 2009)

when analyzing the data for themes, major ideas, or important concepts (Halcomb &

Davidson, 2006). The notes were coded around words that represent the concepts

underlying the observation. Merriam (2002) stated, "Grouping code words around

concepts that emerge in the data will result in categories" (p. 149). This observational

data addressed both research questions that guided this study.

Team meetings provided data that were coded based on categories and themes

teachers discussed about intervention implementation. Through observation of teacher

conversations, I was able to gain first-hand knowledge of the teachers' perspectives of

their intervention implementation. The meetings took place in teachers' natural setting.

Teachers reviewed student-reading levels at the onset of the study to determine

students who needed intervention support. I attended the first team meeting to gain an

understanding of the experience and the strategies teachers implemented to support

struggling readers. I attended 1team meeting between Weeks 3 and 4 to collect data that

supported the experience. Teachers again reviewed student data before the Week 6 team

meeting. I attended the sixth team meeting to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions of interventions implemented during this entire study.

I took reflective notes during the team meetings. I checked for accuracy and validity at the conclusion of each meeting, by reading over my notes and asking participants clarifying questions to verify data before I left the meeting. The notes were coded to identify patterns in the discussions. These patterns helped build an understanding of teachers' perceptions about interventions they implemented to struggling second grade readers.

I reviewed and analyzed the data obtained from the various sources. While reviewing the audiotaped teacher interviews and SLO document, I made editorial changes using a different color pen to distinguish revisions when comparing notes in my reflective journal that contained anecdotal notes collected during team meetings (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). The data were triangulated (Yin, 2009). I compared the data from the interviews, SLO's and observation notes for similarities and differences. Data triangulation allowed me to collect data from multiple sources to support the findings that emerged from this case study. Triangulation use also solidified evidence that corroborates the phenomenon (Yin, 2009).

Procedures for gaining access to the participants

I was able to have access to this population because I was an employee of the school district in which the participants teach. After receiving approval from Walden University and IRB, I met with the principal at both schools. At the conclusion of the meetings at both schools, I was granted access to begin data collection in the form of

teacher interviews, review of SLOs, and participation in second grade team meetings.

Scheduling practices in Kedville School District allows common planning time for grade

level teams to meet and collaborate on SLOs, instructional plans, resources, student

needs, and students' progress. This schedule structure made interaction with participants

and participation in team meetings possible and did not add any extra duties or paperwork

to the participants' workloads. Since I did not modify common practices used in

Kedville School District, this study did not affect teacher's regular expectations.

Role of the researcher

My role as the researcher required many responsibilities. My responsibilities

included introducing the study, obtaining participants' consent, and collecting,

maintaining, and analyzing the data, and sharing the study results. I began by facilitating

a team meeting to share and explain all components of the study. Participants were

informed of the purpose of the study, the research questions, duration, along with the

process and procedures to collect data. I was responsible for securing all documents that

supported the study. Documents included signed consent forms, conducting one-on-one,

audio-recorded teacher interviews, and taking and maintaining notes in a reflective

journal. I also maintained the documentation of the actual names of pseudonym

participants. Throughout the study, it was my responsibility to encourage participants to

ask clarifying questions as needed and reinforce the confidentiality of conversations and

data collected. I maintained all documents during the study and made documents

available if requested by participants. However, participants did not request documents

throughout the study. At the conclusion of the study, it was my responsibility to

summarize and analyze the data collected. I was responsible for keeping and securing all

materials obtained during the study. All of the data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in

my home office for 5 years. After 5 years, I will be responsible for destroying all

documents related to the study.

Data Analysis

In this section, I will explain the data analysis along with the coding procedure

used to categorize the information. It also includes a discussion and description of

assured best evidence of quality to maintain credibility of the findings. Lastly, I will

discuss procedures for addressing discrepancies.

To gain an understanding of the phenomenon, I collected and analyzed three types

of data: semi structured audio-recorded teacher interviews, SLO document review, and

note taking in a reflective journal during observations of team meetings. The participants

reviewed their students reading data at the onset and conclusion of this study to organize

and convey their perspectives on interventions they implemented with struggling second

grade readers. Participants also participated in a member check to verify the accuracy of

my findings. The member check did not include review of raw notes; instead,

participants reviewed themes that emerged from all three data sources to determine if the

findings were accurate.

Interview data

Interviews were conducted to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions of

interventions implemented to struggling second grade readers. Teachers participated in a

semi structured audio-recorded interview containing open-ended questions (Appendix C). The semi structured interview process allowed the researcher to probe for additional information and/or clarification. Responses to the interview questions allowed teachers to discuss interventions used to support students identified as below grade level based on state and local assessments. In addition, the data obtained from the interviews allowed teachers to report their perceptions about reading intervention implementation. As a novice researcher, I used paper and pencil analysis of the audio-recorded interview (Saldaña, 2009). The interview responses were transcribed. Each transcript was coded to identify patterns in the discussions. The patterns that emerged built perceptions of intervention implementation based on frequency and similarities of terms communicated by teachers. The categories that emerged shaped an understanding of teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies used in instruction.

Document review

Document review was used to collect data for question one. What research based reading interventions do teachers implement? Teachers completed a SLO document that identified interventions they used to support struggling readers. The document was examined closely to determine code words that represented reading interventions used. After the open coding, analysis included reflection on the groups of code words that emerged, their characteristics, and frequency (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This coding process allowed me to organize the data into chunks that brought meaning to the information and symbolically captured the essence of the research based reading

interventions teachers used (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Saldaña, 2009). After the initial

organization of the data, a second cycle of coding was conducted that allowed me to

cluster together similar terms. I narrowed the term within each cluster by finding the

most significant descriptive wording. These words evolved into categories that helped

gain an understanding of the participants' perceptions (Creswell, 2009; Saldaña, 2009).

Observational data

Observational data was collected during three 30-minute team meetings to gain an

understanding of research based reading interventions teachers implemented. The data

were notes from teachers' discussions that were recorded in my reflective journal. The

notes were coded as a creative step to organize and analyze the data (Creswell, 2009,

Merriam, 2002). In order to code the notes from team meetings, I made abbreviated

codes based on emerging topics (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Saldaña, 2009;

Tesch, 1990). While reviewing notes in my reflective journal, I used a colored pen to

write the abbreviated codes in the margins of the reflective journal when similar topics

appear. This preliminary process allowed me to merge the codes into categories based on

historic data and new categories that developed. According to Saldaña (2009), "coding is

not labeling, it is linking" (p. 8); therefore, the codes were used to capture the essential

elements of the study inquiry. I clustered the codes based on their similarities to

formulate categories that I analyzed to understand the second grade teachers' perceptions

on intervention implementation (Saldaña, 2009; Yin, 2009).

This was an exploratory study to understand deeply the perspectives of the

participants. Therefore, the discussions and documents were coded and major themes

that were related to the research questions emerged. Themes are describing words or sentences that are the outcome of coding (Yin, 2009). These themes developed an understanding of teachers' perspectives of interventions implemented to struggling second graders.

Coding Procedures

Coding is a process that involves organizing data into chunks to develop a general meaning (Creswell, 2009). According to Saldaña (2009), "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (p. 3). Saldaña (2009) metaphorically stated that "just as a title represents and captures a book or film or poem's primary content and essence so does a code represent and capture a datum's primary content and essence" (p. 3). Saldaña (2009) further explained coding is not a prescriptive process; instead, it emerges through discovery and exploration of data.

This heuristic (exploratory) case study used a first cycle and second cycle coding process (Saldaña, 2009). I used descriptive coding that organized and answered the research questions by identifying what the data exposed (Saldaña, 2009; Tesch, 1990). I began the first cycle coding by precoding the data. I highlighted and underlined key words or phrases that aligned to the research questions. The precoding process provided evidence to support my data analysis at the conclusion of the study (Saldaña, 2009). While gathering data, I maintained wide margins to create two columns for preliminary jotting and final codes. Preliminary jotting gave me the opportunity to "start preliminary

jotting that I used for future reference and transitional links between the raw data and final codes" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 19).

According to Merriam (2002), "The first step in data analysis is assigning code words" (p. 149). After each data collection, I reviewed the data to begin the process of assigning code words. This process continued throughout the 6-week study. At the conclusion of the six-week data collection, I began second cycle coding.

The second cycle coding allowed me to reorganize, merge, and/or eliminate data coded during the first cycle coding. This organization system helped me to cluster similar data that developed into major topics along with identifying new stand-alone categories that were or were not relevant to the study (Creswell, 2009; Yin 2009). Code words were grouped to reflect common patterns, categories, and/or themes (Merriam, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 2007; Yin, 2009). I used acronyms as a final abbreviation to code data once patterns, categories, and/or themes were discovered after data collection (Merriam, 2009; Saldaña 2009). This process evolved into themes. Saldaña (2009) stated, "A theme is an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded" (p. 13). The themes that emerged were analyzed to describe the findings theoretically and confidently. This information will help administrators in Kedville School District gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives on the interventions they implement to struggling second grade readers.

Final analysis of the data formulated a theoretical outcome that gave administrators and teachers an understanding of interventions used in Kedville School District to assist struggling second graders in reading. The study outcome provided an

understanding of teachers' perspectives on the intervention strategies implemented. Ideas

for future professional development opportunities offered to teachers emerged. In

addition, the school district gained an understanding of how teachers felt about

intervention practices they implemented to support struggling readers. This study has the

potential to lead to future reform and change in instructional practices in Kedville School

District when addressing the needs of struggling readers.

Best Evidence of Quality

I used multiple strategies to assure accurate analysis procedures. According to

Creswell (2009), "Multiple strategies will enhance the researchers' ability to assess the

accuracy of findings as well as convince readers of accuracy" (p. 191). After analyzing

the data obtained, I rechecked each data set collected. I reassessed the teacher interviews

for missed patterns and/or misidentification in coding patterns (Creswell, 2009). I

reevaluated my codes and notes contained in my reflective journal to assure appropriate

identification of patterns and clarify any questions or discrepancies in information

recorded from the participants' team meetings and discussions. Then I used the

triangulation strategy to ensure the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009;

Yin, 2009). Triangulation seeks to substantiate the same point or phenomenon using

multiple measures. This practice is respected more than outcomes that rely on a single

source (Yin, 2003; 2009). This allowed me to examine evidence from the different data

collected and analyzed to "build a coherent justification of themes" (Creswell, p. 191). In

addition, triangulation allowed me to use outside sources to validate materials (Merriam,

2002; 2009). Two types of triangulation were used. They were multiple sources of data

and multiple methods of confirming patterns that emerged. Multiple sources of data

included audio-recorded teacher interviews, SLO documents, and notes recording in a

reflective journal during team meetings. According to Yin (2009), "Case study findings

are likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of

information following a corroboratory mode" (p. 116). The rechecks conducted

throughout the study served as multiple methods of confirming patterns that emerged.

Lastly, I used the peer review strategy to ensure the evidence of quality and validity of

the data. A colleague who was familiar with my research "scanned the data and assessed

whether the findings were plausible based on the data" (Merriam, 2009, p. 26). The

participants participated in a member check (Creswell, 2009). They did not review raw

notes. Instead, they reviewed themes that emerged from the data along with the final

report of perspectives to determine whether they felt the themes and findings were

accurate (Creswell, 2007; 2009; Merriam, 2002).

Procedures for Addressing Discrepancies

During the initial stages of my study, I expected potential discrepancies would

arise that would need to be addressed. I assumed there would be anticipated

discrepancies and discrepancies that would develop during the actual data collection

process. I expected to encounter discrepancies in the data collection and analysis of the

data. In addition, some discrepancies I anticipated encountering related to teachers' years

of experience and knowledge of intervention implementation. Outcomes of the semi-

structured interviews also had potential for discrepancies. Teachers' limited experience

with SLO documents and completion of the documents posed an opportunity for

discrepancies that would need to be addressed. Lastly, student transiency is higher in the two schools selected for this study based on enrollment data. Lack of consistent data due to transiency could influence intervention implementation.

Teacher experience levels and training may bias their perceptions and knowledge of intervention implementation. Based on hire date in the county, college attended, and years of experience, the ability to implement interventions may vary from one teacher to the next. These differences may potentially affect their ability to support struggling learners because their repertoire of intervention strategies may be limited. There were differences in experience levels and training within the participant population. However, each participant had knowledge of intervention implementation gained from experience, professional development, or recent coursework. Therefore, experience or training did not influence the study.

Discrepancies could occur when conducting semi-structured interviews to collect data. Both strengths and weakness of interviews were considered. Interview strengths are they focus the study topic and provide understanding and explanations. Weaknesses are poor questions, response biases', and untruthful responses (providing responses assumed what the interviewer wants to hear). To address and reduce interview weakness, questions were reviewed by reading specialists to assure accuracy and alignment to the research questions. The semi-structured interviews did not pose any discrepancies.

There was also potential for discrepancies in the completion of the SLO document due to it being a new instrument in Kedville School District. Teacher participants may not yet be comfortable with completing the newly created document resulting in

differences in document completion. During this study, participants chose to collaborate and complete the documents together. They monitored and addressed student data as a team. The participants used their student data to self-reflect and determine progress or lack of progress on student reading abilities after intervention implementation. The SLO document did not pose any discrepancies.

Lastly, student transience eliminates consistency and follow-through in learning. This had the potential to influence the teachers' perceptions of the interventions they implemented. Many students at each school often transfer enrollment both in and out. This results in short enrollment spans, inconsistency in instruction, breaks in instruction when there is a time lapse in enrollment, and fragmentation or absence of instruction. Students did not transfer in or out of enrollment during this study. Therefore, transiency did not cause any discrepancies that needed addressing.

Findings

To learn what research based reading interventions teachers' implemented and what teachers' perspectives were on reading interventions they implemented to low achieving second graders, I collected data from three sources. The sources used were teacher interviews, SLO documents, and observations during team meetings. In addition, the participants reviewed their students' data at the onset and conclusion of this 6-week study to determine what they were seeing with their students' learning. After gathering the data, I examined the relationships of the non-numerical data. I developed a coding system to analyze the data (see Table 1). This involved locating patterns, themes, and categories aligned to the two research questions that were the focus of this study.

Table 1

Codes Identified During Analysis

Coding
Q1 - Research Question 1   *Q2 - Research Question 2*   *Q1Components - Reading intervention components implemented*   *Q1Interventions – Interventions teachers implement*   *Q2Encounter – Types of reading problems teachers encounter with struggling students*   *Q2Strategies – Strategies teachers implement*   *Q2PerspectiveS – Teachers' perspectives of students' success*   *Q2PerspectiveU – Teachers' perspective of students who were unsuccessful*   *Q2Implementation – Teachers' implementation of reading intervention*   *Q2PD – Professional development*

The data were categorized by codes (Table 1) that aligned to the two research

questions that guided this study. The first research question was coded Q1 (What

research based reading interventions do teachers implement?) The second research

question was coded Q2 (What are teachers' perspectives on their implementation of

reading intervention strategies?) I also saw patterns within the data that I coded into

subcategories. For example, when asked the second interview question, I discovered the

participants shared common reading intervention components such as phonemic

awareness, phonics, and fluency. Therefore, I coded these responses as Q1Component.

Another example I discovered was the types of problems teachers' encounter that aligned

to Q2. Common responses were decoding, phonics, and phonemic awareness. These

data were coded Q2Encounter. Using this coding system with the three data tools

allowed me a comprehensive triangulation. I was able to discover a broad understanding

of the data along with commonalities and differences among the data sources.

While reviewing the SLO documents, I was able to continue coding the data as

mentioned. A code that was used in the document review was Q1Intervention. Data

were coded Q1Intervention when teachers' reported and discussed research based

interventions they implemented to support struggling readers. Examples of the patterns

from the participants' responses that were coded Q1Intervention identified the *Leveled*

Literacy Intervention (LLI) and *Foundations* as interventions implemented. Another

pattern that emerged in the SLO documents was Q2Strategies. Data were coded

Q2Strategies when teachers' reported or discussed strategies they used when they

delivered instruction and intervention support to struggling readers. Responses as direct

instruction, small group instruction, re-teaching decoding, and *Fundations* word work

were coded Q2Strategies. Another pattern that emerged and coded (Q1Component) were

vocabulary, high frequency words, phonemic awareness, and comprehension. The code

Q1Component emerged when I saw patterns in the data that directly linked to attributes

found in the scholarly research.

The observational data were also coded using the coding identified in Table 1.

However, I also began to see common patterns that developed throughout analysis of the

different data sources. Table 2 shows examples of common patterns that emerged in the

three data sources. Patterns aligned to Q2Encounter emerged throughout the team

meetings. Examples of patterns that emerged in the data were "difficulty decoding, does

not have word attack skills, and weak phonics skills." Patterns that I discovered were

"still academically behind, moved a reading level, does not use strategies, mastered

vowels, and have to be reminded." These patterns were coded Q2Perspective. Initially, I

tried codes with shorter acronyms, but I found the use of abbreviated codes aligned to key

words were a better strategy for me.

Table 2.

Codes with example patterns in the three data sources

Coding	Examples of patterns
Q1Components - Reading intervention components implemented	Vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and comprehension
Q1Interventions – Interventions teachers' implement	Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Fundations
Q2Encounter – Types of reading problems teachers' encounter with struggling students	Weak decoding and word attack, weak comprehension, fluency
Q2Strategies – Strategies teachers' implement	Small group instruction, Fundations (word work), re-teaching
Q2PerspectiveS – Teachers' perspectives of students' success	Making growth in reading levels, increased sight word recall
Q2PerspectiveU – Teachers' perspective of students who were unsuccessful	Student growth in reading levels but not on grade level, student not able to transition skills learned in isolation to practice in reading, not retaining sight words over a length of time
Q2Implementation – Teachers' implementation of reading intervention	Intervention implemented with modifications that are not included in the intervention manual
Q2PD – Professional development	Professional development needed

The previous paragraphs explained the coding process that I used. The following

paragraphs will explain the expectations and surprises in the data and tentative

conclusions based on the patterns that emerged from the data.

Interview Data.

Participants partook in one-on-one semi-structured interviews that evolved around eight guiding questions that aligned to the two research questions that steered this study (Appendix C). Although there were guiding questions to keep the interview focused on the purpose of the study, the semi structure allowed opportunities to probe for additional information and clarification as needed. I expected the participants would communicate using common commercial interventions and practices since the district elementary reading supervisor endorsed the use of LLI and *Fundations*. I also expected all the participants to have a solid understanding and ongoing training in the implementation and appropriate use of the two interventions. I was curious to learn teachers' perceptions of interventions implemented to struggling second grade readers. I also wondered if there was a direct connection or disconnect between intervention implementation and lack of student progress evidenced by the low achievement in state mandated standardized and local assessments.

Before I transcribed the interview responses, I determined how the interview questions aligned to the questions that guided this study. I coded the questions Q1 for Research Question 1 and Q2 for Research Question 2. I transcribed the audiotaped semi structured interviews on a two-column chart. After a first cycle and second cycle coding, I was able to organize the interview responses based on the research question addressed and into themes that emerged. I developed tables to represent the data in a clear format that enhanced the readers' understanding. In the following paragraphs, I also

summarized how the participants' interview responses answered the research questions

surrounding this study.

Research Question 1. What research based reading interventions do teachers

implement? Themes that emerged from the data responded to the two research questions

that guided this study. The first research question for this study established the

interventions teachers' implemented, reading components emphasized and what

components teachers find to be problematic for students (Tables 3 and 4). The data show

Table 3.

Reading interventions implemented and components teachers addressed during
intervention implementation

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Intervention implemented:									
Leveled Literacy Intervention	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fundations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Double Dose of Reading				X	X				
Reading Recovery						X			
Guiding Reading						X	X		
Early Intervention Reading								X	
Components accredited in the interventions:									
Vocabulary	X				X	X	X		
Sight words			X						X
Comprehension	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Phonemic awareness	X	X				X	X		
Phonics	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Fluency	X					X	X		
Decoding	X								
Engagement in reading	X		X	X	X				
Word Work								X	
Spelling									

participants in Kedville School District used the Fountas and Pinnell LLI and Wilson *Fundations*. The Kedville School District elementary reading supervisor supports both of these commercially purchased programs. One participant discussed having experience and training in Reading Recovery. This participant is the only teacher in this study implementing this program (Table 3). The participants' unanimous responses informed me of the research-based interventions implemented to struggling second grade readers in Kedville School District.

There were also isolated discussions that were not commercial reading intervention programs purchased by the local school district. Instead, they were practices teachers implemented while delivering intervention support. The practices were providing a double dose of reading daily to struggling students and engagement in guiding reading experiences. These responses bring question to whether or not the participants distinguish differences among intervention practices and strategies and intervention programs.

According to the data, the most common research based components addressed were phonics, comprehension, and engagement in reading. A participant stated, "If teachers drill down to the deepest deficit in the early literacy components, they can build the students' foundation so they can move forward" in their learning." As Table 3 shows, the research-based interventions include multiple reading components. However, there are gaps in the interview responses when the participants shared the components they actually used in intervention implementation. The data show participants were not systematic nor consistent with the intervention implementation that aligns with the

teachers' directions guide. In addition, the research based reading interventions included spelling as a component of both interventions endorsed by the local district. Nevertheless, none of the participants included spelling in their response when describing interventions that they implement to struggling readers.

When I inquired about the reading challenges students faced (Table 4), I was also able to gain an understanding of how the interventions implemented aligned to the students' needs, not the integrity of the intervention delivery. Most of the participants responded that their students have problems with "decoding and comprehension," which affects students' ability to read and "understand what they read." Two participants included lack of sight word recognition as a problem while two others added extended responses that focused on the negative impact of decoding for students who rely heavily on decoding. According to one participants, "sight words do not align to word patterns students use when decoding". This "affects the students' ability to use letter/sound relationships to sound-out words." One participant felt "fluency was a problem, but it did not affect students' ability to read." All of the participants used the same commercial interventions purchased and endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor. However, there was an obvious disconnect in components teachers actually implemented in comparison to the essential components documented (Table 3) in the endorsed reading interventions. This disconnect of participant modifications to the program delivery also manifested in the observation data and SLO document review.

Research Question 2. What are teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies? Themes emerged that showed participants perceptions of

Table 4.

Reading challenges teachers encounter with struggling students

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Reading challenges teachers encounter:									
Decoding	X		X	X		X	X		X
Fluency	X					X	X		X
High frequency words	X								
Sight words		X						X	
Phonemic awareness		X	X						
Phonics		X							
Does it make sense			X						
Comprehension		X	X	X	X	X	X		X

their intervention implementation. The responses included the integrity, fidelity and progression of intervention delivery method by teachers, length of delivery, and monitoring of student growth. Participants also shared roadblocks that hindered intervention delivery and personal professional needs that would support intervention implementation to struggling second graders.

All of the participants responded they implemented the interventions with modifications "based on students' needs and progress" (Table 5). One participants' reasoning for making modifications was the

> Research-based intervention is a toolkit just like when you go to your garden, you pull out the tools you need, if you have no weeds you just use a little bit of fertilizer, but if bigger weeds are present, you pull out bigger tools.

The participant transferred that scenario to student learning. "Look at the intervention, look at the students' needs, and match the needs to the intervention accordingly." In

Table 5.

Fidelity of participant intervention implementation

Participant	Recommended	Modified	Comment
1	X	X	*"I go by the recommended process and then modify according to student's needs. I give a double dose in their area of need so I make modifications according to their needs"*
2	X	X	*"The intervention is not meant for every student so I modify to meet students' needs."*
3	X	X	*The interventions are too stressful and students need to feel success so I make modifications. I start as recommendation and then make modifications."*
4		X	*"I make modifications based on where students are."*
5	X	X	*"It depends on the school administration. They want us to keep true to the instruction to get data. Once we get the data we can make modifications to meet the needs of the children."*
6		X	*"I have a hard time following a scripted plan. It needs to be authentic so kids can learn better."*
7		X	*"It needs to be flexible and go with what the students need at that time"*
8	X	X	*"It's both, we are required to use the intervention but we need to modify to meet the needs of all learners."*
9	X	X	*"Both we are data driven. We use a mixture based on the need"*

addition, all of the participants supported this response by stating "students needed a strong foundation" and "intervention implementation should be based on students' individual weaknesses" in order to make progress in reading. Two of the participants shared they make modifications because they "provide a double dose of intervention." They felt it is necessary to make modifications to "enhance student interest" and "give students various opportunities to apply skills." One participant felt it was necessary to start the *Fundations* intervention "as recommended to drill down to the deepest deficit

and go back to those very beginning phonemic awareness literacy components." One participant felt it was necessary to make modifications to the interventions because "sometimes the interventions frustration the students and so modifications are necessary for the students to have some success." Overall, none of the participants shared they fully implemented interventions as recommended. Instead, they made modifications based on students' academic need. I learned teachers were flexible with intervention implementation. They aligned intervention implementation to the reading problems encountered. Based on the teachers' guide of the endorsed research based reading interventions, intervention implementation needs to be systematic and include explicit teaching of all of the reading components noted in Table 3.

Participants shared how they determined appropriate interventions for struggling learners. Eight of the participants began their responses with conversations about data. They shared how they use data from student assessments to determine student strengths and weaknesses. Three participants added they use the students' strengths to build upon the weaknesses, while all the participants shared they use the student weaknesses to set learning goals for students. The aforementioned conversations transitioned into the creating of learning goals recorded on SLO documents. Seven participants emphasized the use of data obtained from local assessments to determine the "pieces of the intervention" they used. Five participants discussed using results obtained from Running Records that are a part of the LLI intervention and three participants responded they used assessments in *Fundations* as a source to identify the level of intervention a student needed. All of the participants responded they implemented interventions to struggling

students daily for approximately 20 minutes for 6–8 weeks. When asked why interventions fluctuated between 6–8 weeks, participants responded outside factors that impact instruction. Factors included, school closings, assemblies, field trips and student absences to name a few. The timing of these factors determined the duration of the intervention implementation.

Inquiry about the participants' perspective on the reading interventions they implemented, received common responses aligned to teaching practices and expectations in Kedville School District. However, close review of the responses show teachers were able to discuss practices they used to support struggling learners, but direct responses to perspectives about intervention implementation appeared absent. Instead, procedures were discussed on how implementation took place with no avail about perspective or how interventions implemented may or may not positively influence student deficiencies. Six participants responded they "write goals for students" based on assessment data. Writing goals are practices required when completing a SLO document. After assessing students via Running Records, local assessments, and *Fundations* assessments, the participants determined what parts of the intervention aligned to the students' needs. This practice determined instructional plans teachers implemented to struggling readers but not perspectives of implementation. After weeks of direct intervention implementation, teachers assessed students again to monitor success and the effectiveness of the intervention.

All of the participants responded they meet with their team every two weeks to review data. Four participants added their team meetings included reviewing student

data, monitoring or writing goals and modifying the intervention and intensity based on individual needs. The purpose of the data review was to determine student growth and the success of the intervention(s) implemented. Tools used to gather data came from the research-based interventions used in the school district. Eight of the participants responded that the LLI is useful because it has levels of difficulty within books in each kit that helps with monitoring of student progress. Six participants stated they used Running Records and monitored students' reading to determine progress. As a probing question and after review of the data during member check, participants were asked if they had additional information to share and each responded no.

Obstacles and the need for professional development emerged in the data during participants' discussions about roadblocks that interfered with their perceptions of the interventions they implemented. All of the participants responded that "time" and other academic demands such as field trips, assemblies, weather related closings, etc. caused roadblocks in delivering the interventions with integrity and conformity. Four participants also added they have a "transient population." The inconsistency, impermanent and transitory state of these students receiving efficient intervention implementation hinders the participants' delivery of the interventions, hence influencing their intervention implementation. As a participant shared, "the students either enroll in the midst of the intervention or depart before they acquire a foundation of reading skills they lack and then don't forget my training in reading intervention delivery is outdated."

Eight of the participants received some form of professional development about implementing reading interventions at one time in their career. Five participants received

direct training on the interventions used in the district; however, they emphasized the training took place 4 or more years ago. All of the participants verbalized the need for ongoing training in intervention implementation to enhance their skills and abilities to meet the needs of students who enroll in school with differing needs and academic challenges. One participant who was new to the position stated, "I have not received professional development in the area of reading interventions, what I've learned is what I've read in articles and in the intervention manuals." All the participants would like to receive ongoing refresher courses or yearly professional development in intervention implementation. A participant shared, "we need PD together as a school to identify what a struggling reader looks like because I think we all have a different picture." Another participant shared, "I think we need a bank of tools because one program is not going to solve the problem, if so we wouldn't have any struggling readers." Based on patterns in the responses to this guiding question, participants shared common feelings about the need for ongoing professional development to increase their knowledge and interactions with struggling readers and deliver interventions with integrity and fidelity.

Data from the semi-structured interviews concurred with data found in the observation data and document review. The three data sources coincided. Commonalities were found in response to research based intervention programs implemented, intervention execution (Table 5), and participant acknowledgment of a limited list of essential reading components of each commercially purchased program. Participants in Kedville School District implemented two research-based interventions to support struggling readers. The interventions implemented were LLI and Wilson

Fundations. The interventions were executed with modifications based on student data and needs determined by the participants, which is not in harmony with either of the district endorsed research-based interventions direction guides. Participants felt the research-based interventions concentrated on the following reading components: sight words and comprehension. In contrast, the reading intervention guides include more reading components (Table 3) that the developers verified via research to be essential for students to gain academic growth and success. The participants' encountered students with decoding and comprehension challenges; however, phonemic awareness difficulties and its effect on the ability to read emerged often in the semi structured interviews.

Reading assessments and data were used to determine interventions; however, teachers felt time and other academic demands interfered with the length, integrity, and fidelity of implementation. The teachers' analysis of their students' data at the onset and conclusion of the study supported student growth in reading after intervals of intervention implementation, but the progress was slow and students were not meeting nor projected to meet grade level expectations if they maintained their current level of academic growth.

Repeating patterns from the document review and observational data emerged in the interview data. The three data sources confirmed the uniformity of interventions implemented in Kedville School District. The data show the participants agreed that common reading components must be explicitly taught to struggling readers. However, it appears that teachers' capacity to implement interventions may be limited, and this limitation could be addressed through professional development. In addition, the data

from the semi-structured interviews, observational data and document review concurred

that current practices with intervention implementation to address reading deficiencies

were not consistent with the process the research-based reading interventions established.

Document Review.

Participants completed SLO documents that I reviewed. The SLO document

included sections that addressed the research questions that guided this study.

Participants recorded specific strategies used to support struggling students and

formulated their perspectives of interventions they implemented by documenting

evidence of student growth. There were specific sections of the SLO document that were

coded. The sections were population, strategies, evidence of growth, and professional

development. The population section was reviewed to assure the participants met the

criteria for participation. The criteria to participate in the study required interaction with

struggling second grade students. The strategies and evidence of growth sections were

reviewed and coded Q1Intervention, Q1Component, Q2Strategies and Q2Perspective.

These codes emerged as they aligned to specific intervention implementation strategies,

components, and student progress. Lastly, the section of the SLO document that

identified professional development was reviewed to understand teachers' perspectives of

the interventions they implemented and areas they documented as professional training

needs to support struggling second grade readers. The information in the SLO assisted

with developing an understanding of the experience.

Research Question 1. Patterns emerged from the document review that shows

participants in Kedville School District used the LLI and Wilson *Fundations* research-

based reading interventions. The components addressed frequently by participants were phonemic awareness and comprehension. Participants also reviewed their student data at the onset and conclusion of this study. According to documentation on the participants' SLO documents, they concluded their instructional practices were effective or highly effective. This conclusion was inconsistent with the actual data participants reviewed at the onset and conclusion of this study. According to participants, the students did made progress, however the growth did not position students to achieve on-grade level statues as expected by local and state standards, yet the participants felt successful with intervention implementation. This leads to questions for a future study to investigate, how participants can feel effective or highly effective success with their practices, while they facilitate instruction to students who continue to struggle and have not achieved grade level skills.

Research Question 2. Patterns emerged that indicate participants' perspectives were their implementation of reading interventions as recorded on their SLO documents were effective or highly effective with struggling readers. None of the participants documented themselves as ineffective but patterns emerged that demonstrated participants wanted to engage in professional development. This information was coded Q2PD. This coding indicated all of the participants expressed a desire to participate in professional development focused on implementation of reading interventions to support struggling readers. This information was also obtained directly from questions posed during the semi-structured interview. Two essential questions elicited responses aligned to participants need for support. Have you received on-going professional development

in the area of reading interventions? What supports do you need to implement

interventions to your struggling students? A representation of responses found in the

three data sources are shown in Table 6.

Table 6.

Participants' needs

	Interview Data	*Document Review*	*Observational Data*
Participant Comments	*~I'm new to teaching, I have not had any professional development about reading interventions* *~I have not had professional development in a long time* *~We need yearly professional development that is followed by ongoing school based professional development*	*~I want to plan with the reading specialist* *~attend reading training provided by Kedville School District* *~Read Fundations guides provided by central office Professional development with reading specialist*	*~I'm lost on what to do for my struggling students* *~I want support with the LLI program* *~Do we have any upcoming professional development courses on reading* *~I'm working with the reading specialist to enhance my skills* *~Can we put intervention implementation on our team agenda for next time* *~How do you get students to retain sight words*

Recurring patterns emerged from the document review that mirrored the interview

and observational data. All three sources established and corroborated the research-based

reading interventions implemented and limited reading components explicitly taught to

struggling readers in Kedville School District. These findings pose concern as the

implementation as prescribed is not aligned to current practices. The participants also

expressed the desire to receive professional development to enhance their skills. This too

needs addressing to make sure participants have the capacity to implement research-

based reading interventions appropriately and within the guidelines established by the research.

Observational Data.

During this 6-week study, I observed team meetings and took notes in a reflective journal using an observational protocol I created (Appendix D). The data collected aligned to both research questions that guided this study. I analyzed the notes for patterns that emerged. The patterns were classified and examined to identify relationships of non-numerical data while ensuring precision of the discussions. According to the data, participants provide specific and isolated reading instruction on the following components: phonemic awareness, comprehension, and sight words. Six of the participants also identified vocabulary, decoding, and schema as important components they implement as an intervention.

Research Question 1. All of the participants referenced the LLI and *Fundations* interventions when they discussed resources they used with struggling readers. These references were also recorded on SLO documents and vocalized during semi-structured interviews. The intervention teachers' guides were nearby during each team meeting observed. During team meetings, the participants were also observed gathering ideas from the teacher's guides and listing resources to use during future instruction with their struggling students. The participants orally discussed, provided evidence (student work samples and data), and documented their implementation of the reading interventions they used throughout the team meetings.

Research Question 2. As I analyzed the data, patterns emerged from the participants' discussions that explained their perspectives of the reading interventions they implemented. According to the participants, "students increased in their reading abilities but continued to fall below grade level expectations" and "struggle with reading components." Students "demonstrated growth in the areas of letter/sound relationships, beginning sounds, and blends." Students continued to "struggle with self-monitoring or self-corrections when reading," phonemic awareness, word patterns decoding and comprehension.

Patterns emerged from the data. Consistent with interview and document data, the observational data revealed the participants implemented LLI and *Fundations* research-based reading interventions using modifications based on student data and needs. During the semi-structured interviews and team meetings, participants communicated they made modifications to the interventions they implemented but they did not provide specific details as to the modifications they made. However, they shared "modifications are based on students' needs."

Participants also communicated student growth and academic progress were the result of the interventions they implemented. As the participants recognized and discussed the academic growth of identified students, they also made note that the students remained below grade level reading expectations. Teachers reported on student progress in the SLO document, which I reviewed. Teachers used their review of reading level data at the onset and conclusion of this study to evidence student progress at team meetings. Participants' overall perspectives of their implementation of reading

interventions were interventions were effective because there was evidence of student growth in reading. The amount of growth was not a fact in their positive perspectives of intervention implementation.

During the team meetings, interviews and on SLO documents, all nine of the participants expressed the need for more time with students and professional development specifically focused on implementing interventions to struggling readers. Illustrative of participants' concern about the amount of time with students were such comments as, "our schedule is just packed full, it's overflowing and there's usually not enough time," and "I have my students a limited amount of time." Another shared, "we just don't have enough time to give individual, small group special instruction like children need."

In addition, participants expressed their desire for professional development during team meetings, interviews, and on SLO documents. Comments included, "I've had training on different interventions it's been a while so I would think a refresher couldn't hurt." Another stated, "I'm a fairly new teacher and I have not received training on how to implement interventions, I think they gave that training before I was hired."

Summary.

Based on the patterns that emerged from the data, teachers in Kedville School District implemented the Fountas and Pinnell LLI and the Wilson *Fundations* daily in repeated intervals ranging from 6–8 weeks. The literacy components addressed by the interventions are vocabulary, sight words, comprehension, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, decoding, engagement in reading, and word work. However, these components

were not taught consistently among participants when implementing interventions. According to data obtained from the participants, the aforementioned components were problems encountered by students who struggle with reading before intervention implementation. The components remained an issue for struggling readers at the end of the study.

Participants implemented the interventions with modifications based on students' needs. They used student data to determine strengths and weaknesses. This information allowed participants to build on students' strengths and set learning goals aligned to students' academic weaknesses. During team meetings, participants shared next steps based on student data and from randomly selected resources within the intervention guides. The data obtained after the 6–8 weeks of intervention implementation determined either continuation or dismissal from intervention support. The data also determined next steps of implementation of the intervention based on student growth or lack of progress.

Unintentionally, data collection allowed participants to reflect on intervention implementation in unforeseen ways. The reflections ranged from blasé to being responsive with the latter of the two having potential for future changes in intervention implementation. During a review of the interview responses, one participant self-reflected. As we listened to the semi-structured interview, the participant stated, "I did not answer some of the questions." I asked the participant, "Do you want to expand or respond again to any of the questions?" The response was "no, I'm ok with the interview and my responses." While on the other hand, another participant listened and had

reservations about responses given. The participant questioned whether the intervention

was not providing desirable results due to the implemented modifications. "I wonder if

the modifications I made to the intervention impacted the outcome. I'm flipping through

this manual and I don't see anything that says make modifications." One participant

thanked me for this research because "the team observations focused the team meetings,

discussions, and monitoring of student progress." During the study period, one team

developed a formal protocol and note-taking sheet to monitor student progress.

While gathering and reviewing the data for this study, I gained a great deal of new

knowledge about instruction, instructional practices, and the needs of teachers in Kedville

School District as it relates to supporting struggling second grade readers. First, I learned

teachers in Kedville School District are aligned to recent research discussed in Chapter 1.

The teachers have an awareness of essential components of reading and include the

components in their instruction as evidenced in SLO documents, the semi structured

interviews and team discussions, but there is a discrepancy with the components used in

intervention delivery and the components within the research-based interventions.

Then, I learned there are concerns with intervention implementation for struggling

second grade readers. First, there are two commercially developed research-based

reading interventions implemented in Kedville School district. If a student does not show

significant progress, teachers continue to use one or both of the interventions with

modifications. In addition, teachers discussed delivering a "double dose" of intervention

implementation to some students. As a participant stated, "if you do the same thing, you

get the same results." Depending on a teachers hire date in the district, they may not

have received professional development on how to use the intervention and how to use the intervention effectively. Next, teachers who may or may not have full knowledge of the interventions, make modifications when implementing the intervention. This has the potential to cause undesired or uneven student results.

This new learning will lead to conversations and collaboration with the reading specialist to develop professional development for the future school years. This will assure teachers are abreast of the instructional practices, resources and support materials available and endorsed by the school district. Also, professional development will enhance teachers' knowledge, skills and repertoire of strategies used when supporting struggling second grade readers.

Conclusion

In Section 2, I introduced and described in detail, this qualitative case study design, setting, and participants. The instruments and materials used for data collection were identified and explained. A thorough explanation of the study duration, data collection process, analysis, and findings were included. In addition, I shared my role as the researcher, coding procedures, strategies to assure data credibility, and I how I would have addressed discrepancies.

A need arose from the findings in this study. During the semi-structured interviews, participants were explicitly asked if they received professional development on reading interventions and what supports they needed to implement interventions to struggling students. Responses showed participants wanted professional development

opportunities to enhance their intervention implementation delivery. Information in the document review and the observational data corroborated this need for professional development (Table 6). In addition, the data exposed the limited reading components addressed during intervention implementation as opposed to the number of components each commercially program encompassed (Table 3). Furthermore, participants' explanations of their decisions to modify the research-based programs caused concern on intervention implementation and its influence on enhancing the skills of struggling readers (Table 5).

This study afforded me the opportunity to collect and analyze data that led to the creation of a professional development project as a deliverable outcome. The targeted audience for the professional development will be teachers who interact with struggling readers. The purpose of the professional development will be to provide training to teachers on the commercial reading interventions endorsed by the reading supervisor in Kedville School District. The goal of the professional development is for teachers to learn how to implement reading interventions to struggling readers with fidelity and integrity. In addition, struggling readers had not improved much with the intervention implementations as they are currently being used, which is another reason professional development is needed. There will be three professional development opportunities offered to teachers who implement interventions to struggling readers.

In Section 3, I will introduce, describe, and provide a rationale for the creation of my project. The project will be a professional development series focused on intervention implementation. Teachers will be introduced to or become reacquainted

with the research-based interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in

Kedville School District. Teachers will learn or refresh practices aligned to the

intervention guidelines to enhance their implementation when supporting struggling

readers. The section will also include a review of literature on professional development,

the project description, project evaluation plans and the project implications.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Findings from this qualitative case study suggest teachers need professional development on implementation of the research-based reading interventions endorsed by the local school district. During data collection, teachers communicated their lack of knowledge, consistency, and professional development about implementing interventions to struggling readers. Analysis of data revealed teachers did not follow the intervention guidelines, made various modifications, omitted instruction on important reading components, and lacked a methodical approach when implementing reading interventions to struggling readers. In addition, struggling readers were not making significant progress with current intervention implementation practices. Therefore, it was evident teachers need to learn how to use and implement the commercial interventions efficiently, effectively, and accurately to support the needs of struggling readers.

In response to the data and findings, my project will be a professional development for teachers about intervention implementation. The teachers will learn about intervention implementation by attending three professional development sessions. The sessions will provide training on the commercial reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. The goal of the professional development is for teachers to learn how to implement the commercial reading interventions to struggling readers with fidelity, accuracy, consistency, and systematically. In addition, this training will show teachers how to use the interventions appropriately and as supplementary tool to support struggling readers.

In Section 3, I will introduce, describe, and provide the rationale for this professional development project. In this section, I will also explain how the project will enhance teachers' knowledge and implementation of the commercial research-based reading interventions the school district endorses. Section 3 will also include a review of literature on professional development, project description, project evaluation plan, and the project implications.

Description and Goals

The project is a three session professional development that will provide training to teachers on the implementation of commercial reading interventions. The attendees will be Maryland certified teachers who work in elementary schools in Kedville School District and instruct and support struggling readers. The teachers will learn how to implement interventions to struggling readers. Although the professional development will take place following the completing of this study, this subsection will explain the project's purpose, goals, and execution.

The purpose of this professional development project will be to provide teachers with adequate training, real world scenarios, and hands on learning opportunities to build their repertoire of strategies and skills when they implement reading interventions. The professional development will be beneficial since all teachers encounter students with reading deficits according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2012). As explained in Chapter 1, teacher's interactions with students include being able to identify deficits and implement interventions that will help them to become successful readers.

The goal of the project will be to build teacher's knowledge and intervention implementation of research-based interventions purchased and endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. During the three sessions, teachers will learn how to identify struggling readers, the components of the interventions, the time frame of implementation, and the methodical process that supports the research and success of the intervention. In summary, teachers will learn how to implement the interventions with fidelity, accuracy, consistency and systematically.

The professional development will be executed in three sessions. The first session will be at the beginning of the school year during the annual back-to-school professional learning day (Appendix A). Afterwards, teachers will receive intervention implementation training during two school-based professional development days. The reading specialist assigned to each elementary school will lead the professional development. Principals will have the flexibility to provide additional professional development opportunities beyond those identified in this project to meet the needs of their instructional staff. The additional professional development opportunities may be in response to participant feedback after each session.

Rationale

After reviewing and analyzing the data and collaborating with a colleague familiar with this study, I chose to develop a three-session professional development as my project. The findings discussed in Chapter 2 identified gaps, inconsistencies, and lack of training in intervention implementation. In addition, struggling readers were not showing improvement with the intervention implementation as currently presented.

Therefore, there is a need for professional development to build and enhance teachers'
knowledge, skills, strategies, and intervention implementation.

Currently, teachers participate in professional development opportunities to grow
their craft. In addition, Kedville School District designates system-wide and school-
based professional development in the school calendar each year. The designated
professional development days are allotted for principals to provide relevant learning
opportunities to enhance instructional practices and provide ongoing learning experiences
for teachers who will positively affect student achievement. I chose this project genre for
two specific reasons. First, professional development on designated days is a common
practice in Kedville School District and teachers will not feel overwhelmed with
additional work schedules or demands beyond their normal duties, responsibilities, or
expectations. Secondly, the data supported the need for teacher training on intervention
implementation; therefore, it makes the professional development relevant to teachers'
duties, responsibilities, and expectations.

In Chapter 1, I discussed and explained the educational impact and expectations
of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Common Core State Standards
developed by the U.S. Department of Education. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
required all public school systems to provide curriculum and instruction that will support
and enhance the academic achievement and success of all students (Common Core State
Standards Initiative Standards in Your State, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2012).
The Common Core State Standards required all school systems to increase instructional
practices and expectations so all students have equal opportunities to meet rigorous

curriculum standards that will make them career and college ready (Common Core State

Standards Initiative Standards in Your State, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

As this study evolved, the U.S. Department of Education created an Every Student

Succeed Act (ESSA; 2015) that reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education

Act (ESEA). The ESSA requires all students to be taught high academic standards by

teachers who are informed in theory of action and engage in professional learning

(ESSA; 2015). The ESSA also requires school districts to conduct an analysis of

teachers' professional needs and design an effective plan to address learning needs

(ESSA; 2015). This study, findings, and project are a direct response to the requirements

of ESSA.

In addition, local, state, and national data show elementary students do not

possess the reading skills needed to perform successfully when faced with grade level

content (U.S. Department of Education, 2012.) Reports from the U.S. Department of

Education and the National Assessment of Title 1 (2009) also validate elementary

students' lack of mastery of reading skills. The reports further suggest the need for

educators to possess competencies to implement instructional practices and interventions

that will increase struggling readers' skills. Teachers can acquire these competencies by

participating in professional development focused on reading interventions and

implementation.

The new ESSA; local, state, and national data; national reports; and data from this

case study provides evidence and supports the rationale for creating a project that

involves a three-session professional development for teachers on reading intervention

implementation. In addition, students are currently instructed with interventions that are modified by teachers, and yet they are not making sufficient reading progress. This professional development will concentrate on building teachers' knowledge and implementation skills on the reading interventions endorsed by Kedville School District in an effort to change those results. It will also provide teachers with strategies on how to implement interventions with accuracy, fidelity, and integrity. This will include implementing the components of the reading interventions systematically as prescribed in the teacher's guide. This project has the potential to address how teachers' implement interventions and students struggling to read. If teachers gain the capacity to implement reading interventions effectively, they can potentially increase students reading abilities.

Review of the Literature

There are students in Kedville School District who are not meeting grade level reading expectations based on state and local assessment outcomes. Teachers in Kedville School District implement interventions to these struggling learners; however, based on the findings of this study, the methodology of implementation is not aligned to the research-based guidelines that support the endorsed interventions. Furthermore, students receiving the current practices of intervention delivery are not making progress. This is a problem in Kedville School District. The review of the literature in this section supports the appropriateness of the project that will be used to combat the problem this study addressed. The project is a three-session professional development designed to enhance teachers' abilities to implement interventions to struggling readers efficiently. As teachers develop their intervention implementation, students have the potential to

increase their reading skills. In this subsection, I will explain the literature that supports

the significance of the framework that guided this project design.

In order to locate literature that supported this project, I conducted a research of

various databases including ERIC, Full Text Journal Library, Education Research

Complete, McDaniel College Research Guide, Walden University Library, and Walden

Dissertations along with educational journals. A search of these sources led me to the

following related terms: *professional development, training, coaching,* and *professional*

learning community. During my review of the literature, two methodologies of

professional development emerged from the research. The methods were the coaching

model and professional learning communities. The theories that support these two

professional development models were the framework used to guide the development of

this project.

Professional development is the "formal in-service training to upgrade the content

knowledge and pedagogical skills of teachers" (Quint, 2011, p. 3). School leaders are

responsible for creating relevant professional development opportunities that will develop

teachers' knowledge of and strategies to teach students. The professional development

must be "ongoing to allow teachers time to learn the strategy and grapple with the

implementation" (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 3). Therefore, this project will use coaching

and professional learning communities to provide teachers with information on

intervention implementation over a course of three professional development sessions.

The professional development schedule will allow time for learning followed by teacher

implementation. Teachers will receive coaching and engage in professional learning

communities throughout the duration of this project. Descriptions of the theories and

practices behind each of these methods are explained in the following subsections.

Coaching

Coaching is a professional development method based on the framework that

teachers engage in active professional learning that is followed by ongoing support and

participation in collaborative discussions with peers (Desimone, 2009). This model

includes time to learn a new skill, implement new learning, reflect on practices, and

refine skills (Desimone, 2009, 2011; Gulamhussein, 2013; Moore, Westwater-Wood, &

Kerry 2015). Skill development takes place after a combination of participation in

professional development and continuous follow-up support (Cornett & Knight, 2009;

Devine, Meyers, & Houssemand, 2013). In this model, collaboration among teachers and

time for sharing experiences and receiving constructive feedback must be provided to

enhance student achievement (Devine et al., 2013; Kennedy & Shiel, 2010; Knight,

2009). This practice reduces isolation and creates an inclusive environment and

collaborative forum among teachers (Jao, 2013; Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2013).

Research by Devine et al. (2013), Desimone (2009), and Cornett and Knight

(2009) opposed the idea that teachers learn a new strategy and never receive or revisit the

topic. If teachers are introduced to a new strategy and expected to implement the new

strategy autonomously, they may be unsuccessful or face challenges (Devine et al., 2013;

Knight, 2009). These difficulties may cause abandonment or lack of use or sustainability

of the new practice (Knight, 2009). Instead, if there is a continuation of support

following participation in professional development, teachers are more likely to transfer

the new skills into their classroom (Desimone, 2009; Gulamhussein, 2013; Villa et al, 2013).

An essential component of peer coaching involves collaboration among teachers to identify student needs, develop plans to address student needs and time to plan strategies to improve instructional practices (Desimone, 2009; Devine et al., 2013; Jewett & MacPhee, 2012; New Teacher Center, 2015). Collaboration intrinsically motivates teachers to be an active part of their professional development and allows them to openly share and build trustworthy relationships in a safe environment (Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, & Bolhuis, 2009). In addition to peer coaching, the Teacher's Network (2015) noted five common coaching strategies used among school personnel to improve teaching strategies and learning for students. They are coaching strategies are technical coaching, collegial coaching, team coaching, cognitive coaching, and challenge coaching. The key to a successful coaching strategy involves using peers to support one another in a nonjudgmental environment that collectively focuses on establishing and achieving a common goal (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Desimone, 2009; Devine et al., 2013; Jewett & MacPhee, 2012) centered on improving instructional delivery and increasing student achievement. Each model has a specific purpose according to The Teacher's Network and the New Teacher Learning Center (2015) as shown on Table 7. There are many coaching models used in schools across the nation. School leaders must identify, communicate, and fully support the coaching model(s) appropriate for their learning environment.

Table 7.

Common Coaching Strategies

Strategy	*Purpose*
Technical Coaching	*Teachers learn and then transfer the new practice into action used on a regular basis in classroom instructional delivery.*
Collegial Coaching	*Teachers refine teaching practices, build relationships with colleagues, increase opportunities to participate in professional conversations and help one another reflect on teaching practices in a safe and trusting environment.*
Cognitive Coaching	*Colleagues focus on building a common understanding and use similar strategies and patterns of thinking.*
Team Coaching	*Teachers work together as a team instead of partners of two.*
Challenge Coaching	*Teachers identify and focus on a specific problem that expands over a larger context (e.g. grade level, school) beyond their individual classes.*

An effective coaching model connects educators "to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices into their teaching so students will learn" (Knight, 2009, p. 18). In order to create an effective coaching model, there are elements that must be established. The collaboration must be regarded as an ongoing peer-to-peer partnership that focuses on a purpose that is applicable to the participants involved. Therefore, this project will involve the partnership of teachers and reading specialist who will focus on enhancing intervention implementation practices and increasing the skills of struggling readers. The partnership will also include engaging in respectful and reflective conversations that may occasionally need to be held in confidence (Cornett & Knight, 2011; Knight, 2009). The coaching relationship needs to be supported by the principal. The principal must ensure sufficient time for collaboration. This project will involve

participants who share common students, data, and grade level standards. Time allocated

for profession development is in the school calendar.

Professional Learning Community

Professional learning communities (PLCs) are organized methods of engaging

teachers in collaborative learning groups to improve their skills and teaching strategies to

increase student learning (DuFour, 2004, 2008; Graham, 2007; Kelly & Cherkowski,

2015; Pirtle & Tobia, 2014). Staffs in school districts commonly use PLCs. They focus

on increasing collaboration among educators who teach the same grade level, set

academic goals, instruct struggling students, reflect on practices and are responsible for

school improvement and student achievement. According to Easton (2015) and Graham

(2007), PLCs are effective when participants make habits out of their accountability,

skills, relationships within the group, making connections between learning and doing,

and are purpose driven. Furthermore, administrators to support teachers, set a purpose

for PLCs, and provide structure by using policies and procedures (Carpenter, 2015;

DuFour 2008).

Unfortunately, PLCs have been overused, underfunded, and lack purpose and

structure causing a deficiency in their effectiveness (DuFour, 2004; Ferguson, 2013;

Hord, Roussin, & Summers, 2010). The framework of an effective PLC is a

collaborative environment that provides teachers with an opportunity to interdependently

learn, monitor student progress and adjust instructional practices to meet student needs

(DuFour, 2004, 2008; Musanti & Pence, 2010; Pirtle & Tobia, 2014). Participants must

commit to use student data to make collaborative and collegial decisions to address

student needs and student learning (Crow, 2015; Servage, 2008). In addition, participants must be willing to learn and experiment with new ideas while monitoring progress based on the student learning goals and actual achievement (Crow, 2015; Graham, 2007).

According to research (DuFour, 2004, 2008; Harris & Jones 2010; Knight, 2011; Pirtle & Tobia, 2014; Servage, 2008) there are components that must be included in order to have an effective professional learning community. The components set the tone and structure of the PLC. First, an atmosphere of trust must be created (Graham, 2007; Stewart, 2014). Participants must feel comfortable sharing celebrations, strengths, weaknesses and needs. This project will allow teachers who share students, grade levels, SLOs and assigned schools to work and learn together. Familiarity with one another and common practices in Kedville School District may enhance an atmosphere of trust and collegiality among participants.

Secondly, PLCs must have a clear structure with a specific and shared vision that is focused on defining effective strategies to enhance student learning (Owen, 2014; Stewart, 2014). Academic standards, skills and the instructional challenges the student and teachers encounter must be identified. All participants must embrace shared values, a sense of community, and willingness to inquire about data, practices and results (Owen, 2014). Current research based instructional strategies must be learned and understood. This includes time for collaboration with knowledgeable peers who share the phenomenon of working with students who struggle to read. During time allotted for uninterrupted collaboration, teachers need to be able to reflect, plan lessons, analyze student work, monitor progress, address challenges, adjust instructional practices, and

design next steps to enhance student growth. This project will align to the aforementioned descriptors. Teachers will be review grade level standards along with student academic deficits when compared to the academic expectations. Participants will develop and understanding of the research based reading interventions. There will be time allocated for collaboration among grade level teams and the reading specialist, which is common practice in Kedville School District.

This project aligns to the seminal work of Knowles (1984a). Knowles' theory of andragogy emphasizes key factors professional development must include in order for adults to learn Table 8. In addition, Knowles (1984a; 1984b) believes adults need to have task-oriented experiences instead of memorization sessions, differentiated presentations to address various backgrounds and levels, self-directed learning needs, and opportunities for self-discovery, mistakes, and guidance.

Table 8.

Knowles' theory of andragogy

Concept	Summary
Know	Adults need to know why they are learning. They need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their learning
Self-concept	Adults need responsibility for decision making to be perceived capable by others. They need to have input on the learning activities.
Adult learner experience	Adults come with experiences and resources
Readiness to learn	Adults come ready to learn and grow so they can fulfill the expectations of their real world tasks. They are interested in relevant learning that has a direct impact on what they do.
Orientation to learning	Adults learn and immediate apply their learning to real world tasks and problems. Valuable adult learning focuses on problems rather than content.
Motivation to learn	Adults learn for internal reasons (e.g., self-esteem, satisfactory job performance)

This project includes ongoing professional development sessions and experiences that provide relevant learning along with follow up opportunities with peer coaching and engagement in professional learning communities. These experiences will give adults autonomy to make collaborative decisions based on data and focused on student learning. The project delivery includes agendas, sharing of data, and evaluations. The agenda will let adults know what they are learning, data will confirm why they are learning, and evaluations will allow them to communicate the effectiveness of the professional development (Guskey, 2002) along with providing input for future learning.

This project includes a combination of the coaching model and a professional learning community and the framework and theories that surrounds each methodology. Teachers will engage in an initial professional development session that will be followed by two additional professional development sessions, team collaboration, collaboration on SLOs and ongoing support from the reading specialist assigned to each school. The structure of the professional development will be guided by the components outlined in the coaching model and professional learning community. Participants will complete evaluations after professional development sessions to evaluate the effectiveness of the sessions and help school leaders determine if the professional development is making a difference (Guskey, 2002) in teacher practices and student achievement.

Implementation

The director of curriculum who also approves research in the county and the elementary reading supervisor are familiar with this study. They are also aware that we

have students who are struggling readers. After the data were collected, some of the

reading specialists and elementary principals became aware of this study. Since they all

encounter and make decisions to support struggling readers, they are eager to discuss and

use the findings of the study to support struggling readers.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

As an ongoing practice and an existing support, Kedville School District leaders

develop a yearly school calendar that includes days designated for professional

development. Each school year Kedville School District leaders include a system wide

preservice professional development day at the beginning of the school year and five

school-based professional development days throughout the school year. The beginning

of the school year, preservice day is historically led by content supervisors. The

elementary reading supervisor collaborates with principals and reading specialists create

professional development opportunities based on student data. The ongoing school based

professional development days are led by the principal at each school. The principal

gains ideas for school based professional development from presentations they receive

from the elementary reading supervisor during monthly principal meetings. There are

also reading specialist assigned to each elementary school. The reading specialists

receive monthly training from the elementary reading supervisor. The school based

administrators and reading specialists collaborate to present ongoing professional

development to teachers.

Using the findings of this case study, I will collaborate with the elementary

reading supervisor, school-based administrators and elementary reading specialists to

review the findings of this study. After review and discussions of current resources, potential resources and existing practices, we will collectively develop the preservice day and school year professional development trainings that will take place throughout the school year. The professional development will be systematic and align to the guides provided by the research-based interventions endorsed by Kedville School District.

The preservice day at the beginning of the year will include an introduction to the research based reading interventions endorsed by the district. The presentation will also include discussions about the identification of struggling readers and existing resources the district has available to build student skills. The following professional development days will include information about intervention implementation along with individualized school data. Under the direction of the elementary reading supervisor, reading specialists will create common PowerPoint slides during their monthly meetings (Appendix A). The slides will review information from the preservice day. It will also include opportunities for teachers to learn and preview the intervention guides and data specific to their school. Participants will use this information to create plans to address the needs of students enrolled in their classes.

The reading specialist will review the contents of the professional development with school-based administrators before presentations are delivered. Administrators can provide additional information and professional development as needed to meet the needs of their instructional staff. The additional professional development will be based on feedback principals receive from participant's completion of professional development evaluation forms at the conclusion of each session. Collaborating with reading specialist

on school based professional development along with completion of evaluation forms are common and existing practice in Kedville School District, therefore, it will not add any extra duties or responsibilities to any stakeholders involved with implementing this project.

Potential Barriers

This study, specifically the data findings, brought an awareness to the lack of knowledge, consistency, gaps, and training teachers have about reading interventions and implementation in Kedville School District. However, this project has the potential for barriers. Potential barriers may include teacher's resistance to change and accurately implement the interventions with fidelity. Teachers may learn new strategies and implementation practices; however, they may not put the changes into action in instructional delivery. Teachers may continue to make self-directed modifications while implementing the interventions instead of following the systematic delivery prescribed by the guidelines of the intervention. There is also a possibility that teachers may not follow the timelines and methods of the interventions. Lastly, teachers may not include all the reading components each intervention addresses. A solution to avoid the aforementioned potential barriers would be to introduce peer coaching or any of the coaching models discussed in Table 7. In addition, professional learning environments (PLCs) would create a communicative where teachers would need to be actively involved in sharing ideas, experiences, challenges, and progressions. Ongoing meetings will serve as an informal check in and substantiate implementation of practices.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

After completing this doctoral study in its entirety, I will begin my collaboration with the elementary reading supervisor. The supervisor is already familiar with the study so there will be no need to present an overview of the study. Instead, the reading supervisor and I will review the local reading data and the study findings in detail and determine the needs of the school district. We will make an outline including the specific topics of each professional development along with the goals and purpose we want addressed with each session. We will present this information to the school based administrators at their monthly principal's meeting. In addition, we will share the plan and purpose with the reading specialist assigned to each elementary school during their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

The reading supervisor, reading specialist, and I will have planning sessions. The sessions will begin with building the knowledge of the reading specialist who supports the teachers on a daily basis. We will review, analyze, and discuss current elementary reading data for the district. Since there are many reading specialists who are new to their positions, we will review and become familiar with the commercially purchased reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor. Collaboratively, we will create the PowerPoint for the beginning of the school year, system wide, preservice professional development day. Next, we will retrieve individualized school data to build an understanding of the needs of each school. The school data will be used to plan two succeeding school based professional development sessions needed to support struggling readers.

After building the reading specialist's capacity, we will focus on the professional development for teachers. During the beginning of the year preservice, teachers will learn about the commercial reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. Learning will include the reading components, timeline, and systematic approach of each reading intervention. Teacher guides will be shared during the session and important components of implementation will be highlighted during the session. At the conclusion of each session, teachers will complete evaluation forms. The feedback will be used to develop next steps for subsequent professional development. The evaluation will give teachers an opportunity to share what they learned during the session and what they feel they need to be successful with intervention implementation.

During the first school-based session, teachers will receive a half day of professional development focused on reading with an hour of the half day allocated for intervention implementation. This will be appropriate since all classroom teachers at the elementary level interact with students who struggle with reading. The session will be presented in October. It will include an overview of the reading interventions endorsed by the district along with topic derived from feedback forms from the preservice session. The reading specialist facilitating the professional development will be able to seize opportunities to expand the discussion based on questions posed and topics initiated by the teachers. Participants will review school data to determine patterns of strengths and weaknesses found in the student data.

Next, teachers will review and analyze individual class data for strengths and weaknesses. The data will include student outcomes on specific reading components measured by local data. Teachers will collaborate on next steps for intervention implementation. Again, teachers will complete an evaluation to provide feedback on what they learned from the professional development along with their future professional development needs. Teachers will also be able to send questions and seek support from the reading specialist throughout the school year. The reading specialist will use the feedback to collaborate with the principal and reading supervisor or next steps for professional development.

During the second school-based session, teachers will again receive a half day of professional development focused on reading that reflects the first school based session. An hour of the half day will be allotted for intervention implementation. The session will be presented in December. The session will begin with review, analysis and discussions of updated local student data. Teachers will analyze the data to determine strengths and weaknesses of students' progress because of intervention implementation. They will also determine how the reading interventions address the areas of strengths and weaknesses. In addition, teachers can use these sessions to create and monitor their SLOs used for their professional evaluations. The principal and reading specialist can integrate questions, responses, and feedback from the previous session in the creation of the professional development.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

The people responsible for this project will be the elementary reading supervisor, reading specialists assigned to the elementary schools, elementary principals, teachers, and myself. Our roles will be as follows. I will be responsible for collaborating with the elementary reading supervisor along with providing an overview to the elementary principals and reading specialist. The overview will include a summary of this study including the purpose, the findings, and data comprised of struggling readers in Kedville School District as a whole and then individual school data. I will share how the implementation of the project can aid and enhance teachers' instructional practices and the skills of struggling readers. The elementary reading supervisor will collaboratively participate in presenting the data with me. It is common practice for the elementary reading supervisor to share student data during principal meetings. The reading specialist will then provide an overview of the commercial reading interventions endorsed by the school district. The overview will include sharing components of the reading interventions, time lines of implementations, how student progress will be monitored, and provide video taped segments of the reading intervention implementation. This presentation will provide principals with a foundation of what to look for when supporting teachers, observing classrooms, or conducting "walk-throughs" of classrooms. The elementary reading supervisor and I will collaborate on plans to provide and set the purpose of the reading intervention professional development for the school year. In addition, we will share how the professional development plan aligns to the requirements included in ESSA.

Reading specialists will have roles in this project. Their roles will be to collaborate on creating a common PowerPoint presentation to share during the beginning of the school year preservice reading breakout sessions. They will also collaborate on common language and purposes to share at their individual schools during two follow up sessions that will be presented during school wide professional development days. The purpose of the PowerPoint presentations will be to build an understanding of the interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor along with teaching teachers how to implement the interventions with fidelity and integrity. Lastly, reading specialists will collaborate with their building level principals to add additional information to the presentation that will directly align to and affect their assigned school. The roles discussed for the reading specialists are common practices in Kedville School District, so it will not create new roles or responsibilities for these educators.

Principals will be responsible for participating in the professional development presented by the elementary reading supervisor and me during their monthly principals' meeting. They will also be responsible for organizing the professional development at their individual schools. This will include collaborating with their reading specialist on data and expected outcomes of the professional development providing. The principals will analyze the feedback forms after each professional development to decide next steps for professional development and the ongoing progression of their school. Lastly, the principal will seek support from the elementary reading supervisor, reading specialist assigned to their school, and/or me as needed. The responsibilities discussed for the

principal are common practices in Kedville School District, so they will not create new responsibilities for the principals.

Teachers' will participate in the professional development opportunities offered. This will not impact their current roles or responsibilities since attending specific professional development is a common practice and expectation in Kedville School District. Teachers will use data to determine the students who need reading interventions. They will be responsible for implementing the reading interventions systematically and accurately. Lastly, they will be responsible for monitoring student progress and collaborating with the reading specialist as scheduled and as needed.

Project Evaluation

The project will be three professional development sessions provided to classroom teachers. The sessions will enhance their knowledge and ability to implement reading interventions to struggling readers. The project will begin with an overview of the commercial reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. Topics will include small group delivery, intervals of implementation, reading components addressed by the two interventions, the systematic process of implementation, how to monitor student progress, and next steps for students making progress and those who are not.

Teachers will complete evaluations at the end of each professional development session to communicate professional growth and/or future needs. The feedback on the evaluation forms will be used to plan future professional development opportunities. In addition, school leaders can use the feedback to determine the overall effectiveness of

this professional development project that focuses on implementation of reading interventions.

After the three sessions are complete, the principal has the potential to continue with the project goals by conducting additional professional development sessions focused on reading intervention implementation. Data from local assessment could be used to determine next steps and needs. These data could be analyzed while monitoring SLO's, during team meetings, during whole staff meetings and while collaborating with the reading specialists. The data could determine if the professional development was effective or if additional professional development is needed. This project has the potential to be an ongoing process as students' needs change and teachers' skills are different. Continuation of a progress monitoring process of intervention implementation is crucial. Principals could use student data, observations, feedback forms, SLO documentation, face-to-face check-ins, and participation in team meetings to monitor the fidelity and influence of the outcomes established by this project's implementation.

Implications for Social Change

Local Community

In Chapter 1, I shared data indicating there are students in Kedville School District who have deficits in reading. This was determined by the lack of success on both local and state assessments. In addition, I provided evidence that there is a trend found in the standardized assessments results. The assessment results show there has been an increase in the number of students who are not meeting academic success. These results

exposed the fact that there are students who do not possess the basic skills needed to be successful when presented with grade level content, skills, and academic expectations. Also, the findings from this study found teachers did not implement the commercial reading interventions with accuracy or systematically as prescribed. Lastly, there are struggling readers receiving reading intervention support who are not making progress.

This project has the potential to make social change for the local community by addressing the needs of both teachers and struggling readers. Teachers will receive relevant professional development that will enhance their skills, strategies, instructional delivery, and knowledge when supporting struggling readers. Teachers will learn how to implement reading interventions to struggling students consistently using the components of reading and with a systematic method of planned instruction. Research by Simmons et al. (2011), Wanzek et al. (2012), and Lo et al. (2009) found students who are below grade level require consistent systematic multicomponent lessons in order to make reading progress. This process will provide the foundation for students to receive effective reading interventions that will build their reading competency.

This project will be important to stakeholders. If the professional development increases teachers' knowledge and abilities to provide appropriate intervention implementation to struggling readers, students who struggle in reading may achieve academically. The student nor their families will be burdened with the challenges and frustrations faced by illiterate individuals, including struggling throughout their educational career and limitations in future employment to name a few. This project can assist struggling readers with gaining the skills needed to be successful in future courses

and higher learning. With reading achievement, they can become productive contributors to society and in the workplace. School personnel will not be faced with decisions involving spending additional funds and spreading resources to address this specific population. Instead, they will be able to make instructional decisions that will influence the larger school population as a whole.

Far-Reaching

The U.S. Department of Education (2012) released information that shows all school districts have students who struggle to read. This project is important to the larger context because illiterate individuals can have an impact in many ways including financial burdens that weigh on public aid, high dropout rates, and encounters with correctional systems and institutions that affects public programs and financial burdens of jails, courts, and police. The U.S. Department of Education also has data that confirms a yearly increase in the number of students struggling in reading. Therefore, teachers need to know how to address this growing problem. The sessions will provide teachers with knowledge and training about the reading interventions, how they work, and systematic implementation. Teachers who participate in this project will enhance their capacity to implement interventions appropriately and increase the reading abilities of struggling readers. An accurate intervention implementation will benefit the society because students have the potential to receive the supports they need to build their reading abilities. As students accomplish academic achievement, they have more potential to be successful in higher learning and workplace. Students who acquire reading skills have the potential to become positive contributor to society.

Conclusion

In Chapter 3, I described the project I created in response to the data. I explained the description and goals, rationale, review of literature, implementation, project evaluation, and implications for social change. Based on the study findings, teachers needed to build an understanding of implementing reading interventions. The goal of the project will be to create a three-session professional development that will provide teachers with adequate training. The training will build teachers' skills, strategies and systematic process of implementing interventions for struggling readers.

The rationale for this project was based on the data. The data gathered identified gaps, variations in delivery, and infrequency of training. In addition, students were not making reading progress with current intervention implementation practices.

I conducted a literature review related to professional development for teachers. I found research that supports the effectiveness of professional development when the coaching model and professional learning community methodologies are used. This project will be presented during the school year. It will begin with teachers engaging in professional development at the beginning of the year. There will be two follow-up sessions. The sessions will extend teachers' knowledge about implementation of the research-based interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. Between formal sessions, teachers will engage in team meetings to collaborate, get support, and grow their learning through experiences with intervention implementation. They will also receive support from the reading specialist assigned to the school. Supports can include collaborative planning of lessons to implement

interventions, peer modeling, informal peer observations with feedback and question/answer meeting sessions to name a few. This structure of professional development aligns to both the coaching and the professional learning community frameworks that guided this project.

In this chapter, I explained how the project would be implemented after receiving final approval from Walden University and confirmation of my program completion. Implementation will include an information session for elementary principals and reading specialists. They will receive an overview of the project including its goals, purpose and how it will be will be implemented. There will also be discussion about the reading interventions and their systematically implementation. This will build a shared vision, communication, and expectation between school based and central office leaders (Buttram & Farley-Ripple, 2016).

Teachers will also receive professional development on intervention implementation to struggling readers. They will participate in professional development sessions held on the schoolwide preservice day and two professional days designated on the school calendar. They will also participate in PLCs to collaborate, increase their understanding of the endorsed interventions, get support, and share practices.

The project's evaluation will be based upon teacher's feedback after each professional development session. Teachers will provide feedback on what they learned by participating and what they need to learn about the interventions in the future. School and district leaders will use the teacher's feedback to plan future professional

development. In addition, the feedback will assist school leaders in securing and providing appropriate grade level or individualized support for teachers.

Lastly, I discussed how this project has the potential to make social change. Teachers will receive training that will boost their skills and instructional delivery when implementing interventions to struggling readers. Students will receive lessons delivered accurately and systematically. The methodological delivery has the potential to enhance the abilities of students who struggle with reading.

In Chapter 4, I will reflect on my project. My reflection will include sharing the project's strengths and limitations. I will discuss what I learned about scholarship, project development, and leadership and change. I will analyze myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Lastly, I will reflect on my project's potential for social change and future research in the educational field.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

Section 4 will include my reflections, conclusions, and analysis of my project and myself as a scholar. In this section, I will explain the strengths and limitations including my recommendations for remediation of limitations of my project. I will share what I learned about scholarship, project development, and evaluation as well as leadership and change. I will analyze myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Lastly, I will describe the project's potential impact on social change and implications, applications, and directions for future research in the educational field.

Project Strengths

It is evident there are students who struggle with reading in all school districts across the national. The data in this study confirmed teachers need professional development in order to address the needs of struggling students and implement research-based reading interventions accurately. This project has strengths in addressing the problem. The ongoing professional development will include direct learning, peer coaching and participation in professional learning communities. Teachers will have opportunities to learn, use new practices, reflect on practices, and refine skills to meet the needs of their struggling readers. Teachers will learn the appropriate and systematic process of intervention implementation included in the research-based reading interventions manual by participating in continuous professional development. This will build teachers' understanding of fundamental reading components that are crucial in reading instruction. They will learn how to implement reading interventions

systematically and with fidelity. Teachers will also have a peer mentor to share ideas with, gain new ideas from, and access for support. Participation in a PLC will provide grade level comradery, shared resources, and a common focus on students. Teachers will be able to increase their collaboration and use of resources to complete SLO documents that address the needs of students. The planning template will provide structure and a monitoring tool when teachers meet with their peer mentor and grade level teams. The evaluation tools used after professional development meetings will allow principals to monitor the effectiveness of meetings. This information will help principals develop purposeful meeting goals and objectives that build the capacity of their teachers (Buttram & Farley-Ripple, 2016). Principals will be able to provide relevant professional development to their staff while simultaneously increasing knowledge of intervention implementation, bringing awareness of student needs, and monitoring the progress of struggling readers.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

I will address three essential limitations in this subsection. One of the biggest potential limitations of this project could be teachers who do not use the new intervention implementation practices during instructional delivery. Teachers may actively engage in the professional development but convert back to their traditional and familiar practices when providing instruction. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to participate in ongoing professional development, peer coaching opportunities, and PLCs to receive continuous follow up and support. Participation in ongoing professional development will allow teachers to learn, implement, revisit, reflect, and refine on new practices. Interacting with

a peer mentor and participating in a PLC avoids implementing new strategies autonomously. Instead, teachers will have a network of colleagues to share and discuss ideas, resources, planning, and challenges. This support system has the potential to reduce chances for teachers to abandon or not implement new instructional practices and has the potential to increase sustainability of implementing new practices.

There needs to be a way to monitor teachers' instructional practices beyond the traditional once a year formal classroom observation. I would recommend principals collaborate with teachers to create an informal walk through checklist that includes instructional "look fors." Principals and teachers could use this informal process to monitor the use of new learning and discuss next steps to continue building teachers' capacities. Principals could also use this information to develop relevant professional development topics and learning opportunities.

The second limitation involves the study participants. This study was limited to teachers who interact with struggling second graders at two schools. Data at the two schools are historically the lowest in the district. A suggestion for future research would be to expand the participant pool to include the perceptions of teachers at schools that interact with students who struggle and have average and high reading levels to determine their perception of their intervention implementation to those struggling readers. Also, multiple grade levels could be included in this study.

Lastly, another limitation was that this study involved teachers who worked with struggling second grade readers. During this study, second grade students did not participate in state standardized assessments. Therefore, this study relied on teachers

reviewing local data when formulating their perspectives on their intervention implementation. I would suggest using participants who work with grade levels that participate in standardized testing. This will allow teachers to use unbiased data to analyze their practices and formulate perspectives on what they do. This will give the researcher a broader understanding of teachers' perspectives of their intervention implementation.

Scholarship

Throughout my participation in this educational journey, I had many learning opportunities that have changed me as a professional, educational leader, and communicator. I gained two noteworthy perspectives about learning and expanded my professional learning and personal learning. Professionally, I learned teachers need ongoing support in order for professional development to be effective. As I reflect back on my leadership practices, I too am guilty of providing "one shot" professional learning opportunities to teachers without any follow up or support offered afterwards. According to research, this technique is not effective if you want teachers to learn new skills or implement new strategies. I also learned professional development should include opportunities for collegiality in learning, planning, implementing, reflecting, and refining educational practices. Teachers should not be left alone to make instructional changes and address student needs. Instead, they need opportunities to collaborate with peers to build their repertoire of strategies, focus on common purposes, sustain effective practices, and work on shared goals and challenges that affect student learning.

I also learned teachers are given unfamiliar instructional tools to use. During this study, teachers communicated their lack of training or out dated training on materials endorsed by school leaders. In order for school leaders to endorse research-based materials and ask teachers to implement practices, it is essential to provide adequate professional development to assure quality and fidelity in practice. It is imperative for school leaders to consider and include time and ongoing professional learning opportunities when making instructional decisions that will influence what teachers teach and the resources that they will use.

Personally, I learned about scholarly reading, writing and communicating through this process. Feedback from my chair and co-chair progressed my writing. Their comments identified my writing weaknesses, common mistakes, and syntax errors. I used their feedback along with the rubric to refine my writing style and communicate my ideas clearly. I am able to detect linguistic errors and formulate sentences that are structurally compelling and less passive. As a district leader, this will aid, polish, and strengthen my communication with educators.

Project Development and Evaluation

Project development should derive from the needs of the participants. This project evolved from the findings in the data and the fact that there are struggling second grade readers in the local district. Analysis of the data revealed teachers were implementing interventions to struggling second grade readers, but the students were not making adequate progress. Also, the teachers communicated an absence or lack of participation in professional development that focused on intervention implementation.

Therefore, I used the data from this study to create an ongoing professional development that will provide teachers with direct learning, a peer coach, and collaboration in a PLC. They will also receive resources that include planning templates to identify and document learning needs and strategies used while refining implementation practices. This will allow teachers to share resources and ideas as they reflect on practices and monitor student progress.

As a district leader, I have a better understanding of the significance of relevant professional development. When planning professional development, there are important factors that need to be determined. The facilitator needs to determine the audience, the purpose, the expected outcome, and the ongoing support necessary to sustain the goals. Professional development needs to be an ongoing process. Teachers need time to learn, implement, and reflect on practices. Time needs to be allocated for follow up, peer support, collaboration, reflection, and refining. As teachers collaborate, they need a planning template to plan, guide, and shape their focus. There also needs to be an evaluation process to monitor the progress of the goals and practices put in place. Instructional leaders need to participant feedback from the evaluation process to support teachers, provide appropriate resources, and plan future follow-up professional development and supports that will enhance instructional practices.

Leadership and Change

Leadership and change requires an ongoing process of learning, collaborating, reflecting, monitoring, and refining. Through the process of this study, I learned authentic leadership involves building an understanding of what you do not know and

being open to the thoughts, needs, and ideas of others. Leadership should not solely be about sharing the latest education trend or jargon. Instead, leadership should include soliciting the needs of your teachers. Then, using the information gained to provide relevant and ongoing professional development that will enhance their instructional delivery and needs. As teachers build their capacity, they have the potential to change how students are taught, resulting in an increase in student achievement.

Throughout this doctoral journey, I have learned about the impact of collaboration. I had to collaborate with the elementary reading supervisor to learn about the research-based reading interventions endorsed in the school district. I also collaborated to identify a relevant project that would address the needs of the participants who are challenged to increase the skills of struggling second grade readers. The research used in this study revealed the importance of teacher collaboration. Teachers need time to reflect on practices and refine skills. This collaboration avoids feelings of isolation and the abandonment of new skills learned. Collaboration provides many opportunities for change as participants are able to share ideas, reflect on methods, refine practices, and monitor instructional implementation. This will lead to changes in instruction procedures that have the potential to influence student learning.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

As I analyze myself as a scholar, I see an improved educator. My growth has included honing my educational focus and using data driven inquiry and decision-making. I am able to examine educational challenges, ask relevant questions, gather data, organize and code the data so it makes sense, explore and exhaust the research, and

dissect data to build an understanding of problems. Involvement in this doctoral program has enhanced my leadership skills, decision-making process, and communication abilities. When communicating with teachers, I am able to provide evidence to support educational decisions, explain the purpose for what we do, and justify why we participate in specific professional development opportunities.

In the past, I used the current trends or education jargon to provide professional development for teachers. As I reflect, I am not sure if the professional development opportunities were relevant or met teachers' needs. I was also one of those leaders who provided one shot professional development opportunities and left teachers on their own to carry out the process. Conducting this case study has changed my leadership style and process. It taught me to solicit information from teachers to gain an understanding of their professional needs and follow up with relevant professional development that meets their needs. I have learned to secure time and resources for teachers to participate in ongoing professional opportunities that involve follow up from meetings and presentations. Teachers also need to participate in nonjudgmental peer coaching and PLCs to get support, share ideas, monitor student progress, reflect on instructional delivery, and refine practices. As I use these skills and practices throughout my educational career, I have the potential to enhance teachers' instructional practices. As teachers' increase their skills, struggling readers have the potential to receive appropriate instruction that increases their reading abilities.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

I have analyzed myself as a practitioner in the field of education. I see many positive changes and growth that will enhance me as a leader. I have become more conscientious in my decision-making and communication. I thought I made the best decisions in the past. As I reflect, I realize my decisions were made through a single lens, my own. I have learned that this was a narrow mindset. Participation in this doctoral program and conducting this study has awakened my thinking, focused my collaboration, and stimulated my ability to provide leadership and professional development for a specific purpose.

I have learned to seek and exhaust resources to support decisions that affect instruction, teachers and student learning. I am able to analyze data to understand, address, and monitor the progressions of a problem. I believe in providing ongoing collaboration opportunities among colleagues and continuous professional development that is monitored for progressions and next steps. Learning how to lead and provide effective professional development and support for teachers has the potential to intensify instructional deliver to struggling readers. Engagement in improved instruction has the potential to build struggling students reading skills

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

I am able to develop purposeful projects. It had been a common practice to look at data, determine students are struggling and release teachers to continue with current instructional practices. In addition, I provided professional development on educational issues that did not align to areas of need. This is true because topics were determined

without an analysis of any data. Now, I am able to analyze data to determine areas of weakness in teacher and student skills. This experience taught me to analyze data, understand stakeholder needs, and research the literature and resources to determine topics for future projects.

I reflected on how I used and will use participants' evaluation responses at the end of professional development sessions. I will make many changes in the use of this information. I will not skim through the responses to look for good comments and give a sign of relief. Instead, evaluations will consist of open-ended questions to get an understanding of participant's learning and perspective. Analysis of the data will determine the effectiveness of the professional development and regulate next steps based on the needs that emerge from the responses. In addition, I will establish follow up professional opportunities that allow teachers to learn, practice, reflect, refine skills, and monitor progress. All of my future projects will be evidence based and strategically planned to offer collaboration and collegial support. The literature supports the need for a continuation in learning and peer support for teachers. These changes in my leadership style and process have the potential to heighten teaching practices and student achievement.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

As I reflect, this project has the potential to impact social change on the local level and beyond. There are three key points that this project influences for the local level. First, teachers are using disjointed and modified approaches to implement interventions to struggling readers. This project has the potential to teach teachers a

systematic approach to intervention implementation that aligns to the research based

guidelines of the commercially developed interventions. Next, there is data that describes

the lack or absence of professional development received by teachers in intervention

implementation. This project will create professional development opportunities and

collaboration for teachers to increase their understanding of the interventions endorsed by

the elementary reading supervisor in the local school district. Lastly, there are struggling

readers who receive interventions implementation using current practices, but they are

not making adequate progress. This project has the potential to change, update, and

improve teachers' implementation practices. Building teachers' capacities has the

likelihood of increasing students reading achievement.

This project has the potential to impact education beyond the local level. Data

show struggling readers are in all school districts across the nation and teachers are

responsible for enhancing their skills. This study can help leaders in other school

systems learn ways to support their teachers. They can follow the process used in this

study. First, they can examine student data to determine if struggling readers are making

adequate progress. Next, school leaders can survey teachers to find out what supports

and interventions are implemented, and processes that they are using. They could also

review previous professional development topics to determine if intervention

implementation training is up to date for educators. Responses gathered from that data

would allow the school leaders to develop relevant professional development that aligns

to the needs of their educators and influences student achievement.

Lastly, leaders in other school districts could learn three important ideas about providing professional development. First, professional development needs to be relevant to the participants needs. Secondly, professional development needs to be ongoing to give teachers time to use what they learn and reflect on practices as they build their understanding. Thirdly, teachers need the support of peer mentors and opportunities to participate in PLCs. This will allow teachers to collaboratively plan, learn, share ideas, reflect, refine skills, and monitor student progress.

This project has the potential for social change at the local level and beyond. The process used in this project will assist school leaders with providing relevant and ongoing professional development to teachers. Applicable professional development has the potential to increase teachers' abilities to implement appropriate intervention implementation to struggling readers. If struggling readers receive proper instruction, they have the potential to increase their reading abilities.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This work is important because we have students across the nation lacking adequate skills to read grade level content. We also have teachers who are responsible for delivering instruction and support to enhance struggling students' academic achievement. This work is important for student achievement and teachers' ability to provide appropriate instruction. For students, continuing with a deficit in reading has the potential to carry throughout their lifetime, which can result in strains in government resources including welfare assistance, jails, and courts to name a few. Furthermore, these students could become illiterate adults. This could result in high dropout rates,

elevated unemployment, families living in poverty, or illiterate adults working in low wage jobs. The aforementioned have the potential to strain public resources. During this study, I learned students are receiving intervention support; however, they are not making adequate progress. Factors that possibly contribute to the lack of progress are teachers' lack of training and unmethodical approaches in intervention implementation.

For teachers, this work has the potential to provide pertinent professional development that will enhance their abilities to support struggling readers appropriately. Engagement in this project, will allow teachers to build their understanding of the essential components of reading and learn how to implement research based reading interventions methodically. Teachers will be able to network with peers, learn new skills, reflect on practices, refine skills, and use new approaches to meet the needs of struggling readers. Through this study, I learned that teachers lacked formal training in the research based reading intervention endorsed by the local district. Also, they modified their instruction and did not have a systematic approach when implementing interventions. The aforementioned learning points could be true for other school districts, which could cause unsuccessful results for struggling students who receive reading intervention support.

Although I learned a wealth of information that will enhance my ability to support teachers in the future and build teachers' intervention implementation when supporting struggling readers, there are suggestions for future research. This study could be conducted over an entire school year to use a mixed-method approach to measure teachers' progress in intervention implementation and struggling students' reading

achievement. Qualitative factors could be used to determine the effectiveness of engagement in ongoing professional development, follow up support, and collaboration. Quantitative factors could be monitoring time and intervals teachers use to implement interventions and student reading levels. This study could also be conducted across multiple grades.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reflected on my insight and learning from this project. I shared my project's strengths, limitations, and recommended remediations. I discussed what I learned about scholarship, project development, and evaluation and leadership and change. I analyzed myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Lastly, I reflected on my project's potential impact for social change and possibilities for future research.

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Appendix A: Project

Introduction:

This project is a three session professional development for elementary teachers who implement reading interventions to struggling readers. Teachers will engage in professional development to increase teachers' knowledge and abilities to implement commercial reading interventions according to the program guidelines. Teachers will also collaborate in professional learning communities when they meet biweekly in grade level teams. The reading specialist assigned to each school will serve as a non-evaluative coach. The reading specialist will provide supports that include but are not limited to collaboration on lesson plans, providing modeling, and conducting informal peer observations and organizing visits to observe instruction in classes with the same grade and similar student's abilities.

Purpose: Teachers lack training, methodological approaches, and are implementing interventions inconsistently. Students are not making adequate academic progress with current practices. There is a need to build teachers' capacities when delivering interventions to struggling readers.

Goals: To enhance teachers' knowledge and intervention implementation strategies to provide efficient support to struggling readers so they may increase their skills.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain and enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District.
- Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the intervention guides.
- Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity.

Target Audience: Classroom teachers who provide intervention support to struggling readers

Project Contents:

- Professional Development training materials for each session including:
    - Planning Guide
    - Agenda
    - PowerPoint
    - Evaluation Sheet
- Professional Learning Community and Peer Coaching meeting/planning template
- Project Introduction PowerPoint for Principals Meetings and Reading Specialists Meeting

Preservice Professional Development

Planning Guide
Professional development training materials
Professional Development # 1 - Preservice

Planning Guide		Date:
Objective	- Explain and enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. - Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the teaching guides. - Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity.	Trainer Notes
Materials	- Fundations Teacher Guide - Sample of Fundations Supplement Materials - Leveled Literacy Reading Teacher Guide - Sample of Leveled Literacy Supplement Materials	Trainer Notes - Send reminder email to teachers – bring your teacher guides. - Facilitator needs to bring samples of supplemental materials
Engagement	- Teachers identify a student that they consider a struggling reader - Teachers define struggling reader - Teachers monitor their knowledge during the presentation	Trainer Notes
Evaluation		Trainer Notes Bring evaluation forms

Note: Trainer notes will develop when the final study is approved and the facilitators prepare to implement the project.

Time	What	Teacher Notes
	Elementary Preservice Agenda Humanities Teachers (insert date)	
8:00 – 8:30	• Welcome • Agenda • Purpose • Recently Released State Reading Data	
8:30 – 9:30	What is a struggling Reader?	
9:30 – 10:30	Essential Components of Reading	
10:30 – 10:45	Break	
10:50 – 11:50	School Team Breakout session: Fundations	
11:50 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:30 – 2:35	School Team Breakout session: Leveled Literacy Intervention	
2:40 – 3:00	Closure	
3:00 – 3:15	Evaluation	

Preservice PowerPoint

Agenda

Elementary Preservice Agenda Humanities Teachers (insert date)		
Time	**What**	**Teacher Notes**
8:00 – 8:30	• Welcome • Agenda • Purpose • Recently Released State Reading Data	
8:30 – 9:30	What is a struggling Reader?	
9:30 – 10:30	Essential Components of Reading	
10:30 – 10:40	Break	
10:40 – 12:30	Fundations	
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch	
1:30 – 3:30	Leveled Literacy Intervention	

Setting a Purpose for Professional Development.....

- What: Kick off to ongoing professional development
- Topic: Research based reading intervention implementation
- Goals:
  - Enhance teachers' skills in reading intervention implementation
  - Increase achievement of struggling readers
- Why:
  - We have students who are below reading level
  - Reading deficit affects learning across all content areas

Before this presentation, insert the most recent student data for the local district that is released from the Maryland State Department of Education

What is a struggling reader?

Create a working definition of a struggling reader with you table.
Be ready to share with the whole group.

Think about and make notes on the following.....

- A student that you have had or worked with that struggled in reading
  - Why did you identify this student as a struggling reader?
  - What were the student's strengths?
  - What were the student's weaknesses?
  - What did you do to increase the student's skills?
  - Did you work alone or did you collaborate with other educators? Why or why not? If yes, how did you work together and how often?
  - What resources did you use to support the student?
  - Did you focus on any specific reading components? If yes, list the components

Discuss your experiences with someone near you.....

- A student that you have had or worked with that struggled in reading
  - Why did you identify this student as a struggling reader?
  - What were the student's strengths?
  - What were the student's weaknesses?
  - What did you do to increase the student's skills?
  - Did you work alone or did you collaborate with other educators? Why or why not? If yes, how did you work together and how often?
  - What resources did you use to support the student?
  - Did you focus on any specific reading components? If yes, list the components

Discuss your experiences as a table group and record your responses on the chart paper provided.....

- A student that you have had or worked with that struggled in reading
  - Why did you identify this student as a struggling reader?
  - What were the student's strengths?
  - What were the student's weaknesses?
  - What did you do to increase the student's skills?
  - Did you work alone or did you collaborate with other educators? Why or why not? If yes, how did you work together and how often?
  - What resources did you use to support the student?
  - Did you focus on any specific reading components? If yes, list the components

Take a gallery walk and discuss…

- Did you see familiar practices?
- Did you see new practices?
- How many practices related to reading?
- How many practices did not relate to reading?
- Did the practices address specific reading components that are research based?
- How many practices aligned to the research based reading interventions endorsed by our school district?
- Can you answer any of the questions above with confidence and accuracy?

Throughout today and during follow up professional development opportunities at your school, think about:

- What is a struggling reader?
- Why is this student a struggling reader?
- What is this student's reading deficits?
- How will I meet this student's needs?

What are the essential components of reading?

List the essential components of reading.

Share with a partner.

Add or delete components based on your partner discussion.

Write your name on your list and put your lists in a pile in the middle of your table.

Essential Components of reading accredited in the research based reading interventions we use in our school district

Vocabulary

- Development of a mental dictionary
- Learn and use unfamiliar words that are introduced (e.g. stories and informational text)
- Build an understanding of the meaning of words
- Use words to acquire and convey meaning

Sight Words

- High frequency words most often used in print
- Common words used everyday in language
- Many are phonetically irregular and do not follow patterns taught in the English language
- Words taught to be memorized so they are recognized quickly in reading

Comprehension

- Processing events in a text to extract meaning
- Understand information in a story and link events to make sense of the text
- Recall events and explain text
- Construct meaning and make mental images from words in a text

Phonemic Awareness

- Ability to blend, segment and manipulate sounds in words
- Ability to decode and spell unfamiliar words
- Blending sounds to make words
- Segmenting words into individual sounds
- The ability to notice or manipulative the individual sounds in words

Phonics

- Mastery of letter/sound relationships
- Blend sounds in words together and reads word as a whole with accuracy
- Understand letter/sound relationships
- Understand sounds are connected to letters
- Use letters and sound combinations to read and spell unfamiliar words

Fluency

- The ability to read grade level text accurately, with automaticity and proper expression.
- Read smoothly and pause at punctuation
- Ability to read words automatically with appropriate intonation

Decoding

- Understand the smallest unit of sound
- Segmenting sounds in isolation without adding extra sound or changing the sound
- Ability to apply letter/sound relationship to pronounce written words.
- Ability to figure out unfamiliar words
- Skill of attacking and reading an unfamiliar word

Word Work/Spelling

- Ability to spell and segment words to resemble their patterns
- Ability to use letters in correct sequence to produce a word accurately

Engagement in Reading

- Provide opportunities to transfer skills into practice
- Provide time to read and reread text
- Put books in students hands – exposure to books
- Designate time for independent, shared, small group, and partner reading
- Designate time for free reading to:
  - Self select text
  - Read for interest

Retrieve your list from the middle of the table. Compare and discuss.

- Vocabulary
- Sight words
- Comprehension
- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Decoding
- Engagement in reading
- Word Work Spelling

Intervention Implementation

Fundations
&
Leveled Literacy Intervention
(LLI)

Procedures

- Take a 15 minute break
- After break report to your designated school team breakout room
- Topic: Fundations
- Lunch
- Topic: Leveled Literacy Intervention
- Report back to this location
- Closing
- Complete evaluation

School Team Sessions

Fundations

- Understanding the Teacher's Manual
- Purpose
- Timeline
- Setting up your classroom
- Materials
- Procedures

Leveled Literacy Intervention

- Understanding the Lesson Guide
- Goals
- Lessons
- Materials
- Procedures
- Review of sample material

Let's take a 15 minute break.....

Closing

- At your tables, discuss:
  - Something shared today that you already knew
  - Something new you learned today
  - One thing you learned today that you plan to use when working with students this school year

Questions?

Next steps for this school year...

- Continue developing understanding of interventions at your home school
- Collaborate in PLC's and with peer mentors to continue growing knowledge of intervention implementation, put new learning into practice, refine skills, network with colleagues, share ideas and materials
- Collaborate with your reading specialists
- Use data to make instructional decisions for students and monitor student growth

- Complete your evaluation

- Enjoy the rest of the day

- Have a great school year

Preservice Evaluation
Elementary Humanities Teachers
(Insert Date)

Focus: Reading, Interventions, Struggling Readers

1. What did you learn from your participation in this professional development?

2. How will you use your new learning when working with struggling students?

3. What did you learn about *Fundations* that you did not know?

4. What would you like to learn about *Fundations* in a future professional development?

5. What did you learn about LLI that you did not know?

6. What would you like to learn about LLI in a future professional development?

7. What do you think will be your biggest challenge when you work with struggling readers this school year?

8. Reflect on your learning today. What will you need to implement reading interventions with success?

9. What challenges do you anticipate encountering when implementing reading interventions to struggling readers this school year?

10. What would you like to learn about reading instruction in your next professional development?
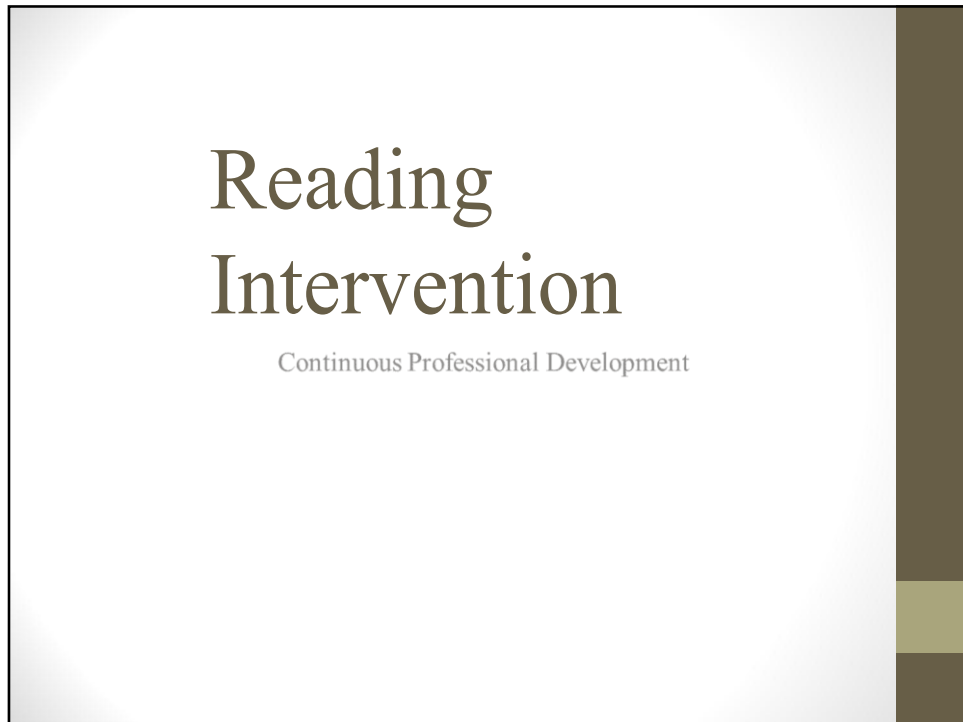
Professional Development # 2 – School Based

Planning Guide Date:		
Goals:	• Enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. • Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the intervention guides. • Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity. • Use student's reading data to identify students' needs • Use data to create SLO plans	Trainer Notes
Materials	• *Fundations* Teacher Guides • Sample of *Fundations* Materials • LLI Teacher Guides • Sample of LLI Supplement Materials • Copies of PLC planning template • Copies of SLO document • Grade Level Data	Trainer Notes • Tell teachers to bring their computers to access individual class data • Intervention teacher guides
Evaluation		Trainer Notes • Bring evaluation forms

Note: Trainer notes will develop when the final study is approved and the facilitators prepare to implement the project.

Professional Development Agenda (#2) Humanities Teachers (insert date)		
Time	What	Teacher Notes
8:00 – 8:15	• Agenda • Purpose	
8:15 – 9:15	Mock Instruction: *Fundations*	
9:15 – 10:00	Corners Question/Answer	
10:00 – 10:15	Break	
10:15 – 11:15	Mock Instruction: LLI	
11:15 – 12:00	Corners Question/Answer	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 3:30	Grade Level Collaboration: • Analyze Student Data • Use data to create team SLO • Use the *Fundations* and LLI teacher guides and scope and sequence to develop long and short term planning	
3:30	Evaluation	

PowerPoint School Based Professional Development #2

Reading Intervention

Continuous Professional Development

Agenda

Time	What	Teacher Notes
	Professional Development (2) **Humanities Teachers** **(insert date)**	
8:00 – 8:15	• Agenda • Purpose	
8:15 – 9:15	Mock Instruction: Fundations	
9:15 – 10:00	Corners Question/Answer	
10:00 – 10:15	Break	
10:15 – 11:15	Mock Instruction: Fundations	
11:15 – 12:00	Corners Question/Answer	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 3:30	Grade Level Collaboration: • Analyze Student Data • Use data to create team SLO • Use the Fundations and Leveled Literacy Intervention teacher guides and scope and sequence to develop long and short term planning	
3:30	Evaluation	

Goals:

- Enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District.
Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the intervention guides.

- Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity.

- Use students' reading data to identify students' needs

- Use data to create SLO plans

Mock Instruction: Fundations

- Watch Fundations in Action
- Look for:

- What is accomplished in this lesson?
- What are the students learning?
- What process is used to implement this intervention as suggested by the research?
- What is the teacher doing to make this instruction successful?
- What should students be doing during this process?
- How do I monitor students' understanding?

Corners: Fundations

- Go to your grade level location
- Review and discuss grade level materials needed for successful implementation
- Ask Questions

Let's take a break…..

Mock Instruction: Level Literacy Intervention

- Watch Leveled Literacy Intervention in Action
- Look for:
  - What is accomplished in this lesson?
  - What are the students learning?
  - What process is used to implement this intervention as suggested by the research?
  - What is the teacher doing to make this instruction successful?
  - What should students be doing during this process?
  - How do I monitor students' understanding?

Corners: Fundations

- Go to your grade level location
- Review and discuss grade level materials needed for successful implementation
- Ask Questions

Lunch Break!

Grade Level Collaboration

- Retrieve your class data from the intranet
- As a team, discuss: What does the data tell you?
- Use the data to create a team SLO for struggling readers
- Use the intervention guides to develop long and short term:
  - Goals
  - Strategies
  - Draft timelines
  - Process to monitor student growth
  - Alternate plans for students that do not show progress

Questions?

Next Steps….

- Use collaborative planning time to:
  - Discuss new learning, refine skills, monitor progress, network, share resources
  - Collaborate with peer mentor

Please complete your evaluation and drop it in the box.

Thank you!

Professional Development #2 Evaluation

Elementary Humanities Teachers
(Insert Date)

Focus: Reading, Interventions, Struggling Readers

1. What did you learn from your participation in this professional development?

2. How will you use your new learning when working with struggling students?

3. What did you learn about *Fundations* that you did not know?

4. What would you like to learn *about Fundations in* a future professional development?

5. What did you learn about LLI that you did not know?

6. What would you like to learn about LLI in a future professional development?

7. Reflect on your learning today. What supports will you need to implement reading interventions with success?

8. What challenges do you anticipate encountering when implementing reading interventions to struggling readers this school year?

9. What would you like to learn about reading instruction in your next professional development?

Professional Development #3 – School Based

Planning Guide Date:		
Goals	• Enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District. • Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the intervention guides. • Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity. • Use data to monitor students' progress and needs • Use data to monitor SLO goals and progress. • Use data to Modify instructional practices as needed aligned to the intervention guidelines.	Trainer Notes
Materials		Trainer Notes • Tell teachers to bring their computers to access class data and intervention guides
Evaluation		Trainer Notes • Bring evaluation forms

Note: Trainer notes will develop when the final study is approved and the facilitators prepare to implement the project.

Time	What	Teacher Notes
	Professional Development Agenda (3) Humanities Teachers (insert date)	
8:00 – 8:15	- Agenda - Purpose	
8:15 – 8:45	What do we see? - Whole Group: Review School Data - Grade Level: Review Grade Level Data	
8:45 – 9:00	Review: Essential Components of Reading	
9:00 – 10:00	Grade Level Discussion: - Areas of growth - Areas of need - Next Steps *Gallery Walk	
10:00 – 10:15	Break	
10:15 – 10:35	All Share	
10:35 – 12:00	Team Planning and Collaboration	
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:00	Team Planning and Collaboration	
2:00 – 2:15	Evaluation	
2:15 – 3:30	Work in classrooms - Organize intervention materials - Small group planning	

Professional Development #3 PowerPoint

Goals

- Enhance teachers' understanding of the research based reading interventions endorsed by the elementary reading supervisor in Kedville School District.
- Learn the methodological practices found to be effective and outlined in the intervention guides.
- Learn how to implement reading interventions with fidelity.
- Use data to monitor students' progress and needs
- Use data to monitor SLO goals and progress.
- Use data to Modify instructional practices as needed aligned to the intervention guidelines.

What do you see?

- Whole group:

Insert up-to-date school data before presentation

What do you see?

- Grade level:
  - Retrieve grade level data and class data from the intranet

Essential Components of Reading

- Vocabulary
- Sight words
- Comprehension
- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Decoding
- Engagement in reading
- Word Work Spelling

Grade Level Discussion

Use the data to discuss and chart:

- Areas students demonstrated growth
- Areas of need
- Next steps, goals and strategies
- Chart your responses

Take a gallery walk with your team:

- What did you learn from other teams
- What ideas did you get from them
- What are you going to try with your students

15 minute break

Share:

- What did you learn from other teams
- What ideas did you get from them
- What are you going to try with your students

Next Steps:

Work with your grade level team:
- Analyze the data
- Plan for whole and small groups
- Collaborate on intervention implementation experiences
- Share ideas and resources

Questions, comments, concerns….

Professional Development #3 Evaluation
Elementary Humanities Teachers
(Insert Date)

Focus: Reading, Interventions, Struggling Readers

1. What did you learn from your participation in this professional development series?

2. How will you use your new learning when working with struggling students?

3. Reflect on your learning today. What supports will you need to implement reading interventions with success?

4. What would you like to learn about reading instruction in your next professional development?

5. Share any questions, concerns, suggestions, ideas for future learning

Professional Learning Community and Peer Coaching meeting/planning template

Reading Intervention Meeting Planning Template					
Circle One: PLC Planning Peer Coaching Planning Date: Attendees:					
Student(s)	Goal(s)	Strategic Action(s) to Support the Goal	Resources/Materials	Progress Monitoring	
				Areas of Growth	Area of Need

Project Introduction PowerPoint for Principals Meetings and Reading Specialists Meeting

Continuous Professional Development:
Building an Understanding of Reading Interventions Implemented to Struggling Readers

Principals
Reading Specialists
(Insert Date)

Background

▶ A study was conducted to gain an understanding of teacher's perspectives on implementation of reading interventions to address the academic needs of struggling second graders.

Purpose

- Gain an understanding of teacher's perspectives on implementation of reading interventions
- Discover ways we address the academic needs of struggling readers
- Discover teacher needs
- Provide appropriate support to teachers and students
- Develop relevant PD to assist teachers with meeting student needs

Findings

- Struggling readers received intervention support using current practices, however they are not making adequate progress
- Participants reported a lack or absence of professional development on interventions endorsed by the district
- Participants made various modifications to the intervention implementation
- Participants lack a systematic approach to intervention implementation
- Current practices do not align to the reading intervention guidelines

Research

► Teachers need:

  ► Teachers need to engage in ongoing professional development on a topic to gain a deep understanding and use of the practice(s)

  ► Time to collaborate in PLC and with nonjudgmental peer mentors/coaches

  ► Time to learn, use practices, refine practices, share ideas

  ► To monitor student progress and intervention implementation

► Research based reading interventions need to:

  ► Be implemented systematically

  ► Include essential components of reading

  ► Be monitored for progress and alternate practices

Next Steps

► Collaboration among principals, elementary supervisors, reading specialists

► ELA focus on reading, struggling students and intervention implementation

► Ongoing professional development

► Collaborative planning: grade levels & peer mentoring/coaching

Questions

Today…

Elementary Reading Supervisor will:

▶ Share local data

▶ Help you analyze your individual school data

▶ Share essential components of reading

▶ Help you identify your students' reading strengths and weaknesses

▶ Provide an overview of endorsed reading interventions: Fundations & Leveled Literacy Intervention

▶ Show how the reading interventions address identified weaknesses in struggling readers

I will:

▶ Share an overview of the professional development sessions and PPT we will provide for ongoing PD this school year.

Appendix B: Student Learning Objectives (SLO) Template

X Public Schools Student Learning Objective

(insert subject and grade)

Teacher's Name_____

School_____ **Date**_____

Objective Summary Statement	1. *Summarize the long-term academic goal for students (i.e., student will improve their reading comprehension of informational text, increase the pass rate on Algebra I end-of-course assessments, increase mastery of Common Core State Writing Standards*

Population	2. *Describe and explain the student group(s) selected for the SLO.*
	
	    a. *What is the number and percentage of students targeted in the SLO?*
	
	    b. *What is the grade level or performance level of the students?*
	
	    c. *Does this student population represent the majority of the class total and/or does it represent a student subgroup? (ELL, special education, FARMS, GT, race/ethnicity)*

Learning Content	3. *Describe the specific content focus for this SLO.*
	
	    a. *What Common Core State Standards, curriculum, international, national, state, local, or industry standards are selected to develop the SLO?*
	
	    b. *What are (is) the essential knowledge and skills (critical content) that student must master?*

Interval of Instructional Time	4. *Describe the instructional period for this SLO.* *What is the length of time the teacher has for instruction to meet the target? (i.e., one semester, one year)*

Evidence	5. Describe what evidence will be used to determine student progress or growth.
	
	    a. Identify the measures or assessments. For example: pre- and post-testing, formative, summative, performance-based
	
	    b. Are the measures aligned to standards?
	
	    c. How was it determined that the assessments are appropriate for the student population listed?
	
	    d. Will they provide the evidence to determine if the target has been met?
	
	    e. Do the measures meet criteria established by state, district, or school?

Baseline	6. Describe and explain the process and information used to create this SLO.
	
	    a. Identify specific data sources used in the data analysis process.
	
	    b. Identify baseline data for current student performance levels for all students taught by the teacher including student subgroup populations. (ELL, special education, FARMS, GT, race/ethnicity)

Target(s)	7. Describe and explain the expectations for student growth for students included in this SLO.
	
	    a. Are the expectations/progress defined for all students included in this SLO? For example: achievement level, scores, percentages
	
	    b. Explain why the target is appropriate and rigorous, including impact of any complexity factors.

HEI Rating	8. *Determine what range of student performance "meets" the goal (effective) versus "below" (ineffective), and "well-above" (highly effective).*

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE	**EFFECTIVE**	**INEFFECTIVE**

Strategies	9. *Describe and explain the key instructional strategies selected for implementation to support students in reaching the growth target for this SLO.*
Professional Development	10. *Describe the professional development opportunities that will support your instruction for this SLO.* 11. *Describe and explain any additional materials or resources that will support your instruction and assist students in meeting the growth target for this SLO.*

Appendix C: Teacher Interview Guiding Questions

Teacher interview guiding questions

- What are the research-based reading interventions that you implement?

- What components of reading are addressed by the research-based reading interventions that you are implementing?

- Do you implement interventions as recommended or modified?

- What types of reading problems do you encounter with your students (e.g., decoding, fluency, comprehension)? How do they affect your students overall reading ability?

- What do you use to determine appropriate interventions for struggling learners? Is it a part of the intervention? How do you determine the intensity and length of the intervention?

- How useful are the reading interventions that you implement? How do you monitor the success of the intervention implemented? How do you determine the effectiveness of the intervention? What tools do you use to determine the effectiveness of the reading intervention?

- How do you determine that your intervention strategies are/are not increasing struggling reader's reading abilities? What do you do if the interventions are increasing students reading abilities? What do you do if the interventions are not increasing students reading abilities?

- What are roadblocks to deliver interventions with integrity and fidelity? Have you received on-going professional development in the area of reading interventions? What supports do you need to implement interventions to your struggling students?

Appendix D: Observation Protocol

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL SHEET – Teachers' Perspectives on Reading Interventions Implemented to Low Achieving Second Graders	
DATE: START TIME: END TIME:	
Descriptive Notes	First Cycle Coding – Red Ink Second Cycle Coding – Green Ink
Research based reading interventions teachers implement	
Teachers' perspectives on their implementation of reading intervention strategies	