



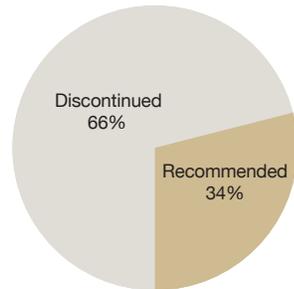
# READING RECOVERY® IN MICHIGAN

## An Oakland University Executive Summary 2014-2015

### INTRODUCTION

**Reading Recovery® (RR) is a program of professional development for teachers: university faculty train and professionally develop teacher leaders who, in turn, develop teachers to work with first grade children having extreme difficulty learning to read and write. Since its establishment in the United States, RR has served nearly 2 million children. Oakland University is one of only 18 universities in the United States to serve as a RR university training center. Since its establishment in Michigan in 1991, RR has trained over 1,400 teachers who have served almost 107,450 Michigan first graders.**

Figure 1: Intervention Status of Reading Recovery Students with Complete Interventions: Michigan, 2014-2015



responsive instructional activities provided in the one-to-one setting by teachers who have participated in RR professional development. Reading Recovery also serves as a pre-referral option to identify children who need longer-term specialist support (Jones, et al., 2005). Schools that implement RR assign teaching staff flexibly to maximize children's access to the intervention and to permit teachers to apply their RR knowledge in their other instructional roles (Lose & Best, 2011).

### READING RECOVERY IN MICHIGAN, 2014-2015

During the 2014-2015 school year, 301 RR teachers (47 of whom were in-training) in 187 schools in 68 school districts taught 2,451 students in RR. When they were not teaching RR, these teachers also taught 10,830 additional students – an average of 44.1 students each day – in their other instructional roles as classroom, special education, Title I reading, and ESL teachers. Teachers trained in RR received professional development from 13 RR teacher leaders who themselves received professional development in group settings from the RR faculty at Oakland University (OU). These teacher leaders also received individualized professional support delivered by OU RR faculty in their schools and at their regional RR sites throughout Michigan. Reading Recovery students represented a full range of diversity (see Table 1). While most schools used general funds and Title I Part A to partially fund RR, a few schools used IDEA-EIS, IDEA-RTI or IDEA-Special Education funds as additional sources to partially fund the intervention.

Table 1: Reading Recovery Demographics: Michigan, 2014-2015

Students	
56%	Male
67%	Free And Reduced Lunch
14%	Some Disability
55%	White, Not Hispanic
29%	Black, Not Hispanic
6%	Hispanic, Any race
3%	Multiple Races, Not Hispanic
2%	American Indian/Alaskan Native, Not Hispanic
2%	Asian, Not Hispanic
2%	Other Races, Not Hispanic
<1%	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic
Languages (Other than English) Spoken in the Home	
40%	Spanish
22%	Arabic
15%	Some other language
3%	Chinese
2%	German
2%	Hmong, Miao
2%	Romanian
2%	Russian
2%	Urdu
2%	French
1%	Hindi
1%	Each: Bengali, Greek, Gujarathi,
<1%	Italian, Laotian, Mandarin, Panjabi, Portuguese, Tagalong, Thai, Vietnamese

### RESULTS

2,451 students were enrolled in RR in Michigan in 2014-2015. A full RR intervention lasts up to 20 weeks. Thirty-eight percent of students received interventions that lasted between 10-14 weeks, 28% between 15-19 weeks, and 21% of the interventions lasted 20 weeks total. Not all of the students who were enrolled received a full intervention; their interventions were incomplete due to a slot opening up for their lessons late in the year (20%, N=498), because they moved (5%, N=115), and for other reasons (2%, N=57).

Of the 1,778 students who received a complete intervention (about 30-35 hours of instruction total), 66% (N=1,173) reached average performance levels in reading and writing and their interventions were discontinued (see Figure

1). The remainder of the complete intervention children, 34% (N=605), made progress but not sufficient enough to reach the rigorous criteria for the "discontinued" designation. These students were recommended for follow-up support in their classrooms and in small group instructional settings. Of those students who received a complete RR intervention, 1.5% (N=25), were referred for LD reading.

The change in classroom reading group placement from fall to year-end for students who received complete interventions and those whose lessons were discontinued is another indication of students' progress in literacy as illustrated in Figure 2. At the beginning of the year, 42% of these students were well below average and 42% were below average. However, at the end of the school year, 65% were average, 18% were above average, and 4% were well above average. Having received RR, these once lowest performing learners have now moved to within average performance levels, thus resembling the normal distribution of students in grade one.

<sup>1</sup>In 2011, the National Center for Response to Intervention awarded high ratings for the survey tool central to Reading Recovery's evaluation and instruction (D'Agostino, 2012). *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* received highest possible ratings for scientific rigor and is posted on the Screening Tools Chart ([rt4success.org/screeningTools](http://rt4success.org/screeningTools)). The Observation Survey is used not only in Reading Recovery, but also widely used by classroom and specialist teachers, and researchers.

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INVESTING IN INNOVATION (i3) GRANT

Since 2010, Oakland University (OU) has partnered with The Ohio State University in the 5-year \$54 million dollar i3 federal grant to scale-up RR in the United States. Since its implementation in October 2010, 242 Michigan teachers participated in the i3 innovation at their regional RR sites. Each teacher received books, stipend for professional resources, and tuition for the 10-graduate credit RR teacher training through OU. Additionally, six post-masters level educators participated in OU's 20-graduate credit RR teacher leader training program. These certified RR teacher leaders returned to their regional sites to train and support new and continuing RR teachers.

### EFFECT OF READING RECOVERY ON READING ACHIEVEMENT

Figure 3 demonstrates the effect of RR instruction on the reading achievement of the lowest performing literacy learners in the fall of first grade and compares their progress to the National Random Sample of their peers and three additional categories of RR eligible students.

**National Random Sample Children** – The red line at the top shows the National Random Sample's progress on text reading at three points in time. These students start the year at a higher text reading level and make progress throughout the year.

**Reading Recovery (RR) Children served in the fall semester** – The blue line shows the progress of RR children who were selected during the fall semester for RR service. Initially the lowest-performing children, they catch up to and even surpass the Random Sample by mid-year when their RR lessons end and continue to maintain their progress.

**Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children that did not have other literacy support** – The green line shows the progress of RR eligible children and the TNI students that did not receive other literacy support. These children start out the year above the RR children and the other two groups of TNI students, but fall behind them at mid-year through year's end. Had they received RR, these children would have made accelerative progress and reduced the gap between themselves and the National Random Sample to achieve within-average performance levels by year's end.

Figure 2: Classroom Reading Group Placement of Reading Recovery Students with Complete Interventions and Students Whose Lessons Were Discontinued: Michigan, 2014-2015

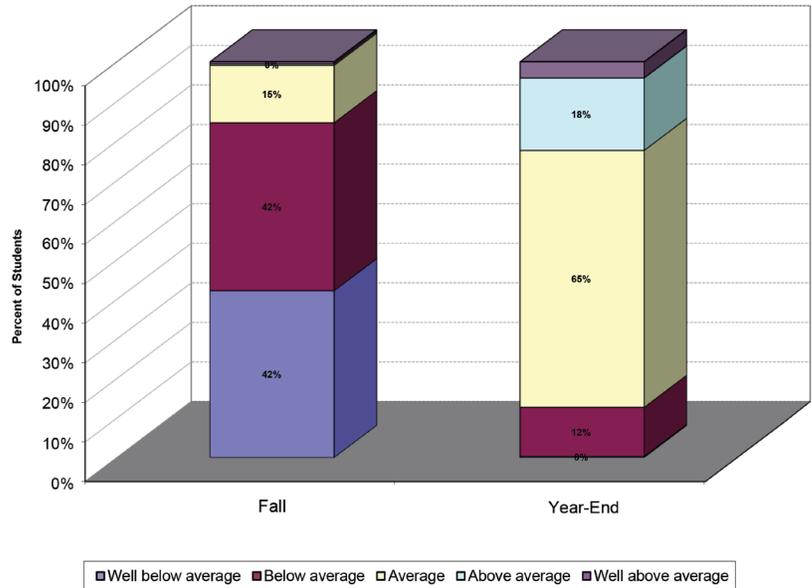
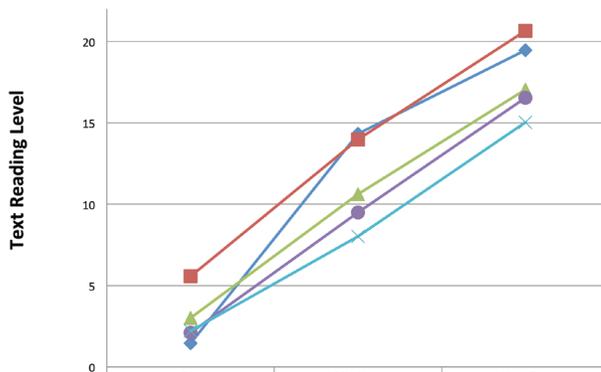


Figure 3: Comparison of Text Reading Level for Reading Recovery and Random Sample Students to Tested Not Instructed Students Who Did and Did Not Receive Supplemental Literacy Instruction: Oakland University - Michigan, 2014-2015



**Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children who received other literacy support from a Reading Recovery (RR) teacher** – The purple line shows the progress of the RR eligible children who did not receive RR, but did receive other literacy support from a RR teacher. These children were low at the beginning of the school year and the literacy support from a RR teacher was not enough to reduce the achievement gap. Had they received the one-to-one RR intervention, it is likely they would have achieved accelerative progress and reached within-average performance levels by year's end.

**Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children who received other literacy support from a non-Reading Recovery (RR) teacher** – The aqua line shows the progress of the RR eligible children who did not receive RR, but did receive other literacy support from a non-RR teacher. These children were low at the beginning of the school year and the literacy support from a non-RR teacher puts them behind the TNI children who received other literacy support from a RR teacher. Had they received RR, these children would have achieved accelerative progress and reached within-average performance levels by year's end.

Juel's (1988) research showed that children who are low performing in literacy in first grade are very likely to remain low performing in fourth grade. The findings illustrated in Figure 3 demonstrate that the lowest performing children require the daily one-to-one instruction provided by RR. Provided with contingent, responsive teaching by specially trained and professionally developed teachers, even the

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

The IDEA attempts to ensure that schools achieve the following (Lose, 2007; 2008):

- Provide early identification and intervention for all children struggling with literacy learning.
- Develop ways to appropriately identify and intervene on behalf of children with LD.
- Provide effective, intensive, evidence-based early intervening services.
- Monitor each child's progress using data-based documentation.
- Accelerate children's reading progress to meet annual progress criteria.
- Create a multi-tiered problem-solving team to support comprehensive literacy efforts.
- Provide the highest quality of professional development for teachers of low achievers.

lowest-performing children can make accelerative progress, benefit from good classroom instruction, and continue learning with their peers (McNeaney, Lose, & Schwartz, 2006).

## EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR READING RECOVERY

The United States Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) publishes intervention reports that assess research on beginning reading curricula and instructional strategies for students from kindergarten through third grade. The most recent WWC report of RR, released in October 2014, is based on the results of the first in a three-part series of research reports of the US Department of Education's 5-year \$54 million dollar *Investing in Innovation (i3) Grant to Scale-up Reading Recovery* by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE). The study met the WWC's group design standards "without reservation"; the highest design rating that the WWC assesses. Additional WWC reports of RR effectiveness were released in 2007 and later in 2013 with evidence of positive effects on student outcomes in general reading achievement, alphabets, fluency, and comprehension.

In 2015, Henry May and colleagues from the CPRE reported results from the multisite randomized evaluation of RR under the i3 scale-up. The researchers reported "... The estimated impact of RR on students' ITBS Total Reading scores was .69 standard deviations relative to the study sample and .47 standard deviations relative to the national population of first graders...these standardized effect sizes are large relative to typical effect sizes found in educational evaluations. For example, the impacts of RR are up to 5.7 times larger than the average effects of Title I programs reviewed by Borman and D'Agostino (1996; average weighted effect size of .11). Gains in percentile rank scores were also large, with treatment students outperforming control students by up to 20 percentile points. When compared to typical gains of first graders on the ITBS tests, the additional gains experienced by RR students is analogous to an additional 1.9 months of learning or a growth rate that is 38% greater than the national average growth rate for beginning first graders" (May et al., 2015, p. 27).

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

A federal initiative that is derived from the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) offers schools facing increased enrollments of students with learning disabilities (LD) two options for addressing this growing population (Lose et al., 2007; Allington, 2009). The first option is that local education agencies can use as much as 15% of their special education funds to pay for early intervening services (EIS) and to support professional development and literacy instruction (Lose, 2005). The second option offered by the IDEA is Response to Intervention (RTI) that can be used to provide high quality instruction based on children's needs without the requirement of labeling students at risk for school failure as LD (Johnston, 2010). The goal is to limit referrals based on inadequate instruction or limited English proficiency and to reduce the number of children identified for LD services (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). To achieve this goal, the lowest

performing children must be identified early so that appropriately intensive interventions and tiers or layers of support can be provided within a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction at the first sign of a child's difficulty.

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND TEACHER-STUDENT RATIO

Some administrators have argued that small group instruction delivered by teachers trained in RR is just as effective as the instruction delivered daily and one-to-one by these same teachers. To address this

question Schwartz, Schmitt, & Lose (2012) used a randomized control trial methodology to evaluate the effect of variations in teacher-student ratio on intervention effectiveness delivered by teachers trained in RR. Even with the expertise of these teachers, students in the 1:1 condition scored significantly higher on the text reading measure than students in the 1:2, 1:3, and 1:5 group conditions. The researchers concluded that a sound approach to RTI would be comprehensive with provision for one-to-one early preventive instruction for the lowest performing learners, effective small group instruction for less struggling older learners, strong classrooms for all, and longer-term intervention for the very few children who continue to need intensive support in later grades.

## READING RECOVERY: AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

In her seminal article, *Learning to be Learning Disabled*, published almost 30 years ago, Marie Clay (1987) gave validity to support the idea that many children labeled LD are in fact instructionally challenged through a series of unfortunate experiences either before, or very early in, their formal schooling. However, provided an appropriate early intervention to support their accelerative learning and response to instruction, the number of children identified as LD can be reduced to only 1-2 percent.

For over 30 years in the United States, RR has operated as an RTI approach. Reading Recovery trained and professionally developed teachers deliver one-to-one daily lessons, tailored precisely to the child, in support of the literacy learning of the most at-risk children (Clay, 2005a; 2005b). While many children respond quite well to whole group and small group instruction, evidence has shown that the lowest performing learners provided with the RR intervention are able to make accelerative progress and continue learning with their peers in the classroom without further intervention or placement in special education for literacy difficulties – a considerable cost savings to districts.

## TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATORS AND INTERVENTIONISTS

Many Michigan schools that have fully implemented RR have requested that other members of the instructional staff have access to the RR training without the requirement of teaching four students daily. Two training programs, *Literacy Lessons (LL)* for special educators and teachers of English language learners and *Literacy Support (LS)* for classroom teachers and reading interventionists, are provided to these teachers as they train alongside teachers in RR<sup>2</sup>. During their training year, these LL and LS teachers are introduced to the complex literacy processing model that informs RR while teaching two students daily, a minimum of four students in one-to-one lessons. Following their training year, LL and LS teachers apply their new expertise as they continue teaching at least one child, one-to-one, each year from their class rosters or intervention caseloads (Konstantellou & Lose, 2009).

<sup>2</sup>Beginning in 2006, teachers of special education and English language learners, working in Michigan schools that have implemented Reading Recovery, participated in training for intervention specialists under a special training model, Literacy Lessons™. In 2009, another training model, Literacy Support, was added to the university training center's options for classroom teachers and reading specialists in Reading Recovery schools. Both of these 8-graduate credit training programs in literacy processing permit teachers to train alongside Reading Recovery teachers, enabling school districts to optimize teacher expertise in response to the diversity of struggling literacy learners in their schools. Since 2006, 60 teachers of special education and ELL have participated in Literacy Lessons training and 62 classroom and reading specialist teachers have participated in Literacy Support training.

## READING RECOVERY REGIONAL TRAINING SITES\* AFFILIATED WITH THE READING RECOVERY CENTER OF MICHIGAN AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

- Bloomfield Hills Public Schools
- Detroit Public Schools
- Dowagiac Union Schools
- Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District
- Genesee Intermediate School District
- Grand Rapids Area
- Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Kalamazoo Public Schools
- Oakland Regional
- Port Huron Area School District
- South Lyon Community Schools
- Walled Lake Consolidated Schools

\*School districts or consortia of school districts comprise each of the state's 12 RR Regional Training Sites.

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*Reading Recovery has a strong track record of preventing literacy failure. Results support the investment of resources on this prevention effort. Yet, Michigan is still far from providing Reading Recovery to all the children who need it. Many of the participating districts experience the impact of low coverage. Almost 9/10 students who need Reading Recovery do not have access to the intervention. Ideally, 20% of the state's first graders should have access. Policy makers and all who are concerned about closing the achievement gap to enable children to succeed in school could achieve greater equity by providing the intervention to the over 21,806 first graders that could benefit from Reading Recovery.*