

63RD CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Believing In Achieving

SHERATON FOUR SEASONS | KOURY CONVENTION CENTER | GREENSBORO, NC



A Partnership for Reading Success

Macon County Schools

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Building Reading Capacity District Wide

- Disclaimer – “Our dirty laundry” what you are about to hear is true (mostly). However, some of the details have been changed to protect our integrity (jobs).
- Breaking down barriers and collaborating for success
- Who are we, and where are we from?
- How we got started
- Where we are now?
- How it applies to EC



Macon County Schools

- Franklin, Highlands and Nantahala
 - Region 8 (Far West)
 - 4300 students
 - Reading scores have been around or slightly above the state average, but toward the bottom of our region.
- **11 Schools**
 - Four Elementary (k-4)
 - One Intermediate (5-6)
 - One Middle School (6-7)
 - One High School
 - One Early College
 - One alternative
 - Two K-12 schools



Challenges

- Teachers functioning as independent contractors
- No consistency with researched based programs across schools in district
- Limited use of data for making instructional decisions
- Development of process for Rtl and beginning implementation (grouping kids, scheduling, finding protected time, staff, materials)
- No instructional coaches
- PLCs that were not functioning effectively
- Lack of fidelity with SCOS/common core implementation
- Separation between EC and general ed

Beginnings

- One school, one Gen Ed teacher trained in LIPS
- Seeing Stars training for 2 teachers and connection to trainer from Franklin
- Implementation in one EC and one Gen Ed classroom



What were our next steps

- Invited teachers and principals to visit in classrooms
- Invited Lindamood Bell to talk with teachers and administrators and give more detail
- Responded to requests of teachers for the training
- Recognized the most critical component for Macon County Schools would be the year long on site professional development
- Working with BOE



What did we like?

- Evidenced Based approach to teaching reading
- Addressed ALL 5 components of reading (we were doing pretty well with decoding using various programs but needed to address comprehension and written application)
- On-going professional development
- Fit into RtI model
- Evidence of improvement on small scale with our students (2 teachers)
- Very engaging for teachers and students



How did we do it?

- partnership was formed with Lindamood Bell
- trained 35 teachers from 6 schools in summer 2011
- professional development in a 4 week summer reading program serving approximately 50 kids
- Implementation began in classrooms and small groups for Tier 3 students Fall 2011
- On-site professional development with Lindamood Bell project leader
- Individual Assessment to determine skill deficits
- Restructured day to accommodate small group instruction
- Implemented dedicated small group instruction time based on tier level (90 min)
- On site instructional coaching by Lindamood Bell project leader
- Certified 6 mentors to support implementation within their school



Project growth

- During implementation more teachers/principals requested training
- Additional trainings were offered
 - July 2011--38
 - Sept 2011—53
 - Jan. 2012—19
 - Aug. 2012—50
 - Aug 2013—39
 - Oct 2013—47
 - Approximately 240 trained to date
- Initial small group instruction began as Tier 3 intervention
- Differentiated groups with EC and non-EC students taught largely by general education teachers while still meeting IEP goals
- EC students received 2nd session with EC teacher
- 2 elementary schools in and 2 out



Project growth

- Still serving Tier 3 students
- Additional focus on Tier 2 “bubble kids” and those moving back up the tiers
- Additional classroom focus with 20/20 VV/SS instruction K-2 and 20 VV instruction 3-6



Where are we now?

- Summer school 2012 and 2013
- District Facilitator responsible for sustaining the fidelity of the implementation
- Mentoring provided by 8 certified mentors, 1 district facilitator and 1 project leader
- Mentoring: 1 on 1, PLC, and top down approach
- District wide classroom focus
 - Read to Achieve
 - Data to drive instruction
- ESL emphasis (vocabulary)
- On Cloud 9 math implementation –small group and classroom
- Written application to content areas



Pulling it all together

- District level collaboration with EC and reg ed
- Blended funding
- Consistent instructional language between EC and classroom
- Differentiated instruction based on skill deficiency rather than disability label
- Both proactive and preventive rather than reactive
- Aligns with common core standards
- Meets all Tiers by intensifying instruction at each tier rather than changing the strategy
- PLC for staff and mentor support
- Fidelity check put on place
- Principal walk-throughs
- Certified 6 mentors



Essentials to success

- Teacher buy in (“buy in is an outcome, not a precondition”)
Paul Bamberg
- School Board Support
- District Level Support and collaboration among gen ed, Title 1 and EC
- Administrative buy in and Support (setting the expectation, scheduling, use of resources, ensuring fidelity)

On second thought

- Don’t try to go too big too fast
- Sometimes the evidence has to speak for itself
- Change is hard, don’t expect too much too soon and celebrate forward progress.