



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Philip C. Cleveland, Ed.D.
Interim State Superintendent
of Education

May 10, 2016

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of Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: County and City Superintendents
FROM: Philip C. Cleveland *PCC*
Interim State Superintendent of Education
RE: Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) 2016-2017 Use of Funds

In yesterday's memorandum regarding ARI restructuring, information was shared relative to FY17 allocations to school systems. This communication is to further explain the specifics related to the Tier I and Tier II allocations referenced in that memorandum and to notify you of an upcoming webinar.

As indicated in yesterday's correspondence, there will be two tiers of funding to school systems. Tier I funding allocations to your system are based on schools where third grade proficiency rates are above the state average of 35.11 percent on the 2015 *ACT Aspire*. Tier I funds should be used to support and maintain current successful efforts in reading for Grades K-5 with an emphasis on Grade 3. Discretion for use of Tier I funding for personnel to support reading outcomes in these schools should be according to your system plan.

The Tier II allocation is intended to fund a full-time ARI reading specialist for each school in your system with third grade proficiency rates below the state average on the 2015 *ACT Aspire*. This reading specialist will be dedicated to serving teachers and students in third grade. Attached to this memorandum is a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between your system and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) regarding the use of ARI funds and a job description for the ARI-funded reading specialist.

As stated in the attached MOA, a plan for ARI professional development is required for each Tier II school. This plan will be developed in collaboration with school system personnel and an ALSDE designee during the summer. More information about Tier II schools will be discussed in webinar for you and other central office personnel on Monday, May 16, 2016, at 2 p.m. A link to this webinar will be included in the e-mail with this memorandum.

Please complete a separate MOA for each Tier II school. Original, signed documents must be received in the ARI Office by close of business on June 1, 2016. Originals should be mailed to:

Mrs. Karen Porter
ARI Program Coordinator
5233 Gordon Persons Building
Post Office Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

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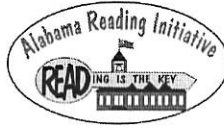
It is also requested that MOAs be submitted electronically to Mrs. Porter's attention at ari@alsde.edu.

Support for your system for 2016-2017 from the ARI regional and state staff will be keenly focused on providing professional development and on-site coaching to the identified Tier II ARI-funded reading specialist(s) to support third grade teachers and students as outlined in the attached documents.

PCC:KWP
Attachments

cc: Andy Craig
Mark Kirkemier
Shanthia Washington
Karen Porter

FY16-1009



ARI-FUNDED SCHOOL READING SPECIALIST JOB DESCRIPTION 2016-2017

The Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) funded school reading specialist for Tier II support will have responsibilities for coordinating efforts in the school where funds have been allocated to support third grade teachers. It is an Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) priority that every student read on grade level by third grade.

The research is clear that a highly skilled teacher is the single most important factor in the reading achievement of students. Therefore, the role of the school-level reading specialist as outlined in this job description will be to function solely as a reading specialist and coaching partner with third grade teachers. Additionally, a proportional amount of the school reading specialist's time as determined by careful data analysis will be dedicated to working with third grade students with greatest needs in reading achievement.

We are confident that this job description offers an opportunity to provide effective support that will increase educator effectiveness and result in students possessing the reading skills necessary to become grade-level readers by third grade.

PURPOSE: Impact student learning by improving teacher practice so that all students are reading on or above grade level by third grade. *Focused support in third grade reading is the state-wide priority.*

CREDENTIALS of ARI Reading Specialists: ARI-funded school reading specialists must possess at a minimum the required certification for elementary classroom teachers. School reading specialists must have had a **minimum** of three years' successful reading teaching experience as demonstrated by state/district school assessments. It is highly preferred that this experience includes success with struggling readers in Grades K-3. School reading specialists must also:

- Demonstrate depth of reading and literacy experience in the critical areas of beginning/foundational reading (Phonological and Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Reading/Writing Connection)
- Display exceptional abilities to work with both adults and students
- Exhibit strength in professionalism and in communication skills
- Demonstrate characteristics of an on-going learner

SELECTION: ARI-funded school reading specialists who match this job description will be selected according to the hiring policies of the district.

SUPERVISOR/SUPPORT: The district determines the supervision of the ARI-funded school reading specialists. The ARI will provide regular support in the school and during required professional development meetings to enhance the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the job description. The district and ARI regional and ALSDE staff will assure adherence to this job description with this contract.

EMPLOYMENT TERMS: A minimum of a nine-month contract is recommended in order to fulfill this job description.

GENERAL DUTIES: In order to ensure that all third grade students are reading on or above grade level, the duties of the ARI-funded school reading specialists will be to spend full school days:

- Coaching teachers in classrooms each day during reading instruction.
- Equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to help third grade students achieve grade-level reading or above.
- Working side by side with teachers to successfully implement lessons so that all students are reading on or above grade level by third grade.
- Providing daily, targeted intervention to struggling third grade students.
- Collaborating with administrators and third grade teachers to analyze and to utilize formative data that will inform instructional decisions/practices to change student performance trajectories.
- Implementing district reading plans and the *2015 Revised Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts*.
- Implementing *Alabama's Plan 2020*.

Support Alabama's Professionals

- **Adhere** consistently to an LEA-/ARI-**approved** schedule that includes time in pre-planned, daily coaching cycles with teachers and daily intervention instruction with at least one group of struggling readers so that reading goals are achieved.
- **Demonstrate** increasing expertise in research-based reading instruction appropriate to Grade K-3 Foundations, Reading, Speaking & Listening, and Writing Standards in order to impact the goal of students performing at or above grade level in reading by the end of third grade.
- **Plan** and/or **facilitate** professional learning opportunities that will assist teachers in: targeting student reading deficits; facilitating professional conversations; fostering student engagement; assessing student learning; reflecting on professional practice; or identifying next learning steps in order to achieve state, district, and school third grade reading goals.
- **Participate** actively and cooperatively in all ARI regional support visits and trainings in order to meet agreed-upon personal outcomes and all school-, state-, and district-established reading goals for third grade. Actively seek help and support to grow in knowledge, skills, and expertise in reading.
- **Model** exemplary work ethic by actively coaching teachers, teaching struggling readers, and participating as a fully functioning member of the school staff daily so that teacher capacity is built and efficacy is achieved.

Support Alabama's Learners

- **Coach** teachers in instruction of students for all tiers of reading in order to reach the goal of students performing at or above grade level in reading by the end of third grade.
- **Assist** school administrators and teachers in analyzing and utilizing assessment data in all tiers of reading instruction and making decisions that will increase the reading skills in students in Grades K-3 so that the goal of students performing at or above grade level in reading by the end of third grade is achieved.
- **Assist** school administrators and teachers in implementing, strengthening, supporting, and organizing reading instruction and reading intervention efforts so that third grade reading data will dramatically improve.
- **Reflect** on personal coaching practices to evaluate personal impact on changing outcomes for third grade students in grade-level reading achievement goals.

Support Alabama's Schools and Systems

- **Motivate** teachers to achieve the goal of all students reading on grade level by the end of third grade in order to build teacher capacity and efficacy related to reading outcomes.
- **Exhibit** winsome human relations skills that will encourage professionals toward continuous growth in their own learning and challenge students toward ever-increasing levels of academic achievement.
- **Plan** regularly with school, district, and regional support staff and ALSDE staff in order to reach goal of all students reading on grade level by third grade.

Alabama State Department of Education
Memorandum of Agreement
Regarding the Use of Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) Funds

Local Education Agency (LEA) _____

The LEA superintendent, the LEA ARI contact, and the school principal should carefully review and fully commit to the following terms of agreement for the 2016-17 school year.

The participating LEA agrees to:

1. Develop and implement an ARI Professional Development Plan in collaboration with an SDE designee.
2. Use the funds allocated for approved activities as identified in the Professional Development Plan.
3. Participate in all targeted professional development (a minimum of four are mandatory), meetings, or other trainings sponsored by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) for the appropriate district personnel.
4. Ensure ARI-funded personnel spend at least 80% of the time performing the duties as identified in the ARI Job Description.
5. Use materials and equipment funded through ARI in the recommended manner.
6. Meet the key performance indicator annually by increasing third grade reading proficiency scores by no less than 10 percentage points on ACT Aspire.
7. Plan regularly and intentionally with personnel to organize, implement, and support all instruction and intervention efforts in order to reach the performance indicator.
8. Use a state-approved formative assessment to measure student performance. Administer the formative assessment at a minimum the beginning of the year and mid-year. Results will be used to make any necessary adjustments to instruction.
9. Submit, as requested by ALSDE, the ARI Professional Development Plan, progress on the status of the implementation, outcomes, and evaluation data.
10. Appoint a district key contact to work with ARI-funded schools and ALSDE staff relative to reading instruction.

Please Note: If the ALSDE determines that the LEA is not meeting the key performance indicator, timelines, or budget, or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the ALSDE as the State Grantee will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include, but is not limited to, state intervention of fund use, disallowing costs, temporarily withholding funds, or non-renewal of contract agreement.

LEA Superintendent

Chief School Financial Officer

Name of School

School Principal

LEA Contact

Alabama State Department of Education

The Alabama State Department of Education agrees to:

1. Work collaboratively with and support the LEA in carrying out the ARI Professional Development Plan.
2. Distribute the LEA's approved portion of the funds during the course of the plan period and in accordance with the LEA's ARI Professional Development Plan. Distribution of funds are contingent upon availability.
3. Provide a minimum of four professional development sessions to appropriate district personnel.
4. Conduct, at a minimum, mid-year and end-of-year reviews.
5. Appoint a key contact for the ARI proposal.
6. Provide feedback on the LEA's implementation status, mid-year reviews, any interim reports, and annual reviews.

Approved:

Karen W. Porter
Program Coordinator, Alabama Reading Initiative

Shanthia M. Washington
Director, Office of Student Learning

Mark Kirkemier
Interim Deputy State Superintendent of Education

Andy Craig
Deputy State Superintendent
Administrative and Financial Services

Julianna Teixeira Dean
General Counsel

Philip C. Cleveland
Interim State Superintendent of Education