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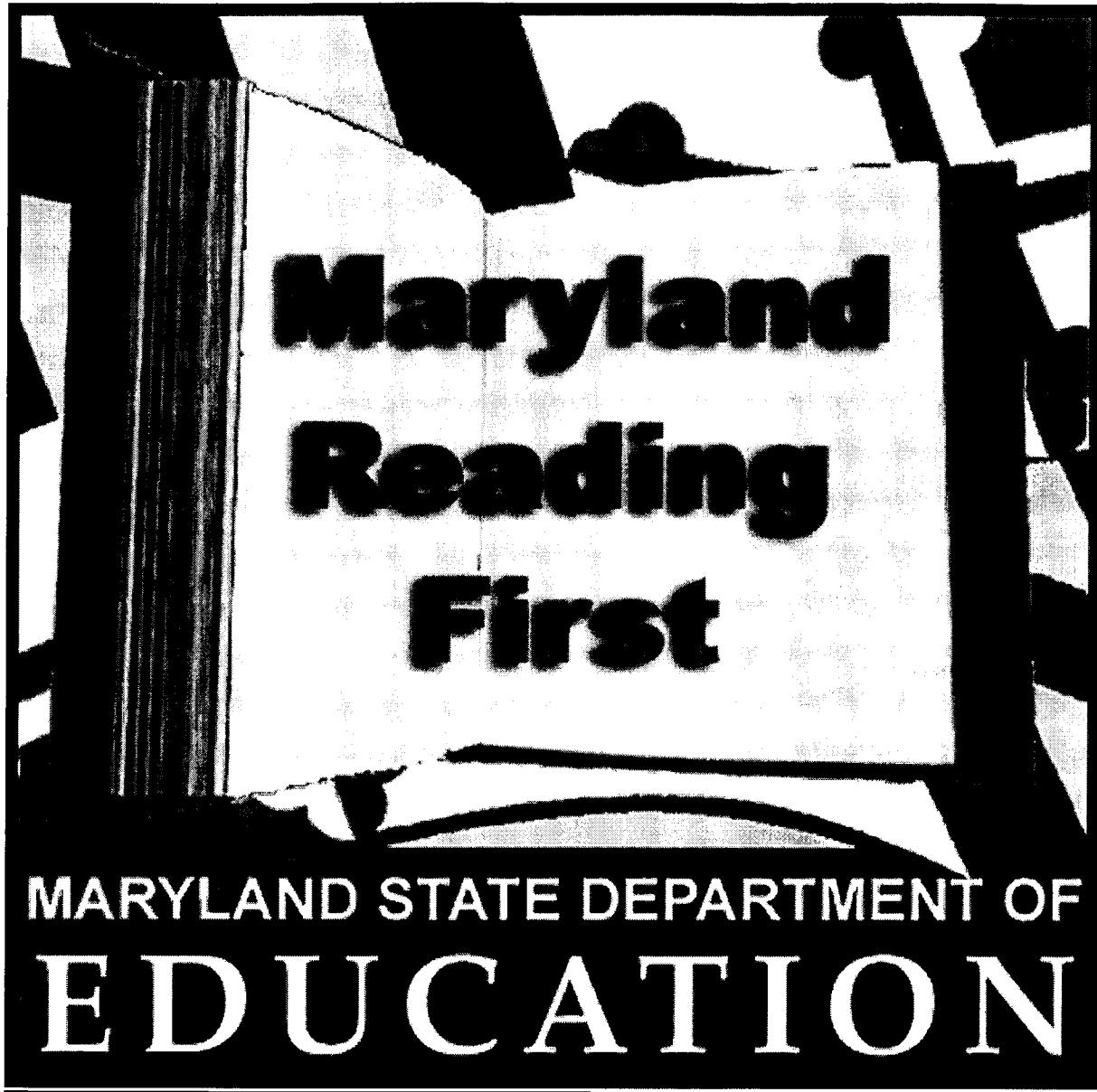
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ABSTRACT

In years past, Maryland has provided little guidance toward adoption and implementation of Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) programs. Only recently, with the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program and the Reading Excellence Act (REA) program, have schools or local education agencies been required to adopt and implement programs that are research based. Programs most frequently funded with these federal funds include Direct Instruction, Open Court, Lightspan, Success for All, Literacy Collaborative, Waterford Early Reading Program, Breakthrough to Literacy, and Carbo Reading Styles Program. This guide provides a summary of statewide reading efforts in Maryland. The guide is divided into the following parts: (1) Improving Reading Instruction in Maryland (Current Reading Initiatives and Identified Gaps; State Outline and Rationale for Using SBRR; State Definition of Subgrant Eligibility; Selection Criteria for Awarding Subgrants; Process for Awarding Subgrants; Maryland's Reading First Professional Development Plan; Integration of Proposed Reading First); (2) State Leadership and Management Plan (State Technical Assistance Plan; Building Statewide Infrastructure; State Management Plan); (3) State Reporting and Evaluation (Evaluation Strategies; State Reporting; Participation in National Evaluation); and (4) Classroom Level Impact (Key Reading First Classroom Characteristics; Coherence). Appendixes provide: Summary of Technical Adequacy of the DIBELS; Subgrant Selection Criteria (see Request for Proposals); Maryland Essential Curriculum (http://mdk12.org/share/vsc/VSC_english_grprek.pdf); Resume's (On File at the Maryland State Department of Education); Outside Evaluator Draft RFP; and References (n=45). (NKA)



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I. IMPROVING READING INSTRUCTION IN MARYLAND

I A. Current Reading Initiatives and Identified Gaps - Current Federal and State Efforts to Improve K-3 Reaching Achievement

Federal Programs

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has the primary responsibility to provide administrative oversight and management for use of federal funds through the Division of Student and School Services. These funds are intended to promote high quality and effective teaching and learning that result in improved student achievement across all content areas among all students, particularly those who are the intended program beneficiaries (e.g., children who are identified as high poverty, limited-English proficient, migrant, homeless and neglected or delinquent children). This is in keeping with the intention of the funds available through Reading First.

The following are sources of federal funds that most commonly are used to support reading and literacy programs in local schools at this time:

- Title I, Part A
- Title I, Part B, Even Start Family Literacy
- Comprehensive School Reform
- Title II
- Title V, Part A (innovative education programs)
- Reading Excellence

In years past, Maryland has provided little guidance toward adoption and implementation of Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) programs. Local education agencies (LEAs) and schools have been allowed to implement programs and to utilize materials so long as those programs and materials reflected and were in support of the state content standards. Only recently, with the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program and the Reading Excellence Act (REA) program, have schools/LEAs been required to adopt and implement programs that are research based.

Programs most frequently funded with these federal funds include Direct Instruction, Open Court, Lightspan, Success for All, Literacy Collaborative, Waterford Early Reading Program, Breakthrough to Literacy and Carbo Reading Styles Program. These programs have a track record of success when implemented as designed; yet, the student achievement results attained have been variable. The use of various measures (detailed later under Maryland Reading Task Force) that comprise the state evaluation of the current status of reading in Maryland have yielded valuable information over the past ten years that will be used to guide Reading First activities as well as statewide activities in the future. The following sections will provide a summary of statewide reading efforts.

The Reading Excellence Act (REA)

Maryland was one of the first states in the United States to be awarded federal funds through the Reading Excellence Act. The following section identifies some of the activities, findings, obstacles, "lessons learned" and conclusions from year two of the REA grant award. The final report submitted by MGT of America and completed in late fall of 2002, provides quantitative student outcome data from students served in the REA programs.

➤ *Maryland REA Demographics and Activities:*

A thorough analysis of REA activities served as a guide as Maryland developed the Reading First Initiative.

- Maryland's schools selected for REA grants were primarily schools serving students from high poverty backgrounds with high rates of minority populations and high mobility rates.
- Twenty-one percent (21%) of the funded public schools had at least 80-90% of their students enrolled in the Free/Reduced Priced Lunch Program, another 56% had levels of 60-79%, and 12% of the schools had levels between 45-59%.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of the selected public schools served more than 90% minority student populations, another 21% had student populations with 70-89% minority students, 24% had 50-69% minority populations, and 12% had less than 49% minority students in their populations.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of the schools had mobility rates between 30%-49% and 32% had rates higher than 50%.
- A wide variety of reading programs were identified in the approved proposals for the Reading Improvement grants submitted by the school districts. Some of the most commonly identified programs were: Direct Instruction, Open Court, Lightspan, Success for All, Literacy Collaborative, Waterford Early Reading Program, Breakthrough to Literacy and Carbo Reading Styles Program.
- Seventy-four percent (74%) of teachers implementing Local Reading Improvement Grants (LRI) spent 90 minutes or more per day on reading instruction.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of principals and 72% of teachers strongly agreed that their district's core curriculum is based on scientifically based reading research.
- Ninety-eight percent (98%) of principals and 87% of teachers agreed that local curriculum is aligned with Maryland Reading Content Standards.
- Seventy-two percent (72%) of teachers strongly agreed that the leadership provided by the principal in improving reading and literacy instruction has increased.
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of principals and 88% of teachers agreed that the LEA/schools provided more reading-related professional development for teachers as a result of REA funding.

➤ *Issues and Challenges in Implementing Reading Excellence Act Grants*

Although participants of the Reading Excellence Act LRI and Technical Assistance Grants identified many benefits, schools and districts faced a range of issues and challenges implementing the first year of the grants in the 2000-2001 school year. This section provides a summary and analysis of the major issues and challenges encountered by the Reading Excellence Act schools and districts.

- Delays in Implementation

Although the MSDE announced the subgrant process quickly and provided extensive technical assistance, numerous school systems and schools did not receive their funding in time to implement comprehensive programs in the following fall. Programs also required computers, software, books and reading materials that could not be ordered until the districts received the appropriate MSDE forms and purchase authority was transmitted to the schools.

- Turnover Rates

Many of the school district offices and schools experienced new leadership that had not been involved in the development of the grant. Turnover rates of faculty appeared to be an issue as well. Teachers who were trained in new programs often transferred to non-REA schools. It should be noted that the funded schools were primarily those serving high poverty and high minority populations that typically have higher turnover rates of faculty and administrators.

- Training on “What is Research-Based?”

Although proposals were subjected to a rigorous review process, some of the funded programs had questionable evidence of effectiveness with the populations of the schools in which they were implemented. More targeted training is needed to ensure Reading First funds are used to support research-based efforts.

- State-Level Staffing

The Reading Excellence Act Grant included a full-time state coordinator and support personnel for the programs. With the large number of programs to monitor, challenges in implementation, and turnover, the coordinator and staff were overwhelmed with responsibility. Reading First, with considerably higher resources targeted to district level activities, should include adequate staffing to provide state-level coordination and monitoring.

Maryland Reading Task Force

The Maryland Task Force on Reading was convened in April 1997, by Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, and was the beginning of a statewide awareness of the need for a focus on improving reading achievement. The Task Force was charged to develop and disseminate a recommendation to the State Superintendent that focused on improving reading achievement in the State of Maryland, to design and recommend a comprehensive professional development system for pre-service and in-service education, and to target ways and means to inform policy makers, practitioners and parents about how to implement best practices for reading in Maryland schools. The Task Force examined how well students had performed on several different tests of reading since 1991 that comprised the state assessment program. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS IV), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) were reviewed to answer the following questions: What is the achievement level of Maryland students in reading compared to students across the nation? Are Maryland students improving in reading according to MSPAP? The Task Force concluded that the reading achievement of Maryland students had shown slow progress when compared nationally on NAEP and CTBS and minimal improvement in reading achievement on MSPAP. The *Final Report*, published in October of 1998, stated that improved student reading achievement can be realized by well-trained and dedicated professionals and an informed public who understand that reading involves complex skills and processes which must be supported through well-designed elementary and secondary reading programs. This resulted in the initial statewide effort to improve reading instruction in the state of Maryland.

It was as a result of this Task Force’s study that the reading course requirements for state certification were examined. The State Board of Education passed regulatory amendments that required all prospective and current Maryland teachers to take additional reading theory and methodology coursework for certification and recertification. Effective in the fall of 1999, twelve semester hours in specific reading coursework were required for regular and special education teachers at the early childhood and elementary levels: Processes and Acquisition of Reading, Instruction of Reading, Materials for Teaching Reading and Assessment of Reading Instruction. Six semester hours in the following content were recommended for regular and special

education teachers at the secondary level: Methods of Teaching Reading in the Secondary Content Area, Part 1 and Methods of Teaching Reading in the Content Area, Part 2.

To fully develop the content of the new courses, the State Superintendent of Schools, charged the Reading Professional Development Committee with following up on the Task Force's work to "identify the knowledge, skills, and performance for each required reading course outlined in the regulations adopted by the State Board of Education on July 28-29, 1998." Participants used a variety of sources in their deliberations including the Maryland Task Force Final Report (1998), *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (National Research Council, 1998), *Starting Out Right* (1999), and textbooks on teaching reading, journals, etc. The course content of the six reading courses was distributed to all Maryland deans and directors of teacher education, personnel directors, continuing professional development liaisons, and others directly involved with teacher education. This effort continues to have impact throughout the state for all teachers in the state of Maryland.

Reading First will drive a studied revision and upgrade of the content of the reading courses to heighten the emphasis on SBRR that will impact curriculum, instruction and assessment in reading, especially at the early grades.

Center for Reading Excellence (CRE)

The Center for Reading Excellence is a partnership among Johns Hopkins University (JHU), the Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI), and MSDE, which has as its mission to maximize the development of reading potential in all Maryland students. This partnership was created for the following purposes:

- To engage in basic applied research and development activities
- To advance educators' and parents' understanding of the reading process
- To provide direct services to parents and children to assist with specific reading needs
- To provide continuing professional development
- To prepare teachers to apply the best knowledge on the effective teaching of reading
- To provide technical assistance to schools and LEAs

This partnership will continue to have impressive potential because of the unique qualifications of the partners. The Maryland State Department of Education is charged with leadership in school improvement initiatives and implementation of state policy, including teacher certification and K-12 school curriculum requirements. MSDE staff plays key leadership roles in supporting professional development at the school, regional and university based levels. The Department has been instrumental in making improved reading proficiency a priority for well over twenty years. Annual presentations to the Maryland State Board of Education incorporate the following departmental priorities: Maryland Functional Tests, Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, the Maryland Reading Task Force, the four reading courses necessary for teacher certification, the Maryland Reading Network, the Center for Reading Excellence, and the placement of reading as a priority in the master plans of all LEAs. From 1991-2002 MSDE annually evaluated reading programs at the school and district level through the MSPAP. Maryland's accountability system measures achievement and progress toward the achievement of student reading performance standards. Although accountability will still be a function of the state, the assessment program is currently being redesigned and will include information at the individual student level, beginning in Spring 2003.

The Kennedy Krieger Institute, a nationally renowned rehabilitation hospital, has a long history of research and direct service to families facing education challenges and neurological-based medical issues. Key resources include its two award winning Blue Ribbon schools for children six through sixteen and its comprehensive resources for evaluation of children and adolescents. KKI's interdisciplinary approach to

address the needs of children brings together resources from education, psychology, neurology, pediatrics, and related areas of specialization.

Johns Hopkins University and in particular, its Graduate Division of Education, has a primary mission of maximizing K-12 student achievement through quality initial and continuing teacher education programs, research, and school-university partnerships. Its Center for Technology in Education and Department of Special Education and Teacher Development and Leadership have a long history of providing school support and services in reading.

In addition to the three primary partners, the Center for Reading Excellence draws upon the rich reading resources available in the region and across the nation, including the reading expertise and talent of K-12 school practitioners, higher education researchers and faculty, professional associations, and parent and community groups. By combining and interrelating the expertise and resources of the partners and related resources, the Center for Reading Excellence is in a unique position to address the reading needs of students in Maryland's schools in a comprehensive and integrated manner including the participation of faculty, professional associations, and parent and community groups.

The Center has worked with Baltimore City schools identified through REA and low performing middle schools to assist in improving reading instruction through technical assistance, professional development, college credit courses, and teacher mentoring. Reading First will provide the Center the necessary funds to continue the work begun with REA to further impact the success of beginning readers by providing SBRR diagnostic testing to identified students.

Family Reading Plan

Maryland has long recognized the integral role of the family in establishing a strong foundation for literacy. The Family Reading Plan was launched in 1999 to involve parents in their children's early reading experiences and to provide at-home support to instruction in school. The United States Department of Education (USDE) and MSDE collaborated to incorporate the Compact for Learning process. Home Links daily activity sheets, stressing skills based in scientific research, help parents practice with their children phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, phonics, and vocabulary development with their children and also stimulate motivation for children to read a variety of leveled books. Home Links materials correlate with the Maryland Content Standards. Currently, the Family Reading Plan is represented in every Title I school; progress of the initiative is monitored through the MSDE Title I office. The annual Family Involvement Conference provides a forum for family members and school personnel to reinforce the base of scientific research that supports young readers.

Maryland Model for School Readiness

The Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) provides a statewide approach to enhance school readiness. The purpose of MMSR is to improve the performance of kindergarten, pre-kindergarten, and pre-school special education students by providing intensive staff development for teachers and other early childhood providers, such as Head Start and child care. As such, staff development, instruction, assessment, communication, and collaboration and coordination are essential program components.

All Maryland kindergarten teachers have received training in the MMSR framework that encompasses the following:

- Maryland's definition of "school readiness"
- Assessment dimensions, outcomes, and indicators for end of kindergarten

expectations

- Instructional Planning Guide which aligns local curriculum, instruction, and assessment for early childhood programs
- Systematic assessment method that supports classroom instruction using the Work Sampling System (WSS) or compatible assessment systems

MMSR materials emphasize that “Language development is complex, and a child needs knowledge of how sounds are combined to make words and how words are combined to produce sentences. At the same time, a child must understand how individual words and sentences convey meaning” (Maryland State Department of Education, 2001, p. [18]).

The Maryland General Assembly requires MSDE to submit a report each year on the social, physical, linguistic, and cognitive skills of children entering kindergarten. The Maryland Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families selected the WSS as the early childhood assessment system to be used in kindergarten for the purpose of assessing entering kindergarteners’ skills for seven curricular domains. All students receive ratings, and the data are collected and analyzed. Reporting reflects the percentage of students who have reached one of the following levels of readiness:

- Full readiness—Students consistently demonstrate skills, behaviors, and abilities which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully.
- Approaching readiness—Students inconsistently demonstrate skills, behaviors, and abilities which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully and require targeted instructional support in specific domains or specific performance indicators.
- Developing readiness—Students do not demonstrate skills, behaviors, and abilities which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully and require considerable instructional support in several domains or many performance indicators.

For the children entering kindergarten in 2002, state-level data revealed that in the area of Language and Literacy, 42% were fully ready for kindergarten work, 46% were approaching readiness, and 12% were developing readiness.

In order to provide kindergarten teachers with additional support in the MMSR Outcomes for Language and Literacy, focused professional development modules have been developed to provide participants with the most current early literacy research and strategies for appropriate literacy instruction.

Judith P. Hoyer Enhancement Program

The Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Education Enhancement Program (Judy Hoyer Program) is a statewide effort to help at-risk young children enter school ready to learn. MSDE was charged to implement the program that was signed into law in May 2000. The vision of the program is to establish early childhood education and family support services that ensure those children enter school ready to learn. Recent research shows that the first years in a child's life lay the foundation for school success. Actions taken before children enter kindergarten impact their abilities to thrive during the elementary school years and beyond. A major emphasis within the instructional component of the Judy Center is early literacy. These centers provide an outstanding structure to disseminate scientifically based reading research throughout all of the providers who care for "at risk" young children in the state of Maryland.

Reading Efforts Directed by Special Education Services

In response to State Superintendent of Schools' request, the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services formed a task force to examine issues and educational practices related to students who are "at risk" for, or identified with, reading and writing disabilities. The membership of the Task Force was comprised of a diverse group of 26 members representing viewpoints of Maryland and other states, LEAs, professional associations or agencies, parents, and the advocacy community.

The Task Force accepted the charge to identify issues related to:

- Identification of students "at risk" for reading and writing disabilities
- Identification practices regarding students with reading and writing disabilities
- Educational practices utilized with students who are "at risk" for, or identified with reading and writing disabilities
- Make recommendations to address unmet needs

In its final report, *Educational practices for students at risk for, or identified with, reading and writing disabilities*, the Task Force categorized the issues for students who are "at risk" for reading and writing disabilities into the three global areas of Professional Development, Capacity Building and Resources, and Effective Practices for Identification, Instruction, and Interventions. The Task Force formulated recommendations for "next step" efforts (MSDE, 2002). The following are highlights from the list of recommendations:

- An interdivisional committee that connects general and special education should be established to develop a mechanism for ongoing review of the status of State initiatives/guideline documents.
- MSDE Divisions involved with general education instruction, in collaboration with special education representatives, will determine future efforts regarding the Task Force recommendations related to general education and students who are "at risk" for failure, and include special education representatives.
- Develop resources to assist LEAs with the selection/evaluation of instructional materials. This includes the coordination of instructional delivery and the appropriate use of materials in accordance with student needs.

Maryland Reading Network

Beginning in the late 1990's, the Maryland Reading Network provided intensive professional development on the theory and practice based in scientific research in an intensive professional development effort designed to strengthen school based and system-based instructional leadership. During its initial phase-in, the network focused on beginning reading, bringing together from Maryland's twenty-four LEAs teams that represented classroom teachers, principals, and central office staff.

Typically, the network operates as a residential summer experience for participants. National and state experts in reading present keynote addresses and workshops; participants read and discuss research and reading literature in role-alike and regional groups; school teams develop plans for improving reading instruction and for sharing and disseminating information. Several follow-up sessions are scheduled during the school year.

In 2001, the Maryland Reading Network enlarged from a single focus to assume a multi-focused approach. The Maryland Reading Networks incorporated the Learning to Read Network, focused on beginning reading; the Reading to Learn Network, targeted to reading in the content areas; and, the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Network, concentrating on preparing teachers in reading.

On July 26, 2002, the Learning to Read Network hosted a statewide conference, "Great Beginnings Never End." The conference emphasized alphabetic awareness, phonics, vocabulary and family literacy and established connections between public libraries, the Reading Excellence Act and Even Start initiatives. Ruby Payne, Principal, Houston Independent School District (ISD) and researcher in the area of poverty and student achievement, presented a keynote address about high achievement in the midst of poverty. Phyllis Hunter, Houston ISD and consultant to USDE on Reading First, presented a keynote address outlining successful reading strategies. This conference served as a prelude to Reading First in Maryland.

K-16 Partnerships

Particularly during the last few years, Maryland has begun to address the critical challenge of attracting, training, and retaining a cadre of teachers and principals who are equipped to bring virtually all students to high standards. The challenge now is to move from the relatively easy task of setting standards to implementing them in all schools. The Maryland policymakers have the most work to accomplish in this area to ensure that all educators are meeting standards of excellence.

The State's exemplary K-16 partnership is wisely focused on teacher preparation as well as articulation of student expectations. Together, the K-12 and higher education systems have implemented more rigorous standards for preservice teachers. For example, all teachers in colleges of education, regardless of their subject area concentrations or teaching license areas, are required to take research based courses in reading. Elementary teachers must take a total of 15 hours in teaching reading, including training in reading process and acquisition, instruction, materials selection and reading assessment. Additionally, already practicing teachers must fulfill the relevant requirements in order to renew their teaching certificates.

Measuring Student Reading Achievement

Reading achievement in Maryland has been measured using three different evaluation instruments. Most recently, the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report Card, released on March 4, 1999, provided encouraging but mixed results. In fourth grade reading, Maryland increased its average score, the percentage of students at the proficient level or higher, and the scores for students in the top quartile. Maryland is one of only 10 of 43 participating jurisdictions to realize significant gains in fourth-grade reading between 1994 and 1998. Yet reading scores for students in the bottom quartile were unchanged, and there was no indication that the gap in performance between the best and worst scoring students narrowed.

➤ NAEP 4th Grade Reading Data

Score	1994	1998
Below Basic	45%	39%
Basic	24%	29%
Proficient	55%	61%

Further disaggregation of NAEP data for several categories including race/ethnicity and low-income revealed the following:

- Race/Ethnicity: In Grade 4, 66% of Anglo students performed at or above the proficient level compared with 38% of African American students.
- Low-Income: In Maryland, in Grade 4, 63% of students who were eligible for free/reduced priced meals performed below basic, while only 27% of students who were not eligible for this service performed below basic.

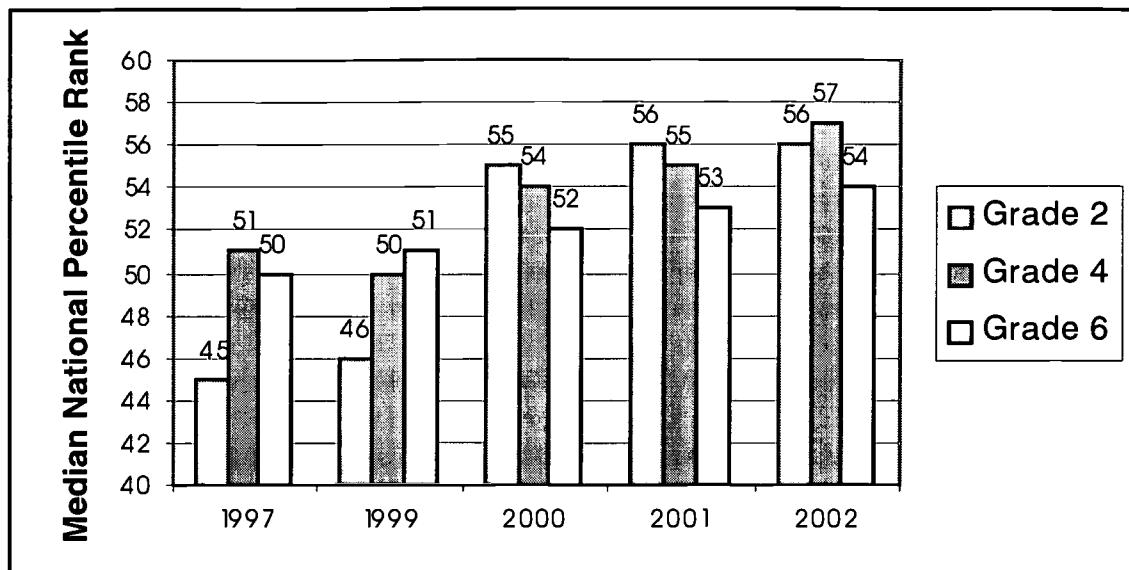
➤ *Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5)*

In Maryland, the CTBS/5 has been administered in grades 2, 4, and 6 since 1997. CTBS/5 is a norm-referenced achievement test, which provides systemwide and school-level median national percentile ranks in reading, language, language mechanics, and mathematics.

On the CTBS/5 for the 2002 school year, second grade students were reading at the 56th percentile. This is an increase from the 45th percentile in 1997 and the 55th percentile in 2000. Gains from 1997 to 2001 in second grade exceed those in fourth and sixth grades.

The table on the following page displays CTBS/5 performance for 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

CTBS/5 Performance for 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002

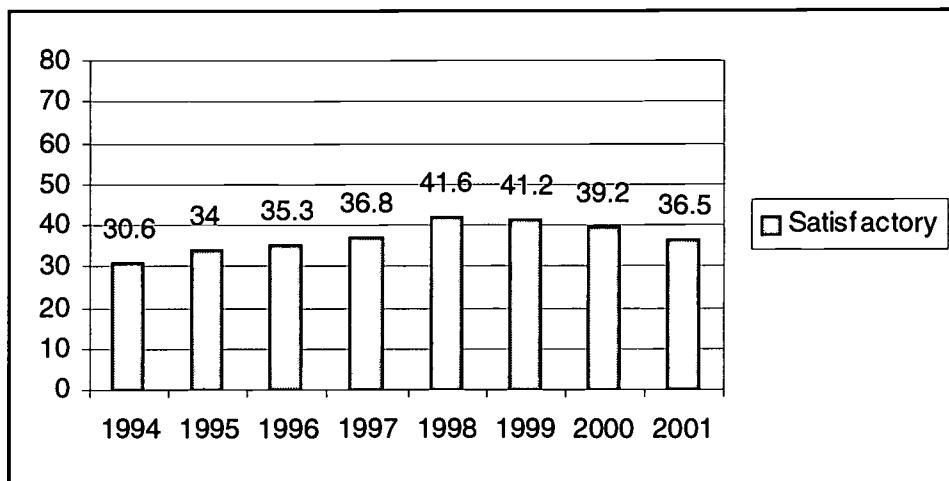


➤ Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP)

Since 1991, school performance in Maryland's schools has been evaluated statewide by MSPAP. The MSPAP was administered at grades 3, 5, and 8 and was designed to track school-level performance in all major areas. Reading achievement has been a critical outcome to examine on MSPAP in evaluating school performance and reading instruction. This outcome is measured as the percentage of students scoring satisfactory or above on the test. Maryland established a performance standard of 70 percent of students reaching or exceeding the satisfactory level in reading as measured by the MSPAP.

The reading performance standard was not reached during any of the years of MSPAP administration. As illustrated in the *MSPAP Grade 3 Reading Achievement* table on the following page, the overall reading achievement in Grade 3 increased steadily from 30.6 to 41.6 percent between 1994 and 1998. However, since the 1999 administration the level of satisfactory reading achievement gradually declined reaching 36.5 percent in 2001.

MSPAP Grade 3 Reading Achievement



Identifying Gaps and Programmatic Needs Related to Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR)

While it is apparent that there are and have been many efforts to improve reading achievement, it is also clear that improvement can be made to close existing gaps. Improvements that can be made include:

- Statewide coordination of all reading programs and initiatives to ensure that SBRR is the foundation of all comprehensive reading programs implemented across the state of Maryland.
- Revision of the reading courses required by the state to heighten the emphasis on SBRR and coordination and consistency between IHEs offering reading certification courses.
- Coordination of inservice professional development efforts statewide.
- Disaggregated student achievement data to demonstrate what reading programs/initiatives are (or are not) working and professional development on the use of data to impact instruction.
- Ensuring strong district and school instructional leadership in the areas of reading and the use of achievement data to improve instruction.
- Development and dissemination of the Essential State Curriculum, PreK-12, that will provide articulation and clarification of state expectations in all curricular areas (including reading) and will ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment statewide.

Toward Solving some of the Identified Gaps

Toward alleviating the gaps identified above, Maryland is already working to alleviate the identified gaps and is involved in ongoing attempts to address programmatic needs in its current reading initiatives. The following section describes these efforts.

Ongoing Efforts to Close Gaps

Based on the analysis of gaps in Maryland's literacy related initiatives, Maryland has already taken actions to address some of the programmatic needs identified. These actions include the following:

- MSDE staff has worked with Achieve, Inc. to align state reading content standards to the new Maryland School Assessment (MSA). The Maryland Essential Curriculum, K-3, includes content standards for each of the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each standard is clarified through indicator statements; and, each indicator statement is further specified through objective statements.
- The State Board of Education passed regulatory amendments that require all prospective and current Maryland teachers to take specific coursework for certification and recertification. These courses will be reviewed as part of the Maryland Reading First Initiative (MRFI) to ensure the inclusion of SBRR.
- A Task Force on Reading and Writing in Special Education completed a report that included specific recommendations for students who are "at risk" for reading and writing disabilities into three global areas of *Professional Development, Capacity Building and Resources, and Effective Practices for Identification, Instruction, and Interventions*.
- A conference that featured scientifically based reading instruction was held on July 26, 2002. This conference was designed to support primary reading curriculum and introduce the major components of Reading First legislation.
- Leadership efforts have been coordinated through the Division of Professional and Strategic Development in the areas of reading workshops for elementary and middle school principals relative to the student achievement as well as in data-based decision making through an on-line course for administrators.

Reading First's Role in Closing the Gap

Maryland's goal under Reading First is clear. All Maryland children will be proficient in reading by the end of grade three. The reauthorization of ESEA, particularly Title I, Subpart A, "Reading First," offers unequivocal direction for Maryland to close the gap in reading achievement by utilizing the following strategies:

All Maryland K-3 teachers will have access to professional development in SBRR.

- Scientifically based reading research (SBRR) shows what reading instruction should be.
- Core reading programs delivering instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are the tools of highly qualified beginning reading teachers.
- Classroom assessments monitoring student progress through benchmark screening and progress monitoring instrumentation deliver immediate data that teachers use to modify instruction. Diagnostic assessments and both supplemental and intervention strategies and materials that are grounded in SBRR, offer specialized and intensive support to students most at risk.
- In-school coaches, supervised and mentored by trained specialists, provide on-site assistance and reinforcement to teachers and students.
- Schools seek continuous improvement of their Reading Action Plans (RAP) based on data-driven decisions.

Coordination of SBRR literacy efforts in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development will close the achievement gap.

- MSDE and LEA staff will become augmented in their knowledge of SBRR
- Maryland K-3 teachers will focus on the standards, indicators, and objectives, aligned to SBRR in the Maryland Essential Curriculum and delivered through SBRR core reading programs

- Maryland K-3 students will have their progress in reading monitored regularly through SBRR classroom, diagnostic, and outcome assessments, and their instruction will be modified as needed.

The Maryland Reading First Initiative provides a model for how to achieve the goal.

- The Maryland Reading First Initiative (MRFI) described in this application outlines how MSDE will apply principles of SBRR in LEAs and schools receiving Reading First funding and how MSDE will develop awareness of SBRR for K-3 teachers and principals statewide.

I B. State Outline and Rationale for Using Scientifically Based Reading Research - Connecting SBRR to Plans and Activities Improving K-3 Reading Instruction

All students will read by the end of third grade. This is the reading goal for all Maryland students. The Maryland Reading Framework that follows was created to show that SBRR as the basis for all reading instruction in Maryland. Through the application of SBRR to professional development, the Maryland Essential Curriculum, instructional strategies, the selection and use of instructional materials and programs, and the use of classroom-based assessment, all students will be successful reaching the outcome goal by the end of third grade as measured by the Maryland School Assessment (MSA).

Background - Factors Impacting Maryland's Reading Framework

Several recent accomplishments have prepared Maryland for effective implementation of Reading First. These accomplishments, which include the Maryland Visionary Panel for Better Schools, Maryland's Assessment System, School Readiness Legislation, Establishment of the Office of Reading First, and training by SBRR Experts, are discussed below.

➤ *Maryland's Visionary Panel for Better Schools*

Achievement Matters Most, a document produced by a select group of nearly 300 representatives of education, business, non-profits, parents and students recommended that Maryland focus every part of its public school system on improving classroom instruction. The following commitments made by the state and local districts have Maryland prepared for Reading First:

- establish a statewide curriculum in every subject at every grade level;
- provide teachers with more explicit assistance in effective ways to teach the state curriculum;
- strengthen teacher preparation and certification by requiring rigorous academic content preparation in both pre-and inservice education, mentoring for novices, and redefining and reorganizing administrative roles to allow principals to assume instructional improvement as their primary and most important role; and,
- hold teachers and administrators accountable for improving achievement for all students and sub-groups of students.

➤ *Maryland's Assessment System*

Maryland has been recognized as a leader in educational reform. In 2001 and 2002, "Quality Counts", the annual special publication of the highly respected Education Week, declared that Maryland's overall program in standards and accountability is the nation's best. The Maryland School Performance Program (MSPP) that includes the Maryland State Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) rather measured school performance and served as the driving instrument in reading instruction and professional development for the past decade. MSPAP, however, was not designed to measure individual student performance. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has propelled Maryland into reevaluating educational standards and accountability. In meeting federal Title I requirements, Maryland committed to the alignment of its new assessment system, kindergarten through grade ten. Title I, Part B, Reading First, stimulated the need to restudy and refocus Maryland's vision for beginning reading. Through the alignment process, MSPAP has been replaced by the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). MSA is a hybrid of two test types: norm-referenced and criterion-referenced portions that overlap to produce NRT and CRT scores. The test will provide a norm-referenced score that describes how well a student has performed in reading compared to his/her peers nationally. It will also produce a criterion-referenced score that describes how well a student has mastered the reading standards specified in the Maryland Essential Curriculum. This new assessment will yield individual student scores in reading in order to give students, parents, and teachers specific information on student progress relative to the Maryland Essential Curriculum. MSA will become the outcome assessment for measuring student progress, at grade 3, in Reading First schools.

➤ ***Legislation***

- Maryland Model for School Readiness - the Maryland General Assembly requires MSDE to submit a report each year on the social, physical, linguistic, and cognitive skills of children entering kindergarten. All students receive ratings on levels of readiness. This sets the stage for instruction and continuous progress monitoring in kindergarten.
- Reading course requirement for state certification- The State Board of Education passed regulatory amendments that required all prospective and current Maryland teachers to take additional reading theory and methodology coursework for certification and recertification. Effective in the fall of 1999, twelve semester hours in specific reading coursework were required for regular and special education teachers at the early childhood and elementary levels. Reading First will provide the impetus to revise the requirements for the courses based on scientifically based reading research.
- Bridge to Excellence – The 2002 Maryland General Assembly passed a historic piece of educational legislation requiring LEAs to develop five-year comprehensive master plans integrating funding sources with the ultimate goal being student achievement. As part of this plan, LEAs are mandated to provide full-day kindergarten programs by the 2007-2008 school year.

➤ ***Establishment of an Office of Reading First reporting directly to the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools***

Dr. Grasmick, the State Superintendent of Schools, strongly supports the findings of the National Reading Panel and its potential for raising the reading achievement of Maryland's beginning readers. Understanding the need to redirect state efforts and coalesce instructional support and funding for this improvement, she created in May 2003, a new administrative unit within the Office of the State Superintendent of Schools. This new unit, the Office of Reading First, occupies a high profile position within MSDE. Its authority, directly under the State Superintendent of Schools, allows easy access to the offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the state delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, and Maryland's twenty-four LEA Superintendents. Under the State Superintendent of Schools, the Reading Office is positioned to provide immediate linkage and communication among the following MSDE divisions: Instruction; Student and School Services; Special Education; Leadership Development; Planning, Results, and Information Management; Library Development and Services; Academic Policy; and, Certification and Accreditation.

➤ ***Training by Dr. Louisa Moats, Dr. Roland Good III, Dr. Deborah Simmons, and Dr. Edward Kame'enui and identified colleagues***

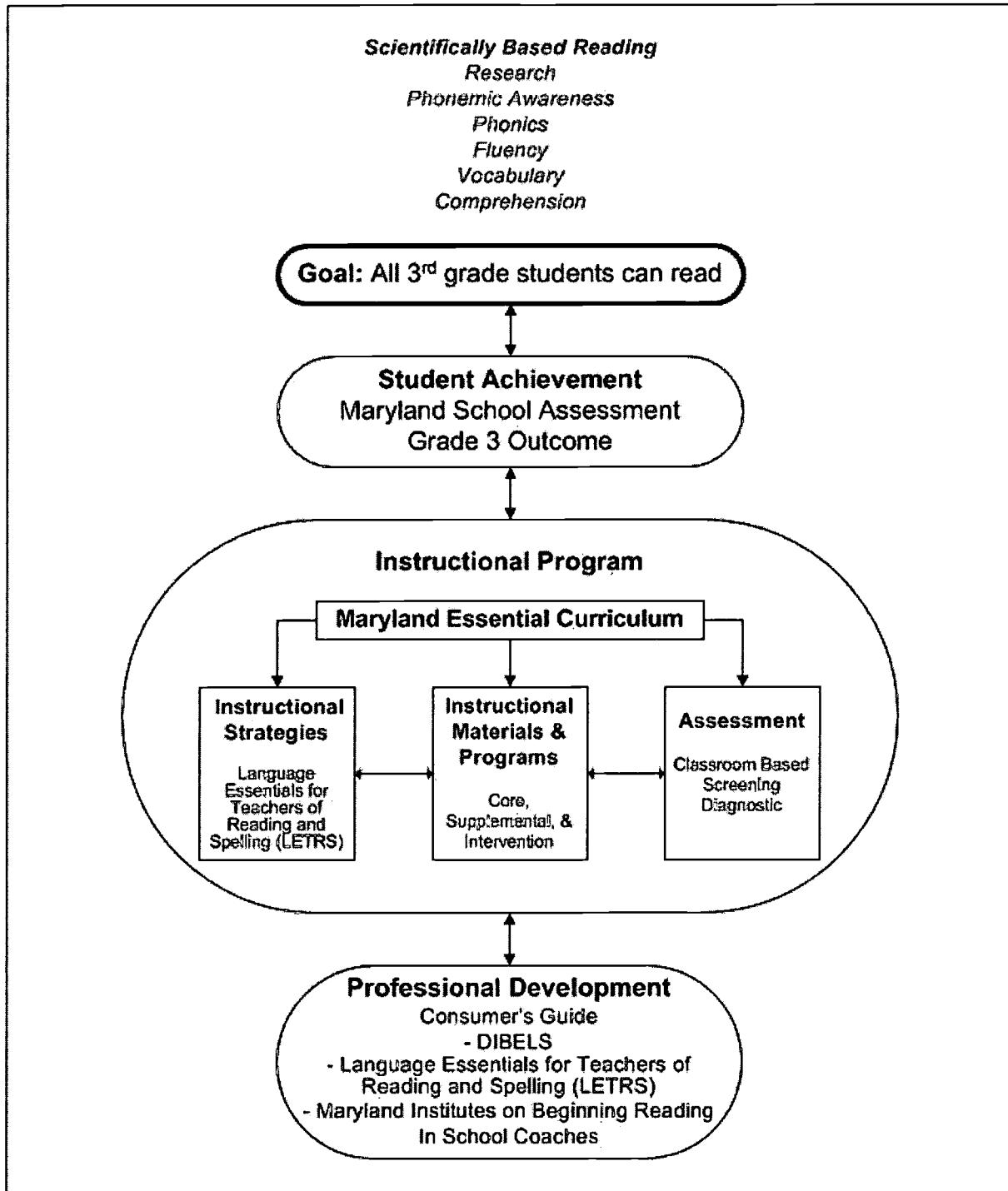
Prior to receiving federal funding, the newly established Office of Reading First has planned and organized much needed professional development for the MSDE and LEA staff in SBRR as it relates to the major components of Reading First. Dr. Louisa Moats has agreed to working with the MSDE in order to provide professional development around the instructional strategies supported by SBRR. Dr. Roland Good III will be assisting in the understanding of classroom based assessment. Dr. Deborah Simmons along with Dr. Michael Coyne will assist Maryland in the selection of materials that meet the criteria for SBRR. The state will also use the components of the Institute for Beginning Reading as presented by Dr. Deborah Simmons and Dr. Edward Kame'enui from the University of Oregon for professional development of schoolwide teams in Maryland Reading First schools and those interested in improving reading instruction.

Maryland's Reading program, strengthened by the Visionary Panel, No Child Left Behind, the Maryland Model for School Readiness, and the Office of Reading First, connects scientifically based reading research to plans and activities for improving K-3 reading instructions. These plans and activities are detailed in the following section as part of *Maryland's Reading Framework*.

Applying Scientifically Based Research to All Required Reading First Activities – Maryland’s Reading Framework

Maryland’s Reading Framework establishes the context in which scientific based reading research lays the foundation for a statewide instructional program and supporting professional development critical to improving statewide student achievement in reading. *Maryland’s Reading Framework* is illustrated on the following page. A summary and detailed description of this framework follows the illustration.

Maryland's Reading Framework



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Summary of Maryland's Reading Framework

➤ *Scientifically Based Reading Research*

Maryland will ensure that curricula, instructional strategies, assessment, and professional development are aligned to SBRR in K-3 classrooms. Scientific research permeates the entire Maryland Reading Framework. Five essential components of reading identified by the National Reading Panel are presented explicitly and systematically; imbue the entire instructional program and pre-service and in-service development of teachers; and, culminate in measures of student achievement.

Thus, paramount to what is taught to students, monitored for their achievement and central to the professional development of their teachers are the following:

- Phonemic Awareness- the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words
- Phonics- the process of learning letter sound correspondences and spelling patterns; phonics instruction links phonemic awareness to the alphabetic principle, the key to decoding written language
- Fluency- the ability to read text with speed, accuracy, and proper expression
- Vocabulary- the ability to know words in order to communicate effectively; oral vocabulary refers to words used in speaking or recognize in listening, and reading vocabulary refers to words used or recognized in print
- Comprehension- the ultimate reason for reading, i.e., understanding

➤ *Maryland's Goal*

Maryland's goal parallels the national goal in reading: All students will be able to read by the end of the third grade.

➤ *Student Achievement*

Maryland will assess its success in reaching the goal through the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), specifically the outcome measurement at grade three.

➤ *Instructional Program*

The Maryland Essential Curriculum, grounded in SBRR, specifies content standards in the five components and outlines instructional strategies, instructional materials and programs, and a system of progress monitoring through classroom based screening and diagnostic assessments. Maryland content standards are as follows:

- Phonemic Awareness- Students will master the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words by the end of grade one.
- Phonics- Students will apply their knowledge of letter/sound relationships and word structure to decode unfamiliar words.
- Fluency- Students will read orally with accuracy and expression at a rate, which sounds like speech.
- Vocabulary- Students will use a variety of strategies and opportunities to understand word meanings and increase vocabulary.
- Comprehension- Students will use a variety of strategies to understand what is read to them and what they read (construct meaning).
- Comprehension of Informational Text- Students will read and comprehend grade level appropriate informational text.
- Comprehension of Literary Text- Students will read and comprehend grade level appropriate literary text.

➤ ***Instructional Materials and Programs***

A statewide team representing Maryland's 24 LEAs will be trained in using the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program* to generate a list of MSDE-approved core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs. The list will be disseminated to all districts in Maryland for guidance in procuring instructional materials that meet the criteria for SBRR and will be added to Maryland's Essential Curriculum.

➤ ***Instructional Strategies***

The content standards, indicators, and objectives that currently comprise Maryland's Essential Curriculum require practical clarification for teachers. Instructional strategies supporting SBRR will be taken from Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), Modules 1-9 (Moats, 2003), and will be included in Maryland's Essential Curriculum.

➤ ***Assessment***

Consistent progress monitoring of K-3 students ensures that students' instructional needs will be identified in a timely fashion. Implementing the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) subtests provides necessary data to help teachers make appropriate decisions to modify instruction. DIBELS screening and progress monitoring information will be included in Maryland's Essential Curriculum. If a child continues to fail to make adequate progress, diagnostic testing will help the teacher determine why the child is not making progress. The diagnostic tests MSDE has incorporated within this application that meet SBRR criteria will be included in Maryland's Essential Curriculum.

➤ ***Professional Development***

Effective professional development, based on SBRR that builds teacher understanding and proficiency with curriculum, instruction, and assessment is the critical linchpin to children's success in learning to read. "Teaching reading is a job for an expert." (Moats, 1999, pp. 4). Thus, Maryland will initiate augmented knowledge in SBRR for MSDE and LSS staff through explicit training by national experts in LETRS, DIBELS, and the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program* (Simmons & Kame'enui, 2003). Trained MSDE and LSS staff will make available to all Maryland teachers the Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading (MIBR's) based on the model developed at the University of Oregon. Maryland will promote the value of trained in-school coaches as primary support to teachers in elementary schools.

Detailed Description of the Incorporation of SBRR in Reading First Activities

> *Instructional Strategies*

The state curriculum is an essential curriculum organized around the five essential components of reading. In the essential curriculum the progression of the acquisition of reading skills from grade K-3 reflects the five components of Reading First. The format selected for the Maryland Essential Curriculum is arranged as follows: standard statements; indicator statements; objective statements. Content curricular "standards" are broad, measurable statements of what students should know and be able to do within a content area. The standards remain fairly consistent across grade levels. "Indicator statements" break the standard statements into "teachable" component parts and are more specific statements of what students should know and be able to do at a particular grade level. "Objective statements," are written with a further level of specificity and depict the individual "walk away" student knowledge or skill. Objectives are intended to guide teachers in daily unit and lesson planning.

The instructional strategies match the essential curriculum at the objective level and will be based on the methods outlined by Dr. Louisa Moats in her LETRS training modules. "Teaching reading is very complex. It requires knowledge of language and knowledge of individual differences in language, culture, and thinking. It requires a repertoire of instructional and classroom management skills, the ability to make data-based decisions about children's needs and the ability to draw on all this knowledge with flexibility in order to reach individual children." (Louisa Moats, Sopris West, LETRS, 2003 Module 7, pp. 6). The Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading (MIBR) will be the model used to communicate to teachers the balance between the core program and the needs of students resulting from careful classroom-based assessment of progress. The five essential components of reading will be explicitly and systematically taught in Maryland Reading First schools.

- Phonemic Awareness

The National Reading Panel states that phonemic awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words. Phonemes are the basic vocal gestures from which the spoken words of a language are constructed. Children with little phoneme awareness usually struggle in learning to read and spell words, developing a wide achievement gulf between them selves and peers who are phonemically aware (Juel, 1988).

The Maryland Content Standards set the expectation that students will have mastered the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words by the end of grade one. After children have caught on to how letters cue the phonemes of spoken words, learning to manipulate phonemes by blending and segmentation manipulations will likely help beginners progress into sequential decoding (Murray, 1998). "Phonemic awareness instruction is most effective when children are taught to manipulate phonemes by using the letters of the alphabet ... and when it focuses on only one or two types of phoneme manipulation, rather than several types" (CIERA, 2001, p. 7).

In the Maryland classroom the teacher will follow a lesson plan that provides explicit systematic instruction focusing on only one or two phonemic awareness skills. In the kindergarten classroom, children will produce rhyming words and identify onset and rimes. At the first grade level, explicit instruction will be in segmenting and blending. These lessons will utilize a number of instructional strategies such as providing a setting for small group interaction with students actively engaged in activities that include identifying and blending onsets and rimes, and blending and segmenting phonemes. The Learning First Alliance (1998) recognized the importance of giving children experiences with rhyming words in the preschool years as an effective first step toward building phonemic awareness.

Teachers will first focus on sound isolation, then blending and segmentation at the phoneme level. Since this is an auditory task, research has found that it is better to work with small groups of children rather than an entire class. The program must show children what they are expected to do. Teachers must model skills they want children to perform, practice as a group, and then ask children to demonstrate the skill. When phonemic awareness tasks include the manipulation of letter sounds, teachers increase the effectiveness of the instruction. Once children become familiar with the concept, letter tiles or squares help them to associate sounds and words.

The following skills and strategies are taken from the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading (National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators et. al., 2001).

Skill	Strategy
Sound Isolation	<p>Use explicit strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show children how to do all the steps in the task before asking children to do the task.• Use consistent and brief wording.• Correct errors by telling the answer and having children repeat the correct answer.
Blending	<p>Scaffold instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When children are first learning to blend, use examples with continuous sounds because the sounds can be stretched and held.• When children are first learning the task, use short words in teaching and practice examples. Use pictures when possible.• When children are first learning the task, use materials that reduce memory load and to represent sounds.• As children become successful during initial learning, remove scaffolds by using progressively more difficult examples. As children become successful with more difficult examples, use fewer scaffolds, such as pictures.

Skill	Strategy
Segmenting	<p>Integrate Familiar and New Information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycle instructional and practice examples used for blending. Blending and segmenting are sides of the same coin, the difference being whether children hear or produce a segmented word. • Concurrently teach letter-sound correspondences for the sounds children will be segmenting in words. • Make the connections between sounds in words and sounds of letters. • Use phonologic skills to teach more advanced reading skills, such as blending letter-sounds to read words.

- Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between the letters of written language, including spelling patterns, and the sounds of language. Phonics instruction links phonemic awareness to the alphabetic principle, the key to decoding written language. The alphabetic principle includes alphabetic understanding and phonological recoding. Alphabetic understanding is the knowledge that words are composed of letters that represent sounds while phonological recoding is using the letter-sound correspondence to retrieve the pronunciation of printed letters or to spell words. Children must learn to recode regular words and irregular words, and to use phonics for advanced word analysis in order to identify written words and link a word to its meaning.

Students who acquire and apply the alphabetic principle early in their reading careers reap long-term benefits (Stanovich, 1986). They have the strategies to decode new words and, with practice, develop ability to decode effortlessly. There is a strong relationship between decoding and comprehension (Foorman, et. al., 1997). Dr. Louisa Moats states, “There is no single ‘best’ method to teaching phonics, but systematic instruction includes daily routines that teach mastery of the sound-symbol patterns of print, step-by-step in a cumulative progression.” According to the National Reading Panel (2000), a key feature that distinguishes systematic phonic instruction from non-systematic phonics is the identification of a full array of letter-sound correspondences to be taught. As in teaching other skills, skill development is only a means to an end.

The purpose of phonics instruction is to learn to apply letter sounds to daily reading. Not all children will need to learn to differentiate to the same degree. These principles have been incorporated into the Maryland Essential Curriculum and are supported by scientifically based reading research. Critical features of effective instruction include beginning in kindergarten with letter-sound correspondence, fluency with known letter-sound correspondences, and letter formation. Instruction in first grade continues with the addition of letter-sound correspondence with common letter combinations.

In Maryland, children will be provided with opportunities to apply what they are learning to reading words, sentences, and stories. In pre-kindergarten children will begin to associate familiar consonant sounds (phonemes) with appropriate letters. By first grade, the curriculum indicator states that children will have the ability to use a variety of phonics skills to decode words. This will be accomplished through explicit instruction that provides students with the skills to recognize short and long vowels and vowel patterns, decode words with consonant blends and digraphs, and to be able to further decode words using onsets and rimes. Additionally, first grade students will be provided with the skills to recognize common, irregularly spelled words by sight. In second grade, students’ phonics skills are

further refined to include the use of diphthongs to decode words and the ability to identify and apply vowel patterns to read words.

The following skills and strategies are taken from the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading (National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators et. al., 2001).

Skill	Strategy
Letter-sound correspondences	<p>Explicit Instruction Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher actions should make the task explicit. Use consistent and brief wording. <p>Scaffolding Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Separate auditorily and visually similar letters.• Introduce some continuous sounds early.• Introduce letters that can be used to build many words.• Introduce lower case letters first unless upper case letters are similar in configuration. <p>Integrate New and Familiar Information – Simple Before Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once students can identify the sound of the letter on two successive trials, include the new letter-sound correspondence with 6-8 other letter sounds.• When students can identify 4-6 letter-sound correspondences in 2 seconds each, include these letters in single-syllable, CVC, decodable words. <p>Review Cumulatively and Judiciously</p>

Skill	Strategy
Sounding out words	<p>Explicit Instruction Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students orally produce each sound in a word and sustain that sound as they progress to the next. • Students must be taught to put those sounds together to make a whole word. • Students sound out the letter-sound correspondences silently and then produce the whole word. <p>Scaffolding Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words must be carefully selected for both the letters in the words and the complexity of the words. • Letters in words for initial sounding-out instruction should consist of continuous sounds as these sounds can be prolonged in the voice stream and be ones students know. • Words in sounding-out practice and instruction should progress from short-vowel-consonant and consonant-vowel-consonant words in which letters represent their most common sounds to longer words in which letters represent their most common sound. • These words should not include consonant blends until students are proficient with consonant-vowel-consonant configurations. • Begin with continuous sounds to facilitate blending. Stop sounds may be used in final positions of words. • Words should represent vocabulary and concepts with which students are familiar. <p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to reading the words, review the letter-sound correspondences that have been recently introduced or are problematic for learners. • As you progress to each new phase of word reading, students may need a reminder of the procedure. • Once students learn a number of word types, include examples of all taught word types in the list.. • Keep the list to a manageable length (6-8 words).

Skill	Strategy
Automatic Word Recognition	<p>Instructional Design Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once students can accurately decode CVC and VC word types, these words should be introduced in short, highly controlled passages. When introducing passage reading, give prompts and procedures for transferring word recognition skills to passages. <p>Explicit Instruction Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direct wording for students to ‘figure out the word, say the sounds in the word to yourself’ for 1-2 weeks. Then give a direction at the beginning of the passage without prompting to say the sounds. To increase the pace of word reading, allow 3 seconds of ‘think time’ per word and gradually reduce that time to 1.5 seconds. <p>Scaffolding Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure students can read the words in lists at a rate of one word per 3 seconds before introducing passage reading Include only words students can decode in passages. Include repeated opportunities to read passages to develop accuracy and fluency. Make clear the connections between sounding out the words in lists and reading those words in passages. Progress from the highly prompted sight reading strategy to the less-prompted strategy. Gradually reduce the time for sight reading words from 3 seconds to 1.5 seconds.

- Fluency

Fluency is the link between phonics and comprehension. As students develop skill in the alphabetic principle, making words from sounds, they must then connect the written word with known oral vocabulary in order to create meaning from the text. Fluency is the ability to read text quickly, accurately and with proper expression. Fluency is not the result of word recognition proficiency. Rather, the fluent reader groups words into meaningful grammatical units to facilitate comprehension (Schreiber, 1980, 1987). Pinnell et al. (1995) confirmed this close relationship between fluency and comprehension. “Students who are low in fluency may have difficulty getting the meaning of what they read” (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 3-5). More than just rapid word recognition, the fluent reader must use punctuation to make judgments as to how to make sense of the text. Fluency requires the reader to carry out all aspects of reading rapidly and without conscious attention to the process. This frees cognitive resources for interpretation of the text while, at the same time, providing the initial information that facilitates further interpretation. (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 3-6).

Two aspects of fluency, automaticity and accuracy, have important implications for the classroom. The beginning reader must first be able to recognize a word accurately. With practice, there are improvements in speed and ease of recognition. Over time the process becomes automatic. Automaticity implies that the skill can be carried out without the conscious attention of the reader. This, as in other perceptual-motor tasks, is facilitated through practice and repetition over time. A fluent reader is able to

divide the text into meaningful chunks, such as phrases and clauses, and knows how to pause appropriately within and at the end of sentences. Fluent readers also know when to change emphasis and tone. Through this process, the fluent reader is establishing an initial basis for understanding the text.

The skill development necessary to become a fluent reader is often a neglected area in reading instruction. In order to help develop fluency, students must be given opportunities to hear fluent reading modeled and then reread the same reading material several times to practice fluent oral reading. Reading material to practice fluency should be easy for students to read. Direct instruction will provide students with opportunities for repeated and monitored oral reading. The National Reading Panel, 2000, lists the following activities for repeated oral reading practice:

- Student-adult reading: reading one-on-one with an adult who provides a model of fluent oral reading; helps with word recognition and provides feedback
- Choral reading: reading aloud simultaneously in a group
- Tape-assisted reading: reading aloud simultaneously or as an echo with an audio-taped model
- Partner reading: reading aloud with a more fluent reader partner (or with a partner of equal ability) who provides a model of fluent reading
- Readers' Theatre: rehearsing and performing before an audience of a dialogue-rich script derived from a book

The Maryland Essential Curriculum will guide fluency instruction requiring that teachers know how to facilitate the above activities. They should also know how to monitor fluency development and provide appropriate intervention when needed. Teachers also need to be able to model fluent oral reading, build vocabulary and background knowledge, make connections to content areas, and increase students' appreciation for a variety of literate forms and/or genres.

There is little scientific research on the effectiveness of sustained silent reading. However, it is known, from correlation research, that good readers read more frequently than poor readers. Whether they read more frequently because they are good readers or if more reading practice improves their reading cannot be determined from the studies. In either case, teachers should encourage students to read independently to allow students time to practice reading materials they enjoy.

In the Maryland classroom, the development of fluency begins in pre-kindergarten with children listening to models of fluent reading and reciting nursery rhymes, poems, and finger plays with expression. In kindergarten, students begin to read appropriate text accurately with expression and use their knowledge of end punctuation marks to signal expression in reading. By grade one, students are provided with the skills that enable them to read familiar text at a rate that is conversational and consistent. Students are assessed at reading independent grade-level materials at a rate of 80 words a minute. By third grade, students are challenged to read instructional materials that are manageable (texts in which no more than approximately 1 in 10 words are difficult for the reader) at a rate of 100-124 words a minute. The following skills and strategies are taken from the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading (National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators et. al., 2001).

Skill	Strategy
Letter-sound fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify target goal, based on DIBELS benchmarks• Identify letter sounds student can identify accurately and include in fluency building. Instruct students on letter sounds not identified accurately.• Progress from accuracy to fluency by systematically decreasing the amount of time per response.• Separate highly similar examples on 1st sets.• Include multiple examples of each letter sound in the

	<p>practice set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 2-3 short duration practice opportunities per day.
Irregular word fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify irregular words students can identify accurately but not fluently. Include these in fluency building. Determine whether words are regular or irregular. Separate highly similar irregular words on 1st fluency building activities. Include multiple examples of each word in the set. Progress from accuracy to fluency by systematically decreasing the amount of time per response. Provide 2-3 short duration practice opportunities per day.
Oral reading fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify passages students can read with 90-95% accuracy. Gradually increase criteria for student reading rate in order to reach targeted rate by the end of the year. Schedule repeated opportunities for the reader to hear and/or practice the passages. Aim to reduce the time and number of errors. Incorporate reading with expression once students can read 60 wcpm. Gradually shift from oral to silent reading.

- Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words we must know to communicate effectively. In general, vocabulary can be described as oral vocabulary or reading vocabulary. Oral vocabulary refers to words that we use in speaking or recognize in listening. Reading vocabulary refers to words we recognize or use in print. Vocabulary is an important middle ground in learning to read. Oral vocabulary is the key to making the transition from oral to written language; reading vocabulary is crucial to the comprehension process of a skilled reader. (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4-15) The value “in understanding text by applying letter-sound correspondences to printed material only comes about if the resultant oral representation is a known word in the learner’s oral vocabulary.” (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 1-15). Vocabulary development is a lifelong task that begins in early childhood and does not end once the child learns to read.

There is a direct relationship between vocabulary scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test in Kindergarten and later reading comprehension. At the end of grade one the correlation is .45 and by the end of grade four it is .62. The relationship of vocabulary to reading comprehension gets stronger as reading material becomes more complex.

Children enter school with wide differences in vocabulary knowledge, usually relative to economic advantage. There are differences in both the quantity of words heard and the quality of words heard. (Hart & Risley, 1995). The importance of vocabulary knowledge to school success is widely documented. From third grade on, learning to read becomes reading to learn. The student with poor vocabulary will not be able to keep up with the increased demands, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of vocabulary knowledge required for school success. Vocabulary development is a fundamental goal for students, particularly those at economic disadvantage, in the early grades (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Both direct and indirect instruction is necessary in vocabulary development. Children learn vocabulary by direct teaching and incidental exposure to words used in context. Pre-instruction guarantees that there will be fewer unfamiliar concepts in the material to be read. This makes the translation of print to speech meaningful by helping to guarantee that the vocabulary items are in the oral language of the reader. The vocabulary is taught depending on the goal. Modeling is used when it is impossible to use language to explain the meaning of a word. Synonyms are used when a student knows a word that can explain the meaning of a new, unknown word. Definitions are useful when students have adequate language to understand a longer explanation and when the concept is too complicated to be explained through a synonym. Students need a variety of strategies and opportunities to understand word meanings and to increase vocabulary.

In the Maryland classroom, children will use a variety of strategies and opportunities to understand word meanings and to increase vocabulary. While a large portion of “vocabulary is learned indirectly, ... some vocabulary must be taught directly” (CIERA, 2001, p. 35). To build vocabulary, students must both listen to and read a variety of texts, including literary and informational materials (Adams, 1990). The Maryland Essential Curriculum includes standards for both literary and informational reading at all grade levels, K-3. Children will increase their listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary through a variety of experiences with text. They will analyze words according to prefixes, suffixes, base words and root words. They will be taught to identify and classify words that show relationships. “Vocabulary is also important to reading comprehension. Readers cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean” (CIERA, 2001, p. 34). “Children learn vocabulary both by direct teaching of well chosen words and incidental exposure to words used in context.” (Moats, 2002).

The following skills and strategies are taken from the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading (National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators et. al., 2001).

Skill	Strategy
Critical reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read storybooks aloud to develop vocabulary
Vocabulary literature	<p>For younger children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose 2-5 words to teach directly from storybooks• Choose words that are important for the story or important for students to know• Give simple definitions and discuss them in the context of the story• Provide students with the opportunity to process the words deeply• Discuss the words multiple times <p>For older children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose words that will enhance the meaning of what students are reading or important for students to know• Use both context and definitions• Teach word meanings by using examples, synonyms, and definitions• Provide students with the opportunity to process the words deeply• Discuss the words multiple times
Nurture a love and appreciation of words and their use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose quality storybooks that children enjoy listening to• Model word awareness and show students that words are important, interesting, and fun• Provide students with rich oral language experiences

- Comprehension

Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can decode the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading. Comprehension is the essence of reading, and in order to comprehend, good readers are purposeful and actively search for meaning in what they read.

Comprehension is impacted by both reader- and text-based factors. The reader needs a strong vocabulary (knowing the meaning of most words in the text), phonemic awareness, alphabetic understanding and fluency with the code. In addition, the reader must have some background knowledge or familiarity with the content of what is being read. Knowledge of text structure and syntax as well as knowledge and active use of strategies that can be used to improve comprehension and further assist the reader in making meaning from the text. Lastly, practice in reasoning, developing thinking skills, and an interest and motivation in constructing meaning are necessary for developing comprehension skills.

Text comprehension instruction does improve reading achievement but there have been relatively few studies conducted with children in grades K, 1, and 2. The National Reading Panel (2000) found that text comprehension could be improved when we teach children to use specific comprehension strategies. The six strategies that have a firm scientific basis for improving text comprehension include monitoring comprehension, using graphic and semantic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, and summarizing. Students must apply knowledge of organizational structure of text to interpret what they know and read. Teachers should know how to provide a direct explanation of when and why to use the strategy, be able to model how to apply the strategy, know how

to guide and help students to apply the strategy themselves, and know how to guide students to independent use through repeated practice of the strategy. Teachers should be able to use cooperative learning to teach comprehension strategies. In addition, other strategies, such as making use of prior knowledge and using mental imagery, have been found to be effective in facilitating comprehension.

Teachers should understand that strategies can and should be used in combination to help students obtain meaning from print. Teachers need to help students learn to pick and use the right strategies for a particular type of text.

Finally, teachers must assess and monitor student progress in text comprehension and provide appropriate intervention, as needed. By discussing read-aloud selections, modeling and ‘thinking aloud’ about the thought processes involved in understanding text and helping students relate the text, to themselves and other texts, teachers can begin to foster comprehension development in the primary grades.

In the Maryland classroom children will use a variety of strategies to understand what they read (construct meaning). Successful readers not only are able to decode accurately and read fluently, but they are able to understand what they read (Adams, 1990). The Maryland Essential Curriculum ensures children become effective readers with standards that support the use of the six strategies that have a firm scientific basis for improving text comprehension: monitoring comprehension, using graphic and semantic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure and summarizing (CIERA, 2001). Maryland children at all levels will acquire comprehension skills through exposure and explicit instruction using a variety of texts. Additionally, children will be taught to apply knowledge of organizational structure of text to interpret what they know and read. The children will use monitoring strategies to check for understanding and resolve problems as they read (CIERA, 2001).

The following skills and strategies are taken from the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading (National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators et. al., 2001).

Skill	Strategy
Before reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set comprehension objectives• Preteach difficult to read words• Preview text and prime background knowledge• Chunk text into manageable segments
During Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify text structure elements• Answer literal, inferential, and evaluative questions• Retell stories or main ideas of informational text
After reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Integration• Judicious Review <p>Formal and Informal Assessment</p>

- Time

Guided by the research connecting instructional time and reading success (Pearson, 1982), teachers will make every minute count in the Maryland Reading First classroom. In order to engage students in active learning, teachers will vary presentation, format, and ways students participate during class. Teachers will limit unnecessary teacher talk and select appropriate instructional materials. Pacing, content, and instructional emphasis will be adapted for individuals and groups of students. In the Maryland Reading First classroom, a minimum of 90 minutes of uninterrupted time will be devoted daily to explicit and systematic instruction in the essential components of reading. Additional

time will be allocated for students not making adequate progress in either supplemental or intervention programs. In the High Quality Professional Development: Institute on Beginning Reading (HQPD-IBR, 2003), Kame'enui and Simmons state that by having adequate, prioritized, and protected time for reading instruction and practice, the school is making a visible commitment and focus to maximizing outcomes for all students. It is easier to coordinate and allocate time for supplemental and intervention programs in the context of a consistent schoolwide schedule of reading instruction.

- Grouping Strategies

Differentiated instruction aligned with student needs and creative flexible grouping used to maximize performance increase the effectiveness of reading instruction. Flexible grouping provides the vehicle to continually monitor student progress and regroup to reflect students' knowledge and skills. A number of reading researchers (CIERA, 2001) have reported that students with reading difficulties who are taught in small groups learn more than students who are instructed as a whole class. "In all cases, the question is what kinds of additional instruction (usually called "interventions" because they are not part of the regular school reading instruction) are likely to help" (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998, p. 247).

To effectively differentiate instruction, schools need to use assessment results to determine student needs and profiles and group students based on instructional needs (Kame'enui and Simmons, IBR 2003). Even with research-based core reading instruction, some students have difficulty learning to read. In Maryland's Reading First classrooms, supplemental instructional strategies will provide additional instruction in one or more areas to small flexible groups of students based on assessment data.

➤ *Instructional Programs and Materials*

The instructional program includes not only the teacher's knowledge and skills at teaching reading but a core program with carefully aligned supplemental and intervention programs. In *A Consumer's Guide for Evaluating a Core Reading Program* (2003), Simmons and Kame'enui state that a core reading program is the primary instructional tool that teachers use to teach children to learn to read and ensure that they meet or exceed grade level standards. A supplemental program is one specifically designed to teach one or two essential skills lacking in an otherwise good core reading program. It may also be used to provide additional practice for students needing instruction beyond the core. Intervention programs are very specialized and intense reading programs designed to catch students up as quickly as possible.

Simmons and Kame'enui (2003) also state that core program should address the instructional needs of the majority of students in a respective school or district. A core reading program is the tool teachers need to be effective in reading instruction. Teachers come to the classroom with different skills, different points of view about how children learn to read and misunderstandings about the implications of these points of view. By participating in the selection of a core reading program, teachers develop an understanding of the core components and the high priority skills required for successful beginning reading. Programs must be carefully assessed to determine whether they provide a prioritized sequence and schedule of objectives, explicit strategies, and provide support for students' initial learning and transfer of knowledge and skills to other contexts. Key to the identification of SBRR core programs is the need to sample both individual lessons and review the scope and sequence to assure adequate initial teaching and sufficient opportunities for practice of high priority items. The systematic and explicit instruction of phonemic awareness and phonics is a critical feature of a core reading program. According to the National Reading Panel "findings of the meta-analysis allow us to conclude that systematic phonics instruction produces gains in reading and spelling, not only in the early grades...but also in the later grades...and among children having difficulty learning to read. (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 2-122)

The following chart, adapted from the Simmons and Kame'enui *Institute on Beginning Reading* (2003), shows the sequence of the five essential components of reading as the emphasis shifts at critical points in time in K-3 instruction.

Changing Emphasis of the Five Essential Components				
	K	1	2	3
Phonological Awareness				
Phonics		Letter Sounds and Combinations	Multisyllables	
Fluency				
Vocabulary	Listening	Reading		
Comprehension	Listening	Reading		

Currently in each district in Maryland, grade level teams composed of classroom teacher representatives from around the district meet to evaluate reading programs on the average of every six years. These teachers represent the diverse learning needs of the district's students. While programs are evaluated based on a locally established set of criteria from the research, this set of criteria has not necessarily been based on SBRR. Once the committee identifies programs, a short list of acceptable programs is distributed to a school. Each local school chooses its reading materials from this list. Although this process affords great flexibility for the schools, it does not provide consistency for students, teachers, or for a reading program across the district.

During summer 2003, Dr. Deborah C. Simmons and her associate, Dr. Michael Coyne, will plan with the Office of Reading First specific training events in how to select reading core, supplemental, and intervention programs based on the *Consumer's Guide for Evaluating a Core Reading Program* (2003). The Office of Reading First will work through LEA Superintendents to identify a panel representing all 24 Maryland LEAs. In early September 2003, Dr. Coyne will train the panel in how to use the *Consumer's Guide*. MSDE through its procurement process will solicit an open review of core reading programs, K-3, that meet as a minimum all of the following criteria:

- Documentation of the 5 SBRR components for reading: phonemic awareness phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension
- SBRR materials correlated with the core program that address students who require supplemental and intensive intervention
- Documentation of acceptance by 2 or more states for inclusion in their Reading First programs
- Documentation of high ratings by the University of Oregon in its report reviewing core reading programs (expected publication date: June 2003)

During September and October 2003, the statewide panel, trained by Dr. Coyne, will engage in a deliberate critique of core, supplementary, and intervention materials submitted by publishers that meet the needs of all students: those reaching benchmark; and, those requiring more explicit, systematic instruction in the five components of reading. The panel will establish ratings and generate the listing for fall 2003 Maryland-Approved Core Reading Programs. In November 2003, the list will be disseminated statewide and published on MSDE's website. Thereafter, beginning in 2005, during January and July of each year, a panel of LEA representatives trained in the criteria will review newly published products that meet the minimum procurement criteria listed above and revise the list of approved core reading programs accordingly. Spring and fall listings will be disseminated publicly on the MSDE website.

Eligible Reading First LEAs will be required to select core reading programs from the list of fall 2003 Maryland-Approved Core Reading Programs. As part of the technical assistance offered to eligible school systems and schools during the subgrant process, the Office of Reading First will use materials and resources from the Institute on Beginning Reading (IBR) and the assistance of Drs. Simmons and Coyne to explain the criteria in the Consumer's Guide and the SBRR strengths of Maryland-Approved Core Reading Programs. LEAs will not be permitted to select core, supplementary, and intervention programs other than those identified by the statewide panel.

Beginning in December 2003, the Office of Reading First staff will deliver professional development in the elements critical to a SBRR core reading program as part of administrative briefings for LEA Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, Coordinators of Reading, Early Childhood Programs, Special Education, and English As a Second Language (ESL). All Maryland LEAs will be encouraged to use the Maryland Approved Core Reading Program listings and the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program* to make decisions for replacing current reading program materials.

Selection of supplemental programs will closely follow the selection of the core program. Supplemental programs should be used to fill gaps in an otherwise sound core curriculum. Therefore, the supplemental program needs to align with the core curriculum. Intervention programs will be carefully selected to meet the needs of individual students identified through careful and on-going progress monitoring. Both supplemental and intervention programs will provide explicit and systematic instruction in the identified area of need. Consistent instruction in the essential components of reading following SBRR will make certain that no student falls through the cracks on the way to becoming a reader at the end of grade three.

Examples of core, supplemental, and intervention programs include:

Core Programs	Supplemental Programs	Intervention Programs
Basal Reading series, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open Court (McGraw Hill, 2002)• Harcourt Brace (2002)• Houghton Mifflin (2002)• Scott Foresman	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimize (Scott Foresman)• Read Well (Sopris West)• Project Read (Language Circle)• Reading Mastery (SRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road to the Code• Lindamood-Bell• Orton-Gillingham• Ladders to Literacy

➤ ***Instructional Assessments***

In the IBR, Dr. Roland Good III states that an effective, comprehensive reading program includes reading assessments for four purposes:

- Outcome: provides bottom-line evaluation of the effectiveness of the reading program in relation to established performance levels.
- Screening: designed as a first step identifying children who may be at high risk for delayed development of academic failure and in need of further diagnosis of their need for special services or additional reading instruction.
- Diagnosis: helps teachers plan instruction by providing in-depth information about students' skills and instructional needs.
- Progress Monitoring: determines through frequent measurement if students are making adequate progress or need more intervention to achieve grade-level reading outcomes.

The purpose of screening, monitoring and diagnostic assessment is to prevent reading failure. To accomplish this, we must begin early and assess dynamically. Maryland has developed a model designed to identify children early who may need additional instructional support and to evaluate and modify instruction on an ongoing, formative basis to ensure that all children achieve on statewide reading assessments at the end of grade three.

Screening and progress monitoring will be accomplished through use of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), developed by Roland Good III and Deborah Simmons at the University of Oregon (2002). This is a quick, easy to administer assessment that is individually administered. In seven minutes or less it is possible to know if a child is on target to mastering the basic skills that assure reading success. The DIBELS measures are sensitive to student growth and capable of repeated and frequent administration. Most importantly, the fluency-based indicators assessed through the DIBELS can predict reading outcomes at third grade on high-stakes tests. Using these measures, MD can identify children early who are at risk for reading failure and make educational decisions that can change their reading outcomes.

The DIBELS subtests, when used as recommended by the authors, are a prevention-oriented assessment and intervention system designed to assess early reading progress formatively. Prevention-oriented systems:

1. Intervene early and strategically during critical windows of reading development.
2. Develop and promote a comprehensive system of instruction based on a research-based core curriculum and enhancement programs;
3. Use and rely on formative, dynamic indicators of student performance to identify need, allocate resources, and design and modify instruction; and
4. Address reading failure and reading success from a schoolwide, systemic perspective (Good, Simmons, Kame'enui, 2001, p. 260).

In designing effective identification and intervention screening and monitoring measures, the first task is to measure what is important. The DIBELS fluency measures “represent valid indicator skills along a continuum in which overlapping stages progress in complexity toward an ultimate goal of reading and constructing meaning from a variety of texts by the end of third grade” (Good, Simmons, Kame’enui, 2001, p. 262-262). These measures incorporate the prerequisite and foundation skills in beginning reading with the need for a high level of proficiency in each skill. They assume that fluency in complex skills requires fluency in the component skills (phonemic awareness, alphabetic understanding, and phonological recoding) and lower level processes. The DIBELS measures have been developed with benchmark goals that specify when target skills should be attained in order to meet third grade outcome goals. When instruction and curriculum emphasize these skills prior to the benchmark goal timing, there is a high probability (about 85%) that the child will reach third grade goals (Good, Simmons, Kame’enui, 2001). For a summary of the technical adequacy of the DIBELS, see Appendix A.

In the beginning of each school year, each child will be given the DIBELS as an initial screening to determine if they are on target or need additional assistance. The DIBELS will be administered to each child three more times throughout the year (December, March, June) to assure that the child is making appropriate progress.

DIBELS subtests of initial sounds (ISF) and phoneme segmentation (PSF) are tests of phonemic awareness. The PSF measure assesses a student’s ability to segment three- and four-phoneme words into their individual phonemes fluently.

DIBELS oral reading subtest (DORF) is a test of fluency. The fluency subtest predicts comprehension and vocabulary. It is a good predictor of later reading achievement. DIBELS subtest of retell fluency (RTF) provides a comprehension check for the fluency subtest. DIBELS word use fluency (WUF) is intended to provide information on vocabulary, beginning in the fall of the kindergarten year.

DIBELS subtests of letter naming (LNF) and nonsense word fluency (NWF) measure phonics. While LNF is not linked to an essential element in reading, it is a reliable indicator of risk. NWF is a measure that assesses alphabetic principle skills, including alphabetic understanding and phonological recoding.

Screening and Progress Monitoring

	Grade:	Kindergarten			First			Second			Third		
	Month:	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*
Phonemic Awareness	DIBELS Initial Sounds Fluency												
	DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency												
Phonics	DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency												
	DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency												
Fluency	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency												
Vocabulary	DIBELS Word Use Fluency												
Comprehension	DIBELS Retell Fluency												

*9 = September

*12 = December

*3 = March

If a child does not meet the established benchmark for each subtest during a screening administration of the DIBELS, another assessment will be given each week for the following two weeks to determine if the child needs further intervention. By repeating the assessments two more times, the reliability of the instrument is increased and errors due to human factors (poor administration, child having a bad day, etc.) are controlled. Any child who has not met the baseline after the third administration in as many weeks will be referred for intervention in the form of supplemental materials. Monitoring will continue on a regular schedule to be determined by the education team but not less than monthly. If the child continues to fail to make adequate progress, a diagnostic evaluation to determine further intervention will be administered. The goal of diagnostic testing is to determine why the child is not making progress and design an intervention to address the barrier. The following diagnostic tests are recommended; additional testing may be required, depending on the needs of each child.

Diagnostic

Grade	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Fluency	Vocabulary	Text Comprehension
K	Phonological Awareness Test	Phonological Awareness Test		TOWK	
1	Phonological Awareness Test	Phonological Awareness Test	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)
2			Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)
3			Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)

End of year outcome assessments are predictive of grade level performance in reading by third grade. Knowledge and skills in the basic elements of reading will be assessed according to the following schedule:

Outcome Monitoring

	Grade:	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	Month:	May	May	May	March
Phonemic Awareness	DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency				
Phonics	DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency				
	DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency				
Fluency	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency				
Vocabulary	DIBELS Word Use Fluency				
Vocabulary/Comprehension	SAT 10 (Vocabulary/Comprehension)				
	MSA(includes SAT 10)				

- Maryland School Assessment – Reading

The Maryland School Assessment is given to students in the spring of each year. It includes a norm-referenced and a criterion-referenced score that is reported for each student. The norm-referenced results are reported in June and include word study, vocabulary and reading comprehension. An overall reading score will be reported by proficiency level, determined through a Standards Setting

Process. Maryland plans to report scores for General Reading Processes, Informational Reading Processes and Literary Reading Processes. Criterion-referenced scores will include selected items from the Stanford 10 along with items created for Maryland. Results will be published before school starts in the fall. An overall criterion-referenced score will be reported based on the criterion-referenced items on the test. Adequate yearly progress, for purposes of the federal government's accountability measure, will be based on a school's criterion-referenced score.

Test items will have both selected response items (SR) and brief constructed response items (BCR). Selected response items will offer four answer choices; brief constructed response items require students to write an answer and will be scored using grade appropriate, 0-3 scale rubrics. Augmented items were written to the Maryland English Language Arts Content Standards in Reading in grade 3 part of Maryland Essential Curriculum. Indicators were organized under three reading processes: general reading processes, informational reading processes, and literary reading processes. These reading process standards have been clarified to ensure that augmentation items assess Maryland standards.

➤ *Professional Development*

“Teaching reading is a job for an expert.” (Moats, 1999, pp. 4) Well-prepared classroom teachers are the key element to student success in reading. Effective professional development, based in scientifically based reading research that builds teacher understanding and proficiency with curriculum, instruction and assessment is the critical lynchpin to children’s success in learning to read. “To understand printed language well enough to teach it explicitly requires disciplined study of its systems and forms, both spoken and written.” (Moats, 1999, pp. 6) Reading First will afford Maryland the opportunity to establish a system of professional development that will build teacher capacity in the five essential components of reading instruction, how they are taught, and monitored for success.

The National Staff Development Council has divided the characteristics of good professional development into context, content, and process. Maryland will also use these characteristics to guide a high quality professional development program that is based in reading research. More specific information concerning the details of the professional development program will be explained in section 1F of this proposal.

- *Context*

Context represents “... the organization, system, and culture... the structures that must be in place for successful learning to occur” (National Staff Development Council, 2001, pp. 2).

The context for reading professional development in Maryland is one of the greatest challenges facing the success of the Reading First initiative. In order to ensure this success MSDE has been reorganized in order to create an Office of Reading First. This office has already begun to change the context for early reading progress within MSDE. In *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide* (2000), the Learning First Alliance recommends that the expertise of colleagues, mentors, and outside experts is accessible and engaged as often as necessary in professional development programs. Outside experts in SBRR have been contacted to provide a deep and rich understanding to key staff at the MSDE. Knowledge gained from Dr. Louisa Moats’ LETRS training as well as Dr. Edward Kame’enui’s and Dr. Deborah Simmons’ Institute on Beginning Reading has been applied to the development of the Maryland Essential Curriculum for K-3 reading and is reflected in MRFI activities.

The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) has been carefully aligned to Maryland’s content standards in reading, correlating curricular standards, textbooks, instructional programs and assessments necessary for student success. Office staff of the Office of Reading First and Reading First Regional Specialists will be responsible for professional development supporting the alignment and will be the “in state experts” serving as mentors to the LEA and school teams. MSDE and LEA representatives, State Reading First Regional Specialists, and school based reading coaches will be involved in the professional development model as both participants as well as trainers. Dr. Louisa Moats and Dr. Michael Coyne have agreed to assist Maryland in understanding SBRR as it applies to instructional strategies, programs and materials. The Learning First Alliance states that school based professional development should focus on the evidence for student learning and remedies for insufficient progress. School teams, including principals and other administrators, will work together with actual school data to form a Reading Action Plan (RAP) for improving early reading instruction at their schools. Time will be built into the process for school teams to practice the new learning at their sites, and follow up sessions will be scheduled for consultation with the experts. Revisions to the original RAP’s will be discussed and implemented.

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) will also be involved in the professional development process. Key staff responsible for the education of elementary school teachers will be invited to participate in the professional development of school teams through Maryland’s Reading First. They will also be involved in the revision of the required reading courses for elementary certification following Maryland’s high quality professional development model. All divisions within the MSDE with responsibility for early reading success will also be invited to participate. These professional development efforts are expected to assist in attaining the goal of having all students read by the end of grade 3.

- *Content*

Content represents the ‘what’... address[ing] the knowledge and skills that ensure all students are successful” (National Staff Development Council, 2001, pp. 2).

In reading, at least, misunderstanding and lack of knowledge may play as a big a role as institutional politics and budgetary constraints (American Federation of Teachers, 1999). In order for all third grade students to be readers, all Maryland schools must be supported by a high quality professional development program in reading that emphasizes the research base in phonemic awareness, phonics,

fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. The Maryland Reading Framework has aligned the grade 3 Maryland School Assessment (MSA) in reading with the Maryland Essential Curriculum for K-3 reading. This newly developed reading curriculum was very carefully constructed to contain the “big ideas” necessary for reading success, as taken from Building and Sustaining a Schoolwide Intervention Model in Beginning Reading from the Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement, College of Education, University of Oregon.

By using the Simmons and Kame’enui process for selecting a core curriculum and Dr. Louisa Moats’ LERTRS strategies, Maryland will align the instructional program to the curriculum and the assessment. Supplemental and intervention materials will be selected to align with the core program in schools and to match the students’ need as determined by screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment.

The use of classroom-based assessment and data-driven decision making will be a large part of the content of professional development at all levels. Key staff members at the MSDE have been provided professional development and training on the use of classroom based assessment by Dr. Roland Good III. This will be a major component of the professional development. Maryland will customize the Institute on Beginning Reading (IBR), developed through the University of Oregon, to provide professional development that includes the three major dimensions of context, content, and process as recommended by the National Staff Development Council. Because all Maryland schools are required to participate in the MSA in reading and will be held to the high standards set forth in NCLB, all schools will benefit from this high quality professional development model employed for Reading First schools.

MSDE will follow the lead of the Learning First Alliance, in order to plan comprehensive high-quality professional development for all individuals involved in early reading instruction at the state, district, and school level. In the project led by Dr. Louisa Moats the Learning First Alliance aligns with the reviews of the following which rest on decades of reading research: *Every Child Reading: An Action Plan* (Learning First Alliance, 2000), *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), and the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (2000). MSDE will use the following standards illustrated in Tables 1-5 taken from the Learning First Alliance report, *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide* (2000), to structure all content in professional development relative to the five essential components of reading:

Table 1: Phonemic Awareness, Letter Knowledge, and Concepts of Print

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Know the speech sounds in English (consonants and vowels) and the pronunciation of phonemes for instruction.	Select and use a range of activities representing a developmental progression of phonological skill (rhyming; word identification; syllable counting; onset-rime segmentation and blending; phoneme identification, segmentation, and blending).	Practice phoneme matching, identification, segmentation, blending, substitution and deletion.
Know the progression of		Order phonological

development of phonological skill.		awareness activities by difficulty level and developmental sequence.
Understand the difference between speech sounds and the letters that represent them.	Use techniques for teaching letter naming, matching, and formation.	Practice and analyze letter-sound matching activities (identifying how letters and letter groups are used for representing speech sounds.
Understand the causal links between early decoding, spelling, word knowledge, and phoneme awareness.	Plan lessons in which phoneme awareness, letter knowledge, and invented spelling activities are complementary.	Observe and critique live or videotaped student-teacher interactions during phonological awareness and alphabet instruction.
Understand the print concepts young children must develop.	Teach concepts of print during shared reading of big books.	Role-play the teaching of print concepts during interactive reading aloud.
Understand how critical the foundation skills are for later reading success.	Have ability to monitor every child's progress and identify those who are falling behind.	Discuss children's progress, using informal assessments, to obtain early help for those in need of it.

Table 2: Phonics and Decoding

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Understand speech-to-print correspondence at the sound, syllable pattern, and morphological levels.	Choose examples of words that illustrate sound-symbol, syllable, and morpheme patterns.	Practice various active techniques including sound blending, structural word analysis, word building, and word sorting.
Identify and describe the developmental progression in which orthographic knowledge is generally acquired.	Select and deliver appropriate lessons according to students' levels of spelling, phonics, and word identification skills.	Identify, on the basis of student reading and writing, the appropriate level at which to instruct.
Understand and recognize how beginner texts are linguistically organized—by spelling pattern, word frequency, and language pattern.	Explicitly teach the sequential blending of individual sounds into a whole word.	Observe, demonstrate, and practice error connection strategies.
Recognize the differences	Teach active exploration of	Search a text for examples

among approaches to teaching word attack (implicit, explicit, analytic, synthetic, etc.).	word structure with a variety of techniques.	of words that exemplify and orthographic concept; lead discussions about words.
Understand why instruction in word attack should be active and interactive.	Enable students to use word attack strategies as they read connected text.	Review beginner texts to discuss their varying uses in reading instruction.

Table 3: Fluent, Automatic Reading of Text

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Understand how word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension are related to one another.	Determine reasonable expectations for reading fluency at various stages of reading development, using research-based guidelines and appropriate state and local standards and benchmarks.	Practice assessing and recording text-reading fluency of students in class.
Understand text features that are related to text difficulty.	Help children select appropriate texts, of sufficiently easy levels, to promote ample independent as well as oral reading.	Organize classroom library and other support materials by topic and text difficulty; code for easy access by students, and track how much children are reading.
Understand who in the class should receive extra practice with fluency development and why.	Use techniques for increasing speed of word recognition.	Use formal assessment results to identify who needs to work on fluency. Devise a system for recording student progress toward reasonable goals.
	Use techniques for repeated readings of passages such as alternate oral reading with a partner, reading with a tape, or rereading the same passage up to three times.	Conduct fluency-building activities with a mentor teacher.

Table 4: Vocabulary

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Understand the role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in comprehension.	Select material for reading aloud that will expand students' vocabulary.	Collaborate with team to select best read-aloud books and share rationales.
Have a rationale for selecting words for direct teaching before, during, and after reading.	Select words for instruction before a passage is read.	Select words from text for direct teaching and give rationale for the choice.
Understand the role and characteristics of direct and contextual methods of vocabulary instruction.	Teach word meanings directly through explanation of meanings and example uses, associations to known words, and word relationships.	Devise exercises to involve students in constructing meanings of words, in developing example uses of words, in understanding relationships among words, and in using and noticing uses of words beyond the classroom.
Know reasonable goals and expectations for learners at various stages of reading development; appreciate the wide differences in students' vocabularies.	Provide for repeated encounters with new words and multiple opportunities to use new words.	
Understand why books themselves are a good source for word learning.	Explicitly teach how and when to use context to figure out word meanings.	Devise activities to help children understand the various ways that context can give clues to meaning, including that often clues are very sparse and sometimes even misleading.
	Help children understand how word meanings apply to various contexts by talking about words they encounter in reading.	Use a series of contexts to show how clues can accumulate.

Table 5: Text Comprehension

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Know the cognitive processes involved in comprehension; know the techniques and strategies that are most effective, for what types of students, with what content.	Help children engage texts and consider ideas deeply.	Role-play and rehearse key research-supported strategies, such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and using graphic organizers.
Identify the typical structure of common narrative and expository text genres.	Choose and implement instruction appropriate for specific students and texts.	Discuss and plan to teach characteristics of both narrative and expository texts.
Recognize the characteristics of “reader friendly” text.	Facilitate comprehension of academic language such as connecting words, figures of speech, idioms, humor, and embedded sentences.	Consider student work and reading behavior (written responses, oral summaries, retellings, cloze tasks, recorded discussions) to determine where miscomprehension occurred and plan how to repair it.
Identify phrase, sentence, paragraph, and text characteristics of “book language” that students may misinterpret.		
Appreciate that reading strategies vary for specific purposes.	Communicate directly to children the value of reading for various purposes.	Interpret the effectiveness of instruction with video and examples of student work.
Understand the similarities and differences between written composition and text comprehension.	Help students use written responses and discussion to process meaning more fully.	Practice leading, scaffolding, and observing discussions in which students collaborate to form joint interpretations of text.

Table 5: Text Comprehension (Continued)

Teacher Knowledge	Teacher Skills	Possible Professional Development Experiences
Understand the role of background knowledge in text comprehension.	Preview text and identify the background experiences and concepts that are important for comprehension of that text and that help students call on or acquire that knowledge.	Discuss and plan to teach ways of helping students call on or acquire relevant knowledge through defining concepts, presenting examples, and eliciting students' reactions to the concepts in ways that assess their understanding.

- *Process*

Process represents “the ‘how’ [through] the use of data, evaluation, and research” (National Staff Development Council, 2001, pp. 2).

The Learning First Alliance describes the steps involved for a new behavior to be effectively transferred into the classroom. The steps are:

1. Understanding the theory and rationale for the new content and instruction.
2. Observing a model in action.
3. Practicing the new behavior in a safe context.
4. Trying out the behavior with peer support in the classroom.

Maryland will follow this model at the state, district, and school level. In October 2003, a Research Forum on Large Scale Implementation of SBRR will be held. Maryland will follow the advice received from Dr. Louisa Moats in May 2003 and invite national experts, such as Drs. Linnea Ehri, Tim Shanahan, Jack Fletcher, and Isabelle Beck, to deliver keynotes highlighting the transition from research to practice. The forum will promote discussion and further study of SBRR before schools begin to implement the change process in reading instruction.

Reading First Regional Specialists will be hired and placed regionally throughout the state as experts in the field. They will also be directly trained by national experts in LETRS, classroom-based assessment, and the selection and use of instructional materials. These specialists will be charged with developing and delivering the Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading (MIBR) using the Simmons and Kame'enui model. They will receive continuous training and feedback from the MSDE Office of Reading First, which will consult with Dr. Louisa Moats, Dr. Simmons, and Dr. Good throughout the development of the institutes.

Staff from all divisions within the MSDE responsible for early reading success and representatives from IHEs responsible for elementary school teachers will be the audience for the initial draft of the MIBR under direction and observation of the above experts. Reading coaches at each Reading First school will receive training in the MIBR in order to assist in the delivery of the institute with their schools and to gain the in-depth background necessary to coach and mentor classroom teachers. These school based coaches will first observe an institute in another LEA and then assist in delivering one in their own LEA, under the direction of the MSDE experts, using the state developed materials. Institutes will be first

offered to Reading First Schools, however, other schools teams will be invited to participate, as staff trained in SBRR becomes available.

MSDE staff from each division with responsibility for early reading will be trained in SBRR and then invited to observe and hold institutes using the prepared materials for other LEA audiences, and using their own funding sources, with Office of Reading First trained staff available as experts. Finally, LEA central office staff will follow the above process in order to be able to use local funding to hold institutes in their own systems using the MSDE prepared materials. School principals will be trained at institutes along with their faculties.

Teachers will be involved in on-going professional development to match their needs using self-evaluation. A full range of options to support all levels of teacher need will be developed through the school based reading coaches and state reading specialists. A variety of professional development activities will meet the individual needs better than a "one-size-fits all" approach (Learning First Alliance, 2000). On-line options will be developed to facilitate immediate support and the need for teachers as adult learners to have choices in their learning.

I C. State Definition of Subgrant Eligibility

Since our original submission, Maryland has reviewed the eligibility criteria for LEAs and has established the following thresholds based on the federal definition for eligibility as applied to Maryland's vision for reading. Local education agencies that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for Reading First funds:

1. Results from Grade 2 CTBS V administered in 2002 were examined. Guidelines established by the assessment vendor specified that a mean average of below 2.6 indicated reading below grade level. LEAs with 30% or more students reading below grade level were considered for eligibility purposes.
2. The identified school systems were then analyzed using the following criteria:
 - a. Jurisdiction over a geographic area that includes an area designated as an empowerment zone, or an enterprise community, under part I of subchapter U of chapter 1 or the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (Maryland has one LEA in this category: Baltimore City)
 - b. Jurisdiction over a significant number or percentage of schools that are identified for school improvement under section 116 (b). In Maryland this is equivalent to 25% or more schools within an LEA (Baltimore City).
 - c. The highest numbers or percentages of children counted for allocations under Title I, Part A. The data used for this section was the updated 1999 USDE Census Data. For school system eligibility purposes this data was analyzed two ways to show highest poverty school systems based on number of poor children (100,000 children) and the highest poverty districts based on percent of poor children (15%).

These criteria provide an applicant pool that is broad enough to ensure that LEAs that face the greatest challenges have the opportunity to apply for MRFI fund. From this pool, we will identify proposals that show the most promise for raising student achievement and for successful implementation, especially at the classroom level.

Based on these criteria, 38% of all LEAs (9 from a total of 24) are eligible to apply for funds, representing both rural and urban areas. The eligible LEAs are: Allegany County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Dorchester County, Garrett County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Worcester County and Somerset County. The eligible LEAs represent urban, suburban and rural areas. Baltimore City is the largest urban district. Allegany and Garrett Counties in western Maryland represent the most rural districts.

LEAs that receive Reading First subgrants may only distribute funds to schools within that LEA that at the minimum meet the criteria described above which includes: 30% of students scoring below grade level on the grade 2 CTBS V and 15% or more low income children. The subgrant will require the LEAs to provide any additional criteria they may wish to apply in order to prioritize school participation.

In addition the eligible Reading First LEAs will make provision for the participation of students enrolled in the nonpublic, nonprofit schools in the area to be served to the extent consistent with the number of such students whose educational needs are of the type served by the program. If such services, materials, and equipment are not feasible or necessary in one or more of such nonpublic, nonprofit schools, as determined by the LEA after consultation with the appropriate nonpublic, nonprofit school officials, the LEA shall provide such other arrangements as will assure equitable participation on nonpublic, nonprofit school children. Further, the LEA will maintain records sufficient to report the per pupil expenditure for the public school children and for nonpublic, nonprofit school children.

I D. Selection Criteria for Awarding Subgrants

The subgrant selection criteria will be aligned to the subgrant application. (See Appendix B for a draft.) The subgrant application is envisioned as a project narrative that addresses twelve components. The proposal also contains required and competitive priorities. The following is a draft outlining the criteria that eligible LEAs and schools must address in their subgrants.

LEA Application must include:

- A description of the LEAs process for reviewing and selecting the school(s) for recommendation to MSDE.
- The list of schools ranked by priority.
- A plan for the selection and implementation of a comprehensive classroom based assessment system that includes screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic and outcome instruments that meet federal and state requirements and local needs.
- A description of the scientific research-based core reading program that each school would implement, specifically identifying any externally developed models included in the program.
- A description of any supplemental and/or intervention programs that the LEA and eligible schools have assessed are needed to support identified gaps in an otherwise good core reading program and/or provide additional instruction to students performing below grade level on one or more essential instructional skills.
- A description of the commitment of both district and school leadership and qualified staff to this project that have sufficient time and expertise to provide the direction and guidance needed to ensure the success of the Maryland Reading First Initiative.
- A description of how the LEA will provide professional development, technical assistance and support for the effective implementation of the comprehensive reading program selected by participating schools.
- A description of how the LEA will evaluate and follow the progress of the comprehensive reading program(s).
- A description of how the LEA will assist the selected Reading First schools in obtaining a wide array of engaging decodable text reading materials.
- A description of how the implementation of the Reading First program will result in classrooms that are grounded in SBRR and meet the needs of all children.
- The amount of funds, if any, requested for administration, technical assistance, and evaluation activities, and an explanation of how funds would be used.
- A budget that consolidates the funding amount and categories of all recommended schools and any proposed Central Office administrative costs using the MSDE budget form.
- Program assurances signed by the superintendent.

Part I: Schools Served (10 points)

MSDE will provide each eligible LEA with a list of schools that scored below grade level as measured by the CTBS V that was administered in 2002. Each LEA will be responsible for establishing school eligibility by listing those schools that have BOTH: 1) the highest numbers or percentages of students scoring below grade level on the second grade CTBS V AND either 2) are identified for school improvement OR 3) have the highest numbers or percentages of students counted for allocations under Title I, Part A.

LEAs need to address the following:

- From the list of eligible schools in the LEA, which schools will be selected to receive Reading First grant funds? Describe the criteria used to make the selection.
- Describe how the number of selected schools is sufficiently targeted to ensure that each school receives adequate funding to make significant progress toward increasing student achievement in reading.
- Describe the factors that most influenced the decision not to select certain school(s) and describe how reading will be addressed at these schools.

Part II: Instructional Assessment (10 points)

MSDE requires that all Reading First schools use DIBELS 6th edition as the screening and progress monitoring assessment, according to the schedule below:

Screening and Progress Monitoring

	Grade:	Kindergarten			First			Second			Third			
		Month:	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*	9*	12*	3*
Phonemic Awareness	DIBELS Initial Sounds Fluency													
	DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency													
Phonics	DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency													
	DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency													
Fluency	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency													
Vocabulary	DIBELS Word Use Fluency													
Comprehension	DIBELS Retell Fluency													

*9 = September

*12 = December

*3 = March

The LEA must show how all assessments are aligned with the instructional program.

- Screening assessment is used to identify children who are at risk for reading difficulty and who will need immediate intervention. The LEA must describe how DIBELS screening assessments are coordinated with other screening assessments at the local level. All students must receive screening assessments. Describe how the data will be collected and used to plan instruction.
- Progress monitoring assessment is used to determine if students are making adequate progress or need more intervention to reach grade level reading outcomes. Describe how students will be targeted for progress monitoring assessments, how the data will be collected and used to make instructional decisions, and what interventions will be used and how the interventions align to the instructional program.
- DIBELS subtests, listed in the chart below, are the outcome assessments for Kindergarten. DIBELS subtests and the Stanford 10 will be the outcome assessment for first grade. The Stanford 10 will be used in second grade. The Maryland School Assessment (MSA), which includes items from the Stanford 10, is the outcome measure for third grade. Scores from these assessments will be used to determine progress, both for schools and for individual students. Describe how the LEA will collect this data and report information to the SEA in a timely fashion.

	Grade:	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	Month:	May	May	May	March
Phonemic Awareness	DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency				
Phonics	DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency				
	DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency				
Fluency	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency				
Vocabulary	DIBELS Word Use Fluency				
Vocabulary/ Comprehension	SAT 10 (Vocabulary/ Comprehension)				
	MSA(includes SAT 10)				

Diagnostic assessment is used to provide in-depth information about students' skills and instructional needs so that teachers can plan appropriate instruction. MSDE has chosen the following assessments, which meet scientifically based reading research criteria for diagnostic assessment:

Diagnostic

Grade	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Fluency	Vocabulary	Text Comprehension
K	Phonological Awareness Test	Phonological Awareness Test		TOWK	
1	Phonological Awareness Test	Phonological Awareness Test	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)
2			Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)
3			Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)	TOWK	Gray Oral Reading Test IV (GORT-IV)

Describe how children are selected for diagnostic assessment, how the assessments will be administered locally, and how the data will be collected and used to make instructional decisions.

It is the LEAs responsibility to ensure that these assessments will be administered and used according to the criteria specified in the publisher's testing guidelines. It is also the LEAs responsibility to maintain records of the results of all testing and make this information available to the State. Describe how the LEA will monitor and support the implementation of the reading program to ensure that it will meet the instructional needs of each student. How will the school and LEA monitor the comprehensive reading program to ensure that it is fully implemented? What procedures will be in place to monitor the progress of struggling readers? How will the LEA ensure flexible grouping, intervention based on SBRR, and scheduling that include a protected, uninterrupted time for reading of at least 90 minutes per day?

Part III: Instructional Strategies and Programs (15 points)

A core reading program is designed to be the base of instruction. If well designed for the needs of the students, it will systematically teach all the essential reading components for the majority of students. All schools selected to participate in the Maryland Reading First Initiative are required to fully implement a scientifically based core reading program chosen from the list of Maryland – Approved Core Reading Programs.

In order to select the core program that best matches individual school needs, LEAs are required to use the Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis authored by Edward J. Kame'enui, Ph.D. and Deborah C. Simmons, Ph.D. and provide the following information:

- Selected schools that are currently using such a program must describe the plan for full implementation including:
 - Identification of the core reading program
 - Professional development and training that has already taken place
 - Level of implementation at each grade level of current implementation at each grade level
 - Timeline for full implementation (K-3)

- Selected schools that are starting to choose or implement a new core program must describe the selection process including the involvement of faculty members and a timeline for full implementation including professional development on that program.

The LEA should demonstrate how they will ensure that the core program is implemented as intended by the publisher.

Part IV: Supplemental and Intervention Instructional Materials (10 points)

Supplemental materials provide additional instruction in one or more areas of reading and support the core curriculum. They may support an identified gap in an otherwise good core reading program. Intervention programs provide additional instruction to students performing below grade level on one or more essential instructional skills. These are very specialized and intense reading programs, designed to catch students up as quickly as possible to where they need to be.

If the LEA intends to use supplemental materials list them and:

- Describe how the supplemental materials support the five essential components of reading, the core program and address student need.
- Provide the plan for implementation including professional development, classroom design and monitoring their appropriate use.
- Show how the materials are based on SBRR.

If the local school system needs to use intervention materials list them and:

- Describe how the intervention materials support the five essential components of reading, the core program and assess student need.
- Provide the plan for implementation including professional development, classroom design and monitoring their appropriate use.

Part V: Instructional Leadership (10 points)

Each LEA and Reading First school must commit leaders and qualified staff to this project that have sufficient time and expertise to provide the direction and guidance needed to ensure the success of the Maryland Reading First Initiative. This section of the proposal needs to demonstrate how the participating LEAs and Reading First schools possess the follow components:

- Have designated individuals with sufficient time and expertise to provide instructional leadership and clear duties and responsibilities for all K-3 staff and all K-12 special education teachers.
- Have an instructional leader with sufficient authority who has responsibility for aligning the reading curriculum to state standards, evaluating LEA and school reading progress, analyzing achievement data and making school and classroom decisions based on continuous progress monitoring of student and teacher data.
- Require instructional leader and staff to participate in quality professional development experiences related to the essential components of reading and the specific instructional programs and materials in use in their buildings, including the scientific base, implementation process and progress monitoring relating to those programs and materials.
- Require a commitment to ensuring continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible.

Part VI: District and School based Professional Development (15 points)

MSDE will provide professional development through institutes and ongoing training sessions offered regionally. The LEA must also provide professional development related to local needs. Reading First

LEAs and schools will be required to select professional development providers from the databases maintained in the Office of Reading First. In this part of the application:

- Describe how the LEA will assess the specific professional development needs of K-3 teachers and K-12 special education teachers in selected Reading First Schools.
- Describe how the LEA will assist eligible Reading First schools in providing comprehensive in-depth professional development on the core reading program.
- Describe how the LEA will provide ongoing professional development and support to reading coaches.
- Describe how the LEA will identify and secure professional development providers who are highly knowledgeable of scientifically based reading instruction and experienced in addressing the content, context, and process of program implementation.
- Explain how the content of the professional development activities will address identified teacher needs in the following areas:
 - The five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension
 - Scientifically based instructional materials, programs and strategies
 - Screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments
- Describe the different contexts in which professional development activities will be delivered to teachers initially as well as during the school year and outside the school year. Address plans for activities such as intensive institutes, whole and half day inservice training, grade level team meetings, across grade level meetings, online courses, college courses, and in-class coaching and instruction.

Part VII: District Based Technical Assistance (10 points)

MSDE will provide technical assistance to LEA through the Office of Reading First and eight Reading First Regional Specialists. The LEA must also provide technical assistance to local schools to ensure successful project implementation and student achievement.

- Describe how the LEA will coordinate local technical assistance with that provided by the MSDE Office of Reading First and Reading First Regional Specialists in order to ensure timely and full implementation of the Reading First initiative.
- Describe how the LEA will assist selected schools in identifying professional development needs.
- Describe how the LEA will assist the selected Reading First schools in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs.
- Describe the assistance that will be given to non-Reading First schools to implement a scientifically based reading program in K-3.

Part VIII: Evaluation (15 points)

Describe how the LEA and Reading First schools will document the implementation and impact of the Reading First activities including:

- A clear evaluation plan to document the effectiveness of local Reading First activities for Reading First schools and the LEA as a whole.

- Strategies on reporting reading achievement data, using valid and reliable measures, disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP and special education for K-3 students in Reading First schools.
- A clear plan to make informed decisions related to Reading First programs based on evaluation outcomes, including intervention with and/or discontinuation of schools not making significant progress.

Part IX: Access to Print Materials (10 points)

Describe how the LEA will assist the selected Reading First schools in obtaining a wide array of engaging decodable text reading materials, including both expository and narrative texts in:

- Classroom libraries
- Book rooms
- School libraries

Describe any local library programs that will be coordinated to promote independent student reading.

Part X: Classroom Characteristics (10 points)

Describe how the LEAs implementation of the Reading First program will result in classrooms with the following characteristics:

- Implementation of a high-quality reading program based on scientifically based research that includes instructional content based on the 5 essential components of reading;
- Coherent instructional design that includes explicit instructional strategies, coordinated instructional sequences, ample practice opportunities, and aligned student material;
- Ongoing use of assessments that inform instructional decisions;
- Protected, dedicated block of time for reading instruction;
- Clear expectations for student reading achievement and clear strategies for monitoring progress;
- Small group instruction as appropriate to meet student needs, with placement and movement based on ongoing assessment;
- Active student engagement in a variety of reading-based activities, which are connected to essential components of reading and to the Maryland Essential Curriculum; and
- Instruction is designed to bring all children to grade level, with appropriate, scientifically based intervention strategies aligned with classroom instruction designed for students not making sufficient progress.

Part XI: Budget (10 points)

The project's budget should detail every year of the project in a separate itemized budget for the first three years. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, is cost-effective, and integrates other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative will appear in the budget narrative must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year. School systems are required to submit a consolidated MSDE budget form for all district and school activities.

Part XII: Competitive Priorities (each competitive priority is worth 5 points)

- A competitive priority will be awarded to districts in which at least
 - 15% of students served in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; or
 - 6,500 children in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

- A competitive priority will be awarded to districts that choose to implement a common Core Reading Program across all Reading First schools in the district. This competitive priority is established because of the training efficiencies that are associated with a single core program and because it reduces the effects of student mobility across schools in the district.
- A competitive priority will be awarded to districts that allocate specific district funds to provide more intensive instruction to children struggling to learn to read in grades K-3.

I E. Process for Awarding Subgrants

Pages 97-101 of this application provide a timeline for the process related to awarding subgrants. Eligible LEAs will be notified within thirty days of the federal approval of the Reading First application and of the availability of competitive Reading First subgrants through a letter to superintendents from Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools. This letter will explain the purposes of the Reading First Grant and the application and award process. The letter will announce the minimum subgrant award for each eligible LEA and explain that this minimum amount is not less than the percentage that the LEA received of the total Title I, Part A funds received by all LEAs in Maryland for the preceding fiscal year. At the same time, the letter will advise that awards to schools in successful LEAs will be substantial (approximately \$225,000 per school). The letter will also announce the dates for three proposal preparation workshops.

Qualified Reviewers

The application review will be a two-tier process. First, an expert review panel in the reading field will provide assistance to the Maryland State Department of Education to review applications for subgrant awards. A renowned national expert in SBRR will lead a review panel. When she met with Maryland representatives on May 2, 2003, Dr. Louisa Moats suggested that Maryland contact Dr. Timothy Shanahan from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a member of the National Reading Panel as a resource in SBRR. Dr. Shanahan has been invited to lead the review panel. The Office of Reading First will facilitate collaboration between the Maryland Reading First Management Team and the State Leadership Team in an effort to recruit nine reviewers with specific expertise in the following areas:

- Have published scientifically based research articles and/or contributed to recognized summaries of scientific reading research.
- Have completed an advanced degree in reading.
- Have years of experience implementing and training others to implement SBRR.

Prior to reviewing the LEA applications, the Office of Reading First will facilitate for panel members an overview of Maryland's proposal for funding that was approved by USDE. In addition, the Office of Grant Management will train panel members in providing accurate documentation to justify scores assigned to subgrant proposals.

The Review Process

If every eligible LEA in the state applies, there will be 9 LEA applications. The rubric specifies that each of the twelve parts must be evaluated and scored separately. Each of the parts must receive a numerical score that falls in the Meets Standard or Exemplary range to be considered for funding. The total number of points awarded for all questions will be used to further distinguish relative strengths of the applications. Along with the numerical score, each reviewer will list the strengths and weaknesses of the responses to each part. Throughout the review process, priority will be given to awarding Reading First funds to schools in different regions of the state, including rural and urban areas. However, only high-quality applications that meet the review criteria will be considered for funding.

In the second stage of the review process, the State Leadership Team, familiar with the MRFI context for reading and literacy improvement, will receive from the Office of Reading First training in SBRR

(instructional strategies based for phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; classroom based assessments, and criteria used to select a SBRR core reading program). The team will also be presented with an overview of Maryland's proposal for funding that was approved by USDE. In addition, the Office of Grant Management will orient Leadership Team participants to the procedure used by the expert panel in Tier 1 review. The State Leadership Team will review scores and expert reviewer comments assigned to all applications. The Leadership Team will be organized into small groups. Each small group will review a subset of applications, discuss the merits of each, and compile a written report of their findings for each application that will include preliminary recommendations to award or not award funding.

Upon reviewing subgroup reports, the entire State Leadership Team will vote to decide if a site visit might contribute to a more complete evaluation of an LEA proposal. If a site visit is recommended, representative members from the Leadership Team will conduct site visits to verify the following:

- Accuracy of information provided in the subgrant application
- Processes used by LEA administrators and school staff to design a comprehensive reading model for their district and school

Findings from the site visit(s) will be communicated to the entire State Leadership Team. At a scheduled meeting, the Leadership Team will study all reports and findings in order to reach consensus in making recommendations to the State Superintendent of Schools regarding the number of subgrants to be initially funded. It is estimated that most grants will be awarded on the basis of \$225,000 per school, depending on the pupil enrollment of a selected school and whether or not the school already has in place a fully implemented K-3 SBRR core reading program. In making its recommendations to the State Superintendent of Schools, the State Leadership Team will guarantee that no LEA will receive an award that is less than the percentage that the LEA received of the total Title I, part A for the preceding fiscal year.

Depending on the number of subgrants awarded following the first competition, a second competition may be required. If so, it would be announced and would follow the same procedures. This subgrant competition will follow similar procedures and timeline. Maryland plans to continue to add MRFI schools as funds are made available, either through an increase in the State Reading First allocation or through the materials funds no longer needed, after the first year of implementation.

Rubric for Evaluating Subgrants

The rubric for evaluating subgrants is in Appendix B . The rubric is designed to follow the federal requirements for Reading First and serves as the scoring instrument for the subgrant process. Reviewers will be asked to rate the proposal on each of the 12 essential components of the RFP separately and indicate whether the proposal Does Not Meet Standard, Meets Standard, or describes an Exemplary Plan. The reviewers will then assign each question a total number of points that reflects the evaluation and in bullet form, list the strengths and the weaknesses of each section.

I F. Maryland's Reading First Professional Development Plan

As Maryland's Reading First Professional Development Plan details, Maryland's professional development incorporates SBRI and effective professional development for K-3 teachers, including special education teachers, in Reading First and non-Reading First schools at the State Level, the Regional Level, Principal Level, School Level, and Teacher Level by individuals highly knowledgeable in and experienced in scientifically based reading instruction.

State Level

Maryland recognizes the need to further the knowledge in SBRR of instructional staff at all levels of the state educational agency and in all twenty-four Maryland LEAs. To this end, members of the MSDE staff have contacted national experts in SBRR and have included them in the State plan. Staff members have attended Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) conducted by Dr. Louisa Moats in order to begin to understand the SBRR changes in professional development for teachers to be the most successful teaching all children to read. Dr. Roland Good III has worked with other staff members on the use of classroom-based assessment to assist in understanding and planning screening, monitoring, diagnostic, and outcome measures to change instruction for children. A team of MSDE staff attended the trainer-of-trainer Institute on Beginning Reading conducted by Dr. Edward Kame'enui and Dr. Deborah Simmons and the team from University of Oregon in order to plan the high quality professional development needed for school change. This is only the beginning for Maryland, as the contact with these national experts will continue to build capacity at the state level to reach the goal of all students reading by the end of grade 3. Organized and operating under the auspices of the State Superintendent of Schools, the six-year Maryland Reading First Initiative (MRFI) establishes the structure to accomplish this goal. The Maryland Reading Framework, with the goal of every student reading by the end of grade 3 as stated in section 1B, will guide the professional development in Maryland from the state to the region to the school to the teacher.

During year one, trainings provided by national experts in SBRR will proceed sequentially with primary attention focused on the Reading First staff and reading specialists to build capacity for professional development within the state. The Office of Reading First will also facilitate professional development in SBRR targeted at representatives from Maryland's twenty-four LEAs through a state research conference on SBRR to introduce the Maryland Reading Framework (see page 18 in section 1B). This conference will begin the change process in reading by allowing LEAs time to study and discuss SBRR before full implementation. Representatives from LEA will also be identified to participate in the selection of core reading programs and materials under the direction of national experts. In addition, representatives from IHEs and professional development providers from each LEA will be invited to receive SBRR training prior to their serving on a statewide panel that will revise state guidelines for courses in reading required for teacher certification. Throughout the project, intense start up training will be required for teachers newly hired in Reading First schools, and annual refresher workshops in SBRR will be required for staff already trained.

Regional Level

Maryland will use the concept of the Regional Professional Development Networks established in Maryland as a collaborative structure to disseminate professional development statewide. Local schools identified for Reading First funds will be assigned to a region (Western Center, North Central Center, South Central Center, and Eastern Center). The Reading First Reading First Regional Specialists will receive professional development directly from the national experts discussed above and will be responsible for the dissemination of all information and professional development from the state concerning Reading First. The summer Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading, described below, will be held in each region. The Reading First Regional Specialists will work with the LEA in their assigned region to provide professional development to non-Reading First Schools after year one.

The National Staff Development Council Standards, revised in 2001 will guide professional development. The purpose of these standards is to "improve learning for all students" through carefully planned attention to context, process, and content. *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide* (2000), developed by the Learning First Alliance states that single workshops unconnected to an overall plan of school-wide improvement are ineffective. Likewise, the superficial treatment of complex information should be replaced by study, practice, implementation, and evaluation of instruction supported by research. The content of the Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading will follow the Kame'enui and Simmons IBR model and concentrate on the following:

1. Five “essential elements” of beginning reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension within the Maryland Reading Framework;
2. Valid and reliable assessment system aligned with the five essential elements of beginning reading (particular focus will be on screening, progress monitoring, and outcome assessment) to ensure success on the grade 3 MSA;
3. A school-wide beginning reading model designed to help teachers and administrators organize, prioritize, and implement a plan for ensuring that children are making adequate and evidence-based improvements in reading;
4. K-3 Maryland Essential Curriculum and the use of the 180-day curriculum maps (carefully aligned to the high priority skills in beginning reading) to ensure that children are on track at appropriate points in time;
5. SBRR core/comprehensive reading programs, supplemental programs and materials, and intervention programs and strategies designed to address the instructional needs of all students.

Principal Level

The principal must facilitate a school vision that fosters high and attainable standards for both teaching and learning. As stated in *The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship* (2000), “the principal is the instructional leader of the school, and this role must take priority over all other responsibilities. He/she must facilitate a school vision, which includes challenging and suitable opportunities for the academic, social, and emotional development of each student. It is the principal’s responsibility to ensure the school’s program is consistent with and accountable to faculty and community priorities and aligned with the expectations of MSDE and his/her local board of education.” The final report of the Visionary Panel convened by Dr. Grasmick to address the plateau in achievement by Maryland public school students had as its major focus *instruction* in its recommendations for Maryland education as it enters the 21st century (MSDE, 2002).

MRFI principals must become lead learners in order to build learning communities in their schools focused on improved student achievement. Thus, principals in Reading First schools will be required to participate in specific training focused on the five components of scientific research base in reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension. From March through May 2004, the Office of Reading First will provide required initial training in SBRR for principals and in-school coaches. Throughout the duration of the project, principals and coaches will be expected to work together to help teachers understand instructional strategies incorporated in core reading programs, how to use supplementary and intervention materials, and procedures for administering classroom based assessments. In addition, all Reading First principals will be required to join K-3 teachers, ESL teachers, and special education teachers from their schools during SBRR training presented as part of the summer Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading (MIBRs). Reading First principals will be expected to provide leadership to their staffs in generating their schools’ Reading Action Plan (RAP) that will guide SBRR instructional activities. Because school principals face difficult challenges in instituting instructional change in low performing schools, MSDE will schedule annual fall Leadership Forums with key speakers, such as Dr. Phyllis Hunter, to address data-based decision making and to learn from national experts strategies for effective implementation of Reading First programs.

MRFI principals will increase their ability to focus on student learning by committing to:

- *Engaging in state level professional development on improving instructional leadership.*

Topics will include instruction in content as follows:

- Redefining the principal’s role
- Data driven decision making within the school improvement process
- Raising expectations for all learners
- Organizing schools into learning communities
- Refining strategies for being the *lead* learner in the school

➤ ***Engaging in professional development in scientifically based reading instruction.***

Topics will include instruction in content as follows:

- Content and features of effective reading instruction, including alignment of reading curriculum to state standards
- The five critical components of reading and the effective instructional strategies that need to be included in kindergarten through third grade curricula and programs as identified by the Reading First legislation
- Use of assessments to inform the evaluation, selection, and implementation of instructional programs and professional development

In the summer of 2001, the Maryland Principals' Academy was established for principals in their first through fifth year of experience. The academy gave principals from around the state the opportunity to hear nationally recognized speakers in the field of instructional leadership as well as a chance to increase their instructional leadership skills. Over the past two years about 300 principals from elementary, middle and high schools representing the spectrum of socio-economic levels, have participated. This academy is already being planned for next year to continue the efforts of the state commitment to the leadership in Maryland. Beginning MRFI principals will be able to participate in this opportunity with the recommendation of their local superintendent.

To provide professional development specifically to MRFI principals, Maryland will require the following:

- MRFI principals will attend an annual fall forum, conducted by National SBRR experts, and participate in workshops and presentations that address SBRR components of reading as well as issues affecting the success implementation of SBRR in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.
- MRFI principals will participate in all professional development activities with their faculties relative to Reading First.
- MRFI principals will participate in an initial orientation with school reading coaches and LEA reading coordinators in the spring of 2004.
- MRFI principals will participate in quarterly principals' networking meetings held in central locations or through the Maryland Virtual Network for School Leadership. Principals will collaborate to share the most current ideas and experiences in instructional leadership, problems, and solutions. Networking will assist in the sharing of what works in the schools of today. To support and continue to build capacity, the Maryland Virtual Network for School Leadership will be open to all acting principals for continuing dialogue of approaches and solutions to current school issues. The Division of Professional and Strategic Development will make every effort to include and surround all MRFI principals with exemplary peer principals, experienced in increasing reading achievement in their school, to serve as models and coaches.
- Interschool visits will be arranged for principals from MRFI schools to observe and discuss reading instruction as it is occurring. Debriefing sessions will be arranged so that the dialogue will focus on improvement in current reading practices. Actual student work will be analyzed to provide the structure for forming learning communities within the MRFI schools.

Reading First School Level

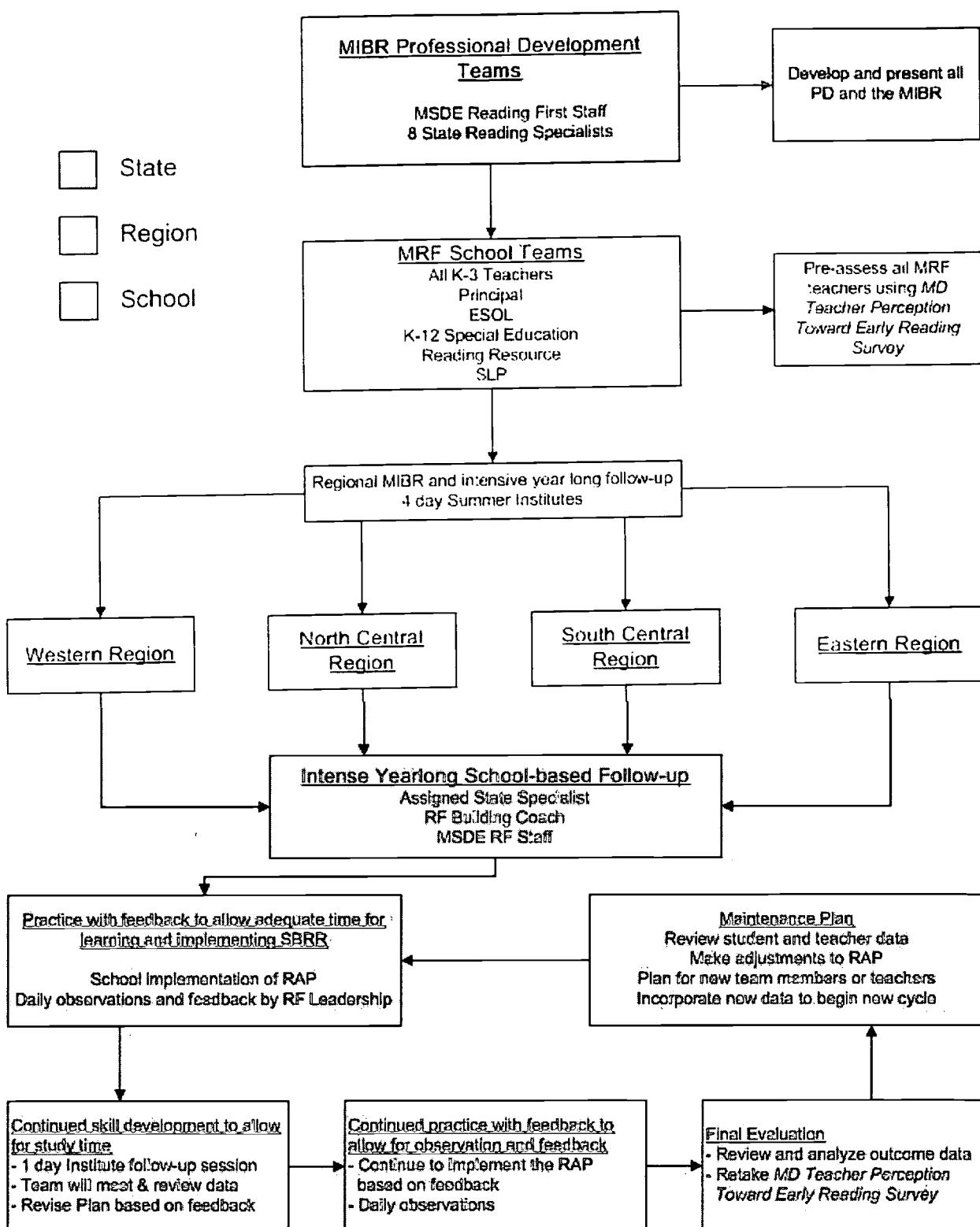
Each Reading First school will develop "Reading Action Plan (RAP)" as part of the school improvement process and will spend the entire year refining it under the direction of the state reading specialist, the school reading coach, and national or state experts. Student data from multiple sources in the area of reading will be disaggregated for each identified school as the process for focusing learning priorities, monitoring progress, and helping to sustain continuous improvement. MRFI year-long professional development training process will allow teacher's adequate time for learning and implementing scientifically based reading instruction, including time for study, observation, practice, application, and evaluation. Teacher's perceptions about beginning reading will be assessed before and after the yearlong institute experience to plan for the more in-

depth experiences that the Reading First schools will receive in the years following the institute to sustain the change and progress. The teachers will be assessed using the Maryland Teacher Perception Toward Early Reading Survey. This survey is adapted from The Teacher Perception Towards Early Reading and Spelling Survey found in *Perceptions and Knowledge of Preservice and Inservice Teachers About Early Literacy Instruction* (Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001.)

The following chart describes the levels of professional development for each school before, during, and after the academies for the duration of a year and beyond.

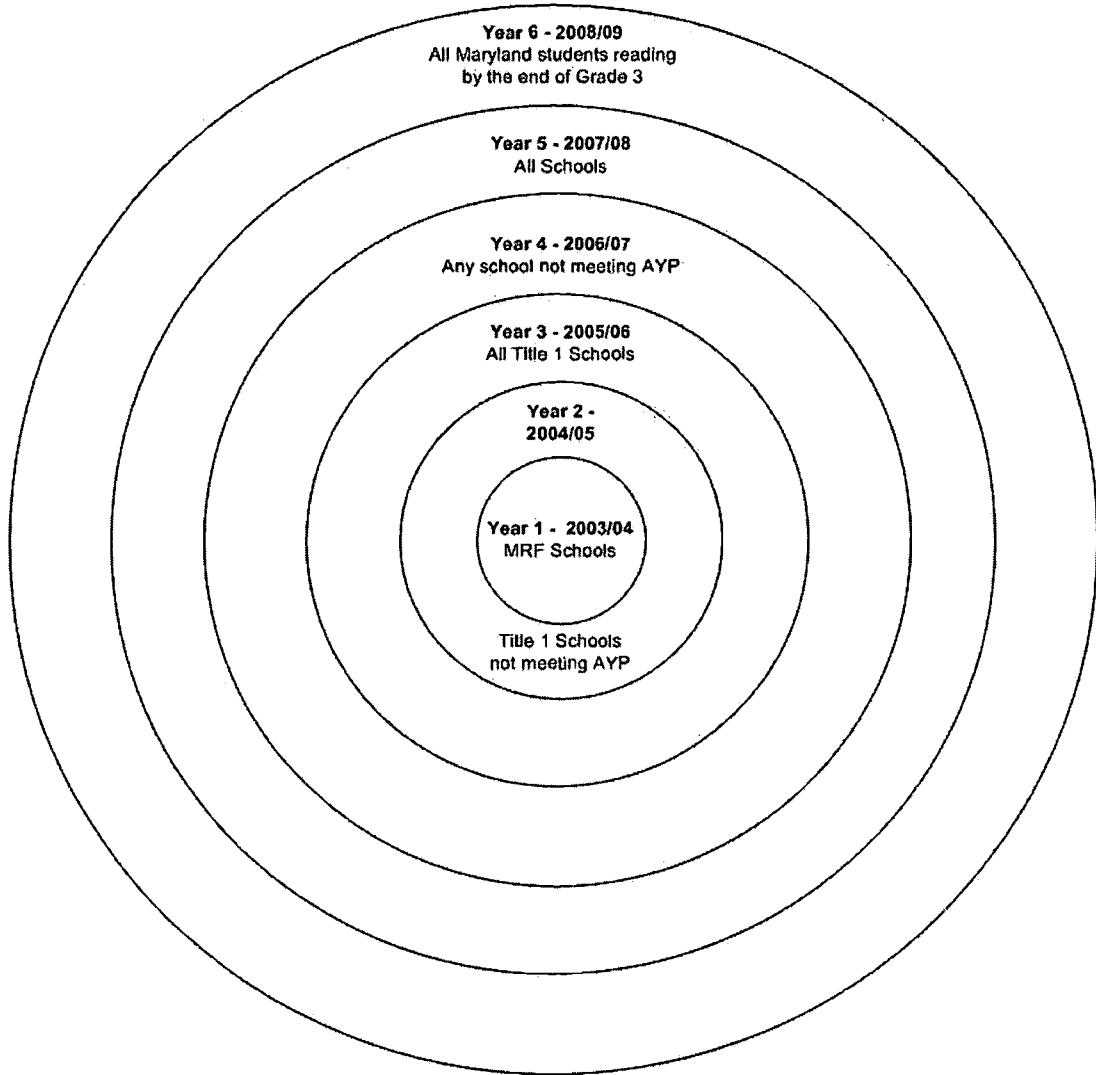
General Professional Development Structure

State - Region - School



During years two and three, training in SBRR through the Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading will reach audiences identified as having “at risk” student populations, including LEA administrators, principals, and K-3 teachers in all Title I schools and any Maryland school not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In years four through six, the MIBR will be delivered regionally and offered to administrators, principals, and K-3 teachers, ESOL teachers, and K-12 special education teachers in all Maryland schools.

Six Year Professional Development Plan for all Maryland Schools



Teacher Level

The Learning First Alliance suggests that a variety of professional development activities will meet individual needs better than a “one-size-fits-all” approach, particularly when these activities are based on teacher self-evaluations of what is needed to improve their students’ performance. The Office of Reading First will use the Maryland Teacher Perception Toward Early Reading Survey both before the MIBR and after the intensive yearlong follow-up. In this way professional development can be customized to an individual teacher’s preferences and needs. The MRFI will offer a full array of options to support teacher needs such as:

- an on-line course for MSDE credit focusing on the five strands of early reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel and taught by an instructor at MSDE with connections to Ed-tech Leaders On-line and a content instructor trained in SBRR by national experts

- the four reading courses required for certification from a local college or university (under review for SBRR by MSDE)
- reading courses taught through LEAs for MSDE credit (under review for SBRR by MSDE)
- electronic networks comprised of schools utilizing Blackboard providing opportunities for schools to share both problems and solutions

➤ *Preservice*

In July 1998 the Maryland State Board of Education increased the amount of reading coursework required for current and prospective teachers. The State Board's regulatory changes spelled out a framework of required courses for all elementary and special education teachers: 12 semester hours in specific reading coursework, such as language and cognitive development; phonics, semantics, and syntax; selecting and using reading materials; and reading assessment.

To fully develop the content of the new courses, Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, charged the Reading Professional Development Committee to identify the knowledge, skills, and performances for each of the required reading courses outlined in the State Board's regulations. In July 1999, MSDE published the *Final Report of the Reading Professional Development Committee*.

However, the reauthorization of ESEA in 2002, and the inclusion of Reading First in Title I, Subpart A, has occasioned the need to revise the document to align better with current scientifically based reading research. MRFI will fund the revision of guidelines for college level courses and credit-bearing professional development workshops. Funded activities are as follows:

- The Office of Reading First staff, including the Teacher Quality Specialist, will participate in training by national consultants in LETRS, DIBELS, and the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program*.
- The Director, Office of Reading First, and the Reading First Teacher Quality Specialist will identify a state panel of reading experts to receive training in SBRR and participate in the review and revision of the reading course guidelines. The 30-person panel will be led by a Chair and consist of equal representation from LEAs and IHEs.
- The panel will meet for 4 full day meetings during March and April 2004 to revise elementary course content based on SBRR.
- The final draft of the revised guidelines will receive external review and critique from Dr. Louisa Moats during May 2004.
- The Office of Reading First will provide periodic updates to the State Board and to the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB).
- Revised guidelines will be disseminated to IHEs and LEA Central Offices and posted on the MSDE website in June 2004.
- Revised guidelines will be effective for all IHEs to revise elementary reading course syllabi in June 2004.
- Teacher Quality Specialist will provide technical assistance to IHEs and LEAs during fall 2004.
- MSDE Program Approval Branch initiates first round of course approval in January 2005.

Timeline

Throughout the granting period, especially during the first year of project implementation in schools, the Office of Reading First will offer on-going professional development in the context, process, and content of SBRR core reading programs, instructional strategies, and classroom-based assessments. However,

Maryland recognizes the need to structure an immediate, comprehensive professional development plan that identifies specified SBRR content and delivery systems for specific audiences. Primary audiences and content are organized by timeline below:

➤ *Pre-Submission - Spring 2003 - Primary Audience: Office of Reading First*

Maryland's commitment to augmenting MSDE staff knowledge of SBRR is already underway. During April, the Reading First Assessment Specialist participated in a full day session in Toronto conducted by Dr. Joseph K. Torgesen on "The New Research on Reading: Implications for Assessment and Intervention." Current SBRR was reviewed and tools for improving reading instruction were discussed. Also, in Toronto, the Assessment Specialist attended a session by Dr. Roland H. Good III titled, "Assessment of Big Ideas in Beginning Reading" in which participants were taught how to make data-based decisions; administer score, and derive instructional recommendations from DIBELS; and, select students who needed additional instructional support.

From May 1-3, 2003, the Reading First Director and Assessment Specialist, accompanied by the Director of Curriculum and English Language Arts Coordinator, Division of Instruction (DOI), participated actively in the LETRS Institute for Trainers (Modules 7-9) in Boulder, Colorado. Under the direction of Dr. Louisa Moats, MSDE staff had intense instruction in the following: Teaching Phonics, Word Study, and the Alphabetic Principle; Assessment for Prevention and Intervention; and Writing. Dr. Moats emphasized integrating the above in well-organized primary language arts classrooms.

From May 21-23, the Reading First Director, Coordinator, Assessment Specialist, DOI English Language Arts Coordinator, Director of Leadership Alignment Initiatives, and LEA Reading Coordinators from Baltimore City and Prince George's County comprised the state team at Phase I of the High Quality Professional Development (HQPD) in Beginning Reading sessions in Eugene, Oregon. Under the leadership of Drs. Edward J. Kame'enui, Deborah C. Simmons, and Roland Good III, Maryland's delegation obtained direction on developing the knowledge of the science of beginning reading and establishing systems within schools to translate and sustain effective practices. Representatives from the Maryland team will also participate in HQPD Phase II and III sessions in June and October 2003, respectively.

➤ *Year One - Summer 2003 - Primary Audience: Representatives from Divisions within MSDE responsible for reading, 24 LEAs, and IHEs*

During July and August, Dr. Deborah C. Simmons and her associate, Dr. Michael Coyne, will plan with the Office of Reading First specific training events in how to select reading core, supplemental, and intervention programs based on *A Consumer's Guide for Evaluating a Core Reading Program*. Participants will learn the SBRR criteria for selection and how to apply it. During September and October, the Office of Reading First will facilitate the LEA panel's review of core reading programs according to the criteria. From discussions and deliberations, a listing of the fall 2003 Maryland-Approved Core Reading Programs will be generated. Thereafter, in January and July of each year, a panel of LEA representatives trained in the criteria will review newly published products and revise the list of approved core reading programs accordingly. Spring and fall listings will be disseminated publicly on the MSDE website.

Fall 2003 - Primary Audience: Representatives from Divisions within MSDE responsible for reading; representatives from all LEAs including central office and school based leaders; and IHE representatives

In October 2003, a Research Forum on Large Scale Implementation of SBRR to introduce the Maryland Reading framework will be held. In her meeting with MSDE staff on May 2, 2003, Dr. Louisa Moats suggested inviting national experts, such as Drs. Linnea Ehri, Tim Shanahan, Jack Fletcher, and Isabelle Beck, to deliver keynotes highlighting the transition from research to practice.

Fall 2003 - Primary Audience: State, District, and University Educational Leaders

On November 13-14, the Council of Educational Administrative and Supervisory Organizations of Maryland (CEASOM) will host its annual invitational conference. A sample of CEASOM membership includes representatives from the following: Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals; Maryland Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development; Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals; Maryland Association of Teacher Educators; Maryland Council of Staff Developers; Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland; and, Maryland Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. Conference attendance averages 425 with all Maryland LEAs and organizations represented. Each year, the conference, co-sponsored by MSDE, selects a pivotal focus that correlates to its umbrella theme: "Working Together: No Child Left Behind." This year's premier conference will highlight Reading First. Dr. Phyllis Hunter will present a keynote, "Reading Is the Next Civil Right." The Director, Office of Reading First, has been requested to facilitate two breakout sessions building an awareness of SBRR, DIBELS, and the MRFI.

Fall 2003 - Primary Audience: MSDE Office of Reading First Staff and the State Reading First Regional Specialists

During November and December, the MSDE Reading First Staff and the State Reading First Regional Specialists will receive training in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS--Modules 1-6). Participants will focus on the following SBRR content: The Challenge of Learning to Read; The Speech Sounds of English: Phonetics, Phonology, and Phoneme Awareness; Spellography: A Road Map to English Orthography; The Mighty Word: Building Vocabulary and Oral Language: Getting Up to Speed: Developing Fluency; and Digging for Meaning: Teaching Text Comprehension. Dr. Louisa Moats has communicated to the Maryland Office of Reading First her interest in assisting with organizing LETRS training in Maryland and personally delivering three of the modules.

Spring 2004 - Primary Audience: Reading First School Reading Coaches

During April and May, the MSDE school based Reading Coaches will receive training in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS--Modules 1-6). Participants will focus on the following SBRR content: The Challenge of Learning to Read; The Speech Sounds of English: Phonetics, Phonology, and Phoneme Awareness; Spellography: A Road Map to English Orthography; The Mighty Word: Building Vocabulary and Oral Language: Getting Up to Speed: Developing Fluency; and Digging for Meaning: Teaching Text Comprehension. The purpose will be to deepen the understanding of these Coaches to assist them as they continue to work with teachers to improve student learning.

Winter 2004 - Primary Audience: State Reading First Regional Specialist

Dr. Roland Good III has indicated to MSDE staff a willingness to train participants in implementing DIBELS screening and progress monitoring assessments. This is tentatively scheduled for February. The State Reading First Regional Specialists will also participate in LETRS training for Modules 7-9, delivered by a national LETRS trainer. They will study the relationship of phonics, word study, and the alphabetic principle with assessment and writing in a well-integrated SBRR classroom.

Summer 2004 – Spring 2005 - Primary Audience: Principals, K-3 Teachers, ESL Teachers, Special Education Teachers in Reading First Schools

During June and July, four (4) Maryland Institutes on Beginning Reading will be required for Reading First K-3 teachers and administrators as follows: one in Western Maryland (Allegany and Garret Co.'s); one on the Eastern Shore (Dorchester, Wicomico, and Somerset Co.'s); one in the Washington, DC metro area (Prince George's and Montgomery Co.'s); and one in the Baltimore metro area (Baltimore Co. and Baltimore City). Each four-day institute, conducted by trained Office of Reading First staff and state Reading First Regional Specialists, will include the following topics modeled after Kame'enui and Simmons' IBR:

- Five “essential elements” of beginning reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension within the Maryland Reading Framework;
- Valid and reliable assessment system aligned with the five essential elements of beginning reading (particular focus will be on screening, progress monitoring, and outcome assessment) to ensure success on the grade 3 MSA;
- A school-wide beginning reading model designed to help teachers and administrators organize, prioritize, and implement a plan for ensuring that children are making adequate and evidence-based improvements in reading;
- Use of the 180-day curriculum maps and the K-3 Maryland Essential Curriculum, (carefully aligned to the high priority skills in beginning reading) to ensure that children are on track at appropriate points in time;
- SBRR core/comprehensive reading programs, supplemental programs and materials, and intervention programs and strategies designed to address the instructional needs of all students.

Each MIBR will require an intense yearlong follow-up at the school level as follows:

- *Practice and feedback to allow adequate time for mastering and implementing SBRR*
 - School implementation of Reading Action Plan from MIBR
 - Daily classroom observations and provide feedback
- *Continued skill development to allow for study time*
 - A one-day MIBR follow up session at the school
 - School teams will meet and review student classroom assessment data
 - Revise plan based on feedback
 - Continue learning about SBRR
- *Continued practice based on feedback and continuation of the cycle of observation, application, and practice*
 - Continue to implement the RAP based on feedback
 - In-school coaches observe daily and assist school teams in making adjustments to meet SBRR
- *Final Evaluation*
 - Review and analyze outcome data
 - Retake Maryland Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading Survey
 - Survey data will be compared to data from pre-assessment
- *Maintenance Plan*
 - Review student and teacher data
 - Make adjustments to Reading Action Plan
 - Plan for new members or teachers
 - SBRR training is focused to address the needs of gaps revealed in the revised RAP and in the perception surveys
 - Incorporate new data to begin new cycle

[See graphic on page 66 for visual representation of the General Professional Development Structure]

➤ ***Year 2 - Fall 2004 - Primary Audience: LEA Reading First Principals, Project Administrators, and Coordinators of Reading***

During October, a one-day Reading First Leadership Forum will be held in central Maryland. Dr. Louisa Moats recommended that the Office of Reading First invite a national expert, such as Dr. Phyllis Hunter, to address mobilizing leadership for success implementation of the MRFI. Workshops and presentations will address SBRR components of reading as well as implementation issues affecting the success of Reading First in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.

Summer 2005-Spring 2006 - Primary Audience: Title I Schools Not Meeting AYP

Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional MIBR and will follow the same format as described for the RF schools. Assistance will be obtained from LEA trained RF teachers and Coaches to support the Office of Reading first in presenting the institutes and continuing the follow-up for one year.

➤ ***Year 3 - Fall 2005 - Primary Audience: Reading First School Reading Coaches***

During November and December, the MSDE Office of Reading First staff, state Reading First Regional Specialists, and school based Reading Coaches will receive training in the *Supplementary Modules* offered by Dr. Louisa Moats and the LETRS training entitled, Developing Classroom Coaches. The purpose will be to deepen the understanding of these key staff members as they continue to work with teachers to improve student learning.

Fall 2005 - Primary Audience: Principals of Title I Schools Not Meeting AYP, Project Administrators, and Coordinators of Reading from LEAs Having Title I Schools Not Meeting AYP

During October, a one-day Reading First Leadership Forum will be held in central Maryland. Workshops and presentations will address SBRR components of reading as well as issues affecting the successful implementation of SBRR in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.

Fall 2005 – Spring 2006 - Primary Audience: Representatives from Title I Schools and LEAs with Title I Schools Not Previously Included

From September through April, trained Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional professional development based on materials from the Institutes on Beginning Reading (IBR) and LETRS. Workshops will be conducted in SBRR components of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension; DIBELS screening and progress monitoring assessments; and, utilizing *The Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program*.

Summer 2005 – Spring 2006 - Primary Audience: Principals, K-3 Teachers, ESL Teachers, Special Education Teachers from Title I Schools Not Previously Included

Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional MIBR and will follow the same format as described for the RF schools. Assistance will be obtained from LEA trained RF teachers and Coaches to support the Office of Reading First in presenting the institutes and continuing the follow-up for one year.

➤ *Year 4 - Fall 2006 - Primary Audience: Principals of Elementary Schools and LEA Coordinators of Reading Not Previously Included*

During October, a one-day Reading First Leadership Forum will be held in central Maryland. Workshops and presentations will address SBRR components of reading as well as issues affecting the success implementation of SBRR in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.

Fall 2006 – Spring 2007 - Primary Audience: Representatives from Title I Schools and LEAs with Title I Schools Not Previously Included

From September through April, trained Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional professional development based on materials from the Institutes on Beginning Reading (IBR) and LETRS. Workshops will be conducted in SBRR components of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension; DIBELS screening and progress monitoring assessments; and, utilizing *The Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program*.

Spring 2007 - Primary Audience: LEA Reading Coordinators and Central Office Leaders

Staff from the Office of Reading First will conduct a series of trainer workshops in how to implement the Maryland-specific professional development modules based on the IBR materials in the five components of reading, the use of DIBELS, and the selection and implementation of core reading program materials.

Summer 2007 – Spring 2008 - Primary Audience: Principals, K-3 Teachers, ESL Teachers, K-12 Special Education Teachers from All LEAs Not Meeting AYP

Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional MIBR and will follow the same format as described for the RF schools. Assistance will be obtained from LEA trained RF teachers and Coaches to support the Office of Reading First in presenting the institutes and continuing the follow-up for one year.

➤ *Year 5 - Fall 2007 -Primary Audience: Principals of Elementary Schools Not Previously Included*

During October, a one-day Reading First Leadership Forum will be held in central Maryland. Workshops and presentations will address SBRR components of reading as well as issues affecting the success implementation of SBRR in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.

Spring 2008 - Primary Audience: LEA Reading Coordinators and Central Office Leaders

Staff from the Office of Reading First will conduct a series of trainer workshops in how to implement the Maryland-specific professional development modules based on the IBR materials in the five components of reading, the use of DIBELS, and the selection and implementation of core reading program materials.

Summer 2008 – Spring 2009 - Primary Audience: Principals, K-3 Teachers, ESL Teachers, K-12 Special Education Teachers from All LEAs

Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional MIBR and will follow the same format as described for the RF schools. Assistance will be obtained from LEA trained Reading First teachers and Coaches to support the Office of Reading First in presenting the institutes and continuing the follow-up for one year.

➤ *Year 6 - Fall 2008 - Primary Audience: Principals of Elementary Schools Not Previously Included*

During October, a one-day Reading First Leadership Forum will be held in central Maryland. Workshops and presentations will address SBRR components of reading as well as issues affecting the success implementation of SBRR in schools, including data-based decision making and scheduling.

Spring 2009 - Primary Audience: LEA Reading Coordinators and Central Office Leaders

Staff from the Office of Reading First will conduct a series of trainer workshops in how to implement the Maryland-specific professional development modules based on the IBR materials in the five components of reading, the use of DIBELS, and the selection and implementation of core reading program materials.

Summer 2009 – Spring 2010 - Primary Audience: Principals, K-3 Teachers, ESL Teachers, K-12 Special Education Teachers from Any LEAs Not Meeting AYP

Office of Reading First staff will schedule district and/or regional MIBR and will follow the same format as described for the RF schools. Assistance will be obtained from LEA trained RF teachers and coaches to support the Office of Reading First in presenting the institutes and continuing the follow-up for one year.

I G. Integration of Proposed Reading First Activities with REA Activities

Current REA Activities

The Request for Proposals issued by MSDE allowed districts to customize their approach to REA implementation based on the specific needs and circumstances of the district, within a parameter of allowable activities. The allowable activities included:

- Reform reading instruction by securing technical and other assistance.
- Provide professional development activities to teachers and other instructional staff.
- Train parents on a volunteer basis on how to help their children with beginning reading skills and processes.
- Provide family literacy services.
- Train parents of children in targeted schools as tutors.
- Develop programs to assist kindergarten students from targeted schools.
- Provide additional assistance to students in grades K-3. Assist children with reading difficulties who might be inappropriately referred for special education services.
- Coordinate efforts by reading, library and literacy program, and local agencies.
- Using these guidelines, districts proposed a range of activities to be funded as REA projects, described in district proposals and district REA coordinator reports.

Overview of REA Projects

Summary descriptions of the REA programs in eligible Reading First LEAs are provided below:

➤ *Baltimore City*

The REA project provided a variety of interventions in 16 of Baltimore City's lowest performing schools individualized to each school's unique circumstances and needs (11 public schools, 5 nonpublic schools). The interventions included a combination of: tutorial assistance for reading, increased volume of reading materials/libraries, professional development for teachers, summer school and Saturday school academic programs, schoolwide book reading challenges, family literacy, and certification courses. These activities were developed to meet identified needs for improving reading achievement at each school, and were targeted toward the school's individual approach. For example, the seven schools that were involved in the

Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI) received their professional development primarily from CLI staff. The three schools managed by the Edison Project received their professional development primarily from Edison staff, and from Success for All staff.

➤ *Baltimore County*

The Reading Excellence Institute in Baltimore County's School District's three REA schools consisted of an instructional component for students and their parents and a professional development component for teachers. The Institute consisted of 20 summer days of intensive instruction in the areas of phonemic awareness, language development, word identification, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. During one week, teachers from each school participate in professional development by observing the master teachers in the morning and participating in afternoon training. During another week, parents are invited to observe and participate in family literacy training.

A parallel summer program, operated in the one participating Baltimore County nonpublic school, focused on intensive instruction in the areas of phonemic awareness, language development, word identification, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension with materials used by the nonpublic schools. The program provided intensive instruction for the targeted students (K-3) during the summer months and ongoing professional development components for the teachers.

➤ *Prince George's County*

The Prince George's County REA project targeted eight schools for reading improvement. Activities in those schools included reading programs, such as the Wright Group and the Waterford Early Reading Program; comprehensive parent and community outreach efforts; a variety of technology-based reading enhancements and tutorial and coaching programs; a comprehensive assessment and accountability program; and professional training in all facets of emergent literacy and reading/language arts. Early intervention opportunities were provided to foster students' reading and language acquisition. Systematic instruction focused upon students' attitudes, strategies, and processes so they may become active listeners, proficient speakers, and independent readers, writers, and thinkers.

Integration of Proposed Reading First Activities with Reading Excellence Activities (REA) (where applicable)

The REA program was established to bring about a change in the way reading is taught in the United States and to align instructional strategies more closely with the current research on effective practice. Specifically, the program seeks to infuse scientifically based reading research into reading and literacy instruction.

Teachers and administrators in the REA schools felt that the activities improved professional knowledge and instruction but the REA programs did not result in an increase in student achievement. The professional development efforts were varied and follow-up support was not provided consistently. There were no effective methods of screening children for purposes of instruction, no benchmarks for interventions, and no guide to which interventions are appropriate for the student need.

The Reading First Leadership team has determined that the REA program cannot be integrated with the Reading First initiative for the following reasons:

- While the REA schools provided professional development, the quality and quantity of professional development was not sufficient to effectively implement SBRR strategies.
- The REA schools were not consistent in their approach.

- REA programs were an add-on to current school activities, resulting in a diffused effort and limited support in the implementation of effective strategies.
- The materials and strategies used in the REA schools, while based in scientific research, do not meet the Reading First guidelines for SBRR.

The Reading First Leadership team is confident that by providing guidance in the selection of SBRR materials, on-going professional development in SBRR practices, modeling and support specific to the needs of the RF school, all based on continuous needs assessment, the lessons learned from REA will result in more successful SBRR Reading First programs.

II. STATE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The management plan for the Maryland Reading First Initiative (MRFI) is designed to make sure that MSDE has in place a staff of sufficient size, knowledge, and experience. This will help MRFI schools move forward and promote the use of scientifically based reading research (SBRR) across the state. The management plan will put in place a network of trained staff to make sure assistance is available, starting as LEAs apply for MRFI funding and continuing with frequent follow-up as selected schools receive and later implement their training in research-based reading instruction.

II A. State Technical Assistance Plan

Based on the experience with the implementation of the Reading Excellence Act, Maryland has learned that substantial initial training is a necessary condition for program success, but it is far from a sufficient condition. Technical assistance is central to the success not only of MRFI, but to the entire statewide reading effort. State-sponsored professional development and state-sponsored technical assistance work together to support LEA leaders, principals, teachers, and in-school reading coaches who are learning to implement SBRR.

Throughout the granting period, and especially during the first year of the project, the Office of Reading First will provide on-going technical assistance in implementing SBRR. Teams from eligible LEAs and schools will receive assistance in understanding the following: legislative requirements of Title I, Subpart A, "Reading First;" Maryland's subgrant requirements and evaluative rubric; criteria for selecting core reading programs and SBRR supplementary, intervention, and assessment materials. Primary audiences and focus for technical assistance are described below:

Primary Audience: LEA Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Instruction

Maryland's commitment to providing statewide technical assistance in regard to SBRR and MRFI is already underway. On April 4, 2003, Dr. Nancy Grasmick met with LEA Superintendents to discuss the requirements of Maryland's application for Reading First funding and implications for statewide professional development. On April 17, 2003, Ms. Gertrude Collier and staff met with LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction to explain the five components of reading and to request statewide commitment to MRFI activities. Based on a subsequent survey from Dr. Grasmick to the LEA Superintendents, Maryland LEAs overwhelmingly support the MRFI.

Proposal Preparation Workshops and Mentoring

- Primary Audience: Eligible LEA Central Office and School Staff

Maryland regards the subgrant process for MRFI funding as an opportunity to initiate technical assistance about research-based reading instruction. From August through November 2003, the Office of Reading First will hold a series of three 1-day workshops. The syllabus for each workshop covers the following: introduction to research-based reading instruction and its five essential components; coherent reading instructional design, including the selection of a core reading program; and classroom-based screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments. At the end of the workshop series, LEAs will understand the importance of SBRR. Not only will the information prove helpful to schools eligible for funding, but central office administrators in attendance will be equipped to apply what they have learned to all schools in their districts.

In addition, the Office of Reading First will provide on-site mentoring and constructive review to LEAs and schools as they initiate subgrant proposals. Misconceptions will be clarified and resources in SBRR will be

identified to help LEAs produce successful subgrant applications. This technical assistance will remain in effect until proposals are approved.

Selecting and Implementing Scientifically Based Reading Programs

- Primary Audience: Eligible LEA Central Office and School Writing Teams

Having been trained in *The Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program*, the Office of Reading First will hold during November 2003, a series of regional one-day workshop in Western Maryland, Central Maryland, and the Eastern Shore to introduce eligible districts and schools to criteria and considerations for selecting a core reading program from the listing of fall 2003 Maryland-Approved Core Reading Programs. The Consumer's Guide will be presented and participants will be encouraged to respond to a Needs Assessment that will facilitate matching approved programs to their district and school needs. The outcome of the technical assistance workshops will be that LEAs have a basic understanding of the best techniques for teaching reading and possess the knowledge and tools to enable them to select a comprehensive reading program.

Selecting and Using Screening, Diagnostic, and Classroom-based Instructional Assessments - Primary Audience: Eligible LEA Central Office and School Staff

As part of an effort to begin to pull together separate reading programs into an integrated whole, MSDE has mandated the use of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) as the standard instrument for monitoring student progress under Reading First. The implementation of DIBELS will be an integral part of the MRFI technical assistance program. During the Summer 2004 Institute, administrators and teachers will undergo extensive professional development in DIBELS to prepare them for the fall 2004 administration. As they administer DIBELS assessments in fall, winter, and spring, teachers will receive technical assistance coordinated by the Office of Reading First and provided by Reading First Regional Specialists and in-school reading coaches. This cycle of ongoing consultation will occur throughout the grant period to ensure proper implementation and standardization of the use of the instrument and to provide trouble-shooting advice.

MSDE will provide technical assistance to Reading First schools in accessing and analyzing classroom, school, and district reports funded by the grant through the DIBELS electronic network. In-school coaches will work with teachers to ensure students identified for "Intensive" and "Strategic" intervention receive additional DIBELS Progress Monitoring Assessments, and, if needed, specific diagnostic testing. Reading First Regional Specialists will provide technical assistance to in-school coaches and teachers to ensure that appropriate SBRR instructional modifications occur for students requiring intervention.

In addition, MRFI staff will review DIBELS data reports with Reading First Regional Specialists to identify not only the schools most in need of extra help, but also particular areas where students are farthest behind. Since reports are available four times a year with no reporting delay, the MRFI staff will be able to identify lagging schools early in the process and provide extra focused technical assistance where it is needed. It is expected that this targeted help will minimize the student failure rate at MRFI schools.

MSDE will contract the resources of skilled technicians at the Center for Reading Excellence (CRE) to provide technical support to Reading First schools in evaluating and administering SBRR diagnostic tests. CRE will collaborate with the Office of Reading First to schedule regional training for in-school coaches and LEA testing specialists who will be primarily responsible for ensuring that identified students receive appropriate diagnostic testing as early as possible. In Reading First schools where there is no locally identified specialist trained in administering SBRR diagnostic tests, CRE specialists will administer them.

The LEAs will ensure that the publishers will provide technical assistance including teacher training to schools in the administration of classroom based assessments that are part of the published core reading program.

Identifying Professional Development Providers

MSDE is committed to ensuring that professional development providers selected by Reading First LEAs and schools are highly qualified and trained in SBRR. To accomplish this, the Office of Reading First will maintain a database of nationally recognized experts that includes their titles, university or agency affiliations, specialty areas, contact numbers, website information, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses. In addition, the Office of Reading First will maintain a database of state and local staff who have been trained in LETRS by Dr. Louisa Moats and/or her colleagues, DIBELS by Dr. Roland H. Good III, and the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program* by Dr. Michael Coyne. The database will include names, titles, contact numbers, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and the content area(s) in which each person has received SBRR training. Reading First schools will be required to select professional development providers from the databases maintained in the Office of Reading First.

Initial Training for all MRFI Schools - Primary Audience: Successful Subgrant Applicants

MSDE will award its initial subgrants to eligible LEAs in March 2004. From March through May, successful LEAs will receive from the Office of Reading First focused technical assistance in getting started and implementing funded activities as follows:

- Principals and LEA reading specialists will have an orientation to their crucial roles. This will include scheduling a minimum of 90 minutes of uninterrupted daily time for reading and in arranging grade level meetings and professional development at the Summer 2004 Regional Institutes supporting SBRR and the implementation of a K-3 core reading program.
- The in-school reading coaches will be trained on their roles in MRFI schools.

Despite professional development and technical assistance provided to them, it is expected that not all LEAs will successfully address SBRR criteria in their first application. Beginning in March and until their subgrant is approved, those LEAs will receive from the Office of Reading First intense technical assistance in revising the components of their applications failing to meet SBRR criteria.

Providing Ongoing Technical Assistance to MRFI Schools

Recognizing that the kind of change Maryland is looking for in MRFI schools does not come easily, Maryland has built extensive follow-up support to teachers. Ongoing support will be delivered on four levels:

1. In-School Reading Coaches
2. Principals, LEA Reading Coordinators, and Project Administrators
3. Reading First Regional Specialists
4. MSDE Office of Reading First Staff

Training the providers of technical assistance is a key MRFI responsibility. MRFI funds will be used to support meetings and technical assistance conducted on behalf of Reading First for and by the providers listed above. In addition, MRFI SEA funds will support fees and travel expenses of national experts in SBRR who will be invited to deliver professional development to the technical assistance providers.

- *In-School Reading Coach*

Maryland will require and fund a highly-trained, full-time reading coach in each MRFI school. The in-school coach will be the first line of technical assistance—an always-present, readily available source of help. The coach whose full-time job is to improve reading instruction in the school will not have direct classroom duties nor be burdened with administrative responsibilities outside the reading program. Duties will include the following:

- Working with K-3, ESL, and special education teachers to improve their reading instruction, including modeling lessons and devising strategies for hard-to-reach students.
- Helping to administer DIBELS assessments required of MRFI schools as well as assist in scheduling and administering SBRR diagnostic assessments used to track student progress and identify individual student needs.
- Helping teachers analyze assessment results and use these results to identify SBRR strategies to modify instruction to make sure that no child is left behind.
- Offering on-going professional development through grade level meetings, coaching services, and in-service workshops.

Although these reading coaches will be employees of participating LEAs, they will be a key part of the MRFI's technical assistance strategy. To make sure they are skilled, MRFI will provide initial training for reading coaches. This training will occur in May 2004, and will cover the following content: in-depth coverage of the basic elements of SBRR, extensive training in DIBELS and commonly used diagnostic tests; hands-on instructional techniques to meet a variety of individual student needs and in-depth training in intervention strategies.

By the time principals and teachers from their school attend the initial Summer 2004 Regional Academy, reading coaches will have established peer networks within their regions and across the state. The emphasis on networking, facilitated through e-mail, will continue as the school year begins. Reading First Regional Specialists will hold monthly meetings for reading coaches. These meetings will include instruction in the latest techniques and research, as well as ample opportunity for sharing across schools.

➤ *Principals, LEA Reading Coordinators and Project Administrators*

The leadership of good principals is perhaps the single most important factor in turning schools around. This rule applies in the area of reading. For this reason, principals at MRFI schools will participate in a major training program during the spring of 2004, shortly after their schools and LEAs are selected to participate. LEA Reading Coordinators and Project Administrators who have received in-depth SBRR training will also be expected to participate and act as coaches/mentors to the principals. Attendance at these sessions will be a pre-condition for funding.

The principals' training will focus on the essential elements of SBRR and include the use of assessment in driving student-oriented educational improvement. This will align with the current Maryland School Improvement Process, causing it to be more focused on data-based decisions for improving student achievement in reading. Principals will also gain valuable knowledge around improving their skills in the observation and evaluation process with specific recommendations on working with teachers to improve their instruction based on SBRR. Sessions will highlight leadership skills and the hands-on techniques successful principals use to move their faculties forward.

By the nature of their work, principals are often isolated; the MRFI principal-professional development/technical assistance program will be designed so that participating principals come away with a peer support network. Down the road, the ability to call one another, ask questions via e-mail or participate in the Maryland Virtual Network for School, funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will assist principals in overcoming barriers and meeting challenges. A coaching network is also envisioned as

principals in schools experiencing success with the MRFI that may be called upon to assist new or struggling principals.

➤ *Reading First Regional Reading Specialists*

Maryland will use MRFI State Educational Agency funds to contract eight Reading First Regional Specialists. Candidates for the hiring pool will be professional educators holding state certification in reading who are able to document past experience in implementing SBRR in low-income schools resulting in improved achievement. These regional specialists will be recruited from eligible Reading First LEA staff identified by their districts. Responsibilities for the regional specialists are included in this application, Part II C. State Management Plan.

Reading First Regional Specialists will receive intense professional development in SBRR through LETRS (modules 1-7), DIBELS, and The Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program. Using the training they receive, the regional specialists will plan and lead professional development activities and deliver technical assistance to their schools. The number of regional specialists will be increased and/or reassigned as needed in 2004-2005 when MRFI schools begin their implementation. This will make it possible, beginning in fall 2004, for schools to receive visits twice a month from an assigned regional specialist. The Office of Reading First will confer with regional specialists to identify specific schools and a timeframe for reduced or more frequent visitations.

In addition to on-site monitoring, regional specialists will be responsible for organizing within their regions monthly meetings of MRFI in-school reading coaches and LEA reading coordinators. Agendas and facilitative processes at these scheduled meetings will promote a high level of exchange and sharing across participating schools. Regional specialists will encourage and arrange visits of faculties to neighboring schools to observe successful SBRR practices.

Monitoring Progress: MSDE Office of Reading First Staff

The Office of Reading First has been newly created within the Office of the State Superintendent of Schools. The Reading First Director, Coordinator, and Assessment Specialist have experience in administering REA and have received training in LETRS, IBR, and DIBELS to ensure that Reading First is implemented according to SBRR and statutory requirements. The Office of Reading First Staff is responsible for designing and coordinating all professional development and technical assistance and for monitoring all grant instructional and assessment activities. The MSDE staff will schedule regular meetings with Reading First Regional Specialists and LEA staff to identify issues and solve problems interfering with successful implementation.

II B. Building Statewide Infrastructure

Building a Statewide Commitment to Improving K-3 Reading Achievement

Maryland's commitment to improving K-3 reading achievement has a long history. Beginning in 1993, MSDE launched the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP). All grade three students were assessed annually, and scores in reading for information, to perform a task, and for literary experience were reported at the school level to provide data for school improvement planning.

In 1997, MSDE published a report from the Task Force on Reading, outlining specific recommendations for improving student reading achievement. At that time, deliberations on the Task Force led to the approval by the State Board of Education for twelve credits in reading required for elementary teacher certification. Maryland has developed course guidelines for those reading credits that provide consistency across all state

IHEs. Maryland was one of the first state approved to receive Reading Excellence Act (REA) funding and has worked steadily to provide a foundation of SBRR in # schools.

However, the advent of NCLB, especially Title I, Part B, Reading First, stimulated the need to restudy and refocus Maryland's vision for beginning reading. MSPAP has been replaced by the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). Beginning in March 2003, third grade students are assessed using SAT 10 in reading, and individual student scores are reported in word study, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. In Reading First schools SAT 10 will become the outcome assessment for measuring student progress in grades 1 and 2, and MSA will measure student outcomes in grade 3.

Maryland's Essential Curriculum in reading has been based on SBRR components: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. MSDE has used research from the National Reading Panel in developing content standards, indicators, and objectives for the essential curriculum that reflect SBRR content and instructional methodologies. (See Appendix C) Achieve, Inc. has reviewed Maryland's reading curricular documents for content rigor and specificity, providing focused feedback and verifying SBRR. Maryland's Essential Curriculum, K-3, and the curricular and instructional requirements for Reading First schools are one and the same. MSDE's commitment to disseminating the essential curriculum statewide, beginning in August 2003, reflects a deep interest in improving K-3 reading achievement not only in Reading First schools, but for all beginning readers in Maryland.

The Office of Reading First

Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, strongly supports the findings of SBRR and its potential for raising the reading achievement of Maryland's beginning readers. Understanding the need to redirect state efforts and coalesce instructional support and funding on the principles of SBRR, she created in May 2003, a new administrative unit within the Office of the State Superintendent of Schools.

This new unit, the Office of Reading First, occupies a high profile position within MSDE. Its authority, directly under the State Superintendent of Schools, allows easy access to the offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the state delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, and Maryland's twenty-four LEA Superintendents. Under the State Superintendent of Schools, the Reading Office is positioned to provide immediate linkage and communication among the following MSDE divisions: Instruction; Student and School Services; Special Education; Leadership Development; Planning, Results, and Information Management; Library Development and Services; Academic Policy; and, Certification and Accreditation.

Prior to receiving federal funding, the Office of Reading First will plan and organize much needed professional development required to augment the knowledge of MSDE and LEA staff in SBRR.

MRFI Department Management Team

MSDE has organized a Department Management Team that includes the following: the Coordinator of Reading First; Coordinator of English Language Arts; Coordinator of Early Childhood Education; Director of Instructional Professional Leadership; Director of Federal Programs; Director of Teacher Quality; Director of Information Management; Specialist in Bilingual Education Programs; and, Specialist in Special Education. The Management Team is chaired by Gertrude Collier, the Director of Reading First, who has over 30 years of experience in the educational field with a concentration of providing services and directions to staff that coordinate curriculum, instruction, and assessment in academic content areas and programs for at-risk children. Ms. Collier was integral in the management of the Reading Excellence Act, the implementation of the recommendations from the Reading Task Force, the foundation of the CRE, the design of the MSA in reading, and the development of the state's essential curriculum.

Members of the Department Management Team have met periodically to coordinate the development of this proposal, ensuring that the concepts, structures, and activities carried full MSDE executive-level support. The following chart identifies the professionals at the state level who will meet bimonthly to (1) contribute their expertise to ensure that Reading First activities in funded schools correlate to SBRR; (2) monitor grant implementation and participate in eliminating barriers to project success; and, (3) assist the Office of Reading First in ensuring that department-sponsored reading literacy efforts are based on SBRR and represent coordinated, non-duplicated efforts. (See Appendix D for résumé's).

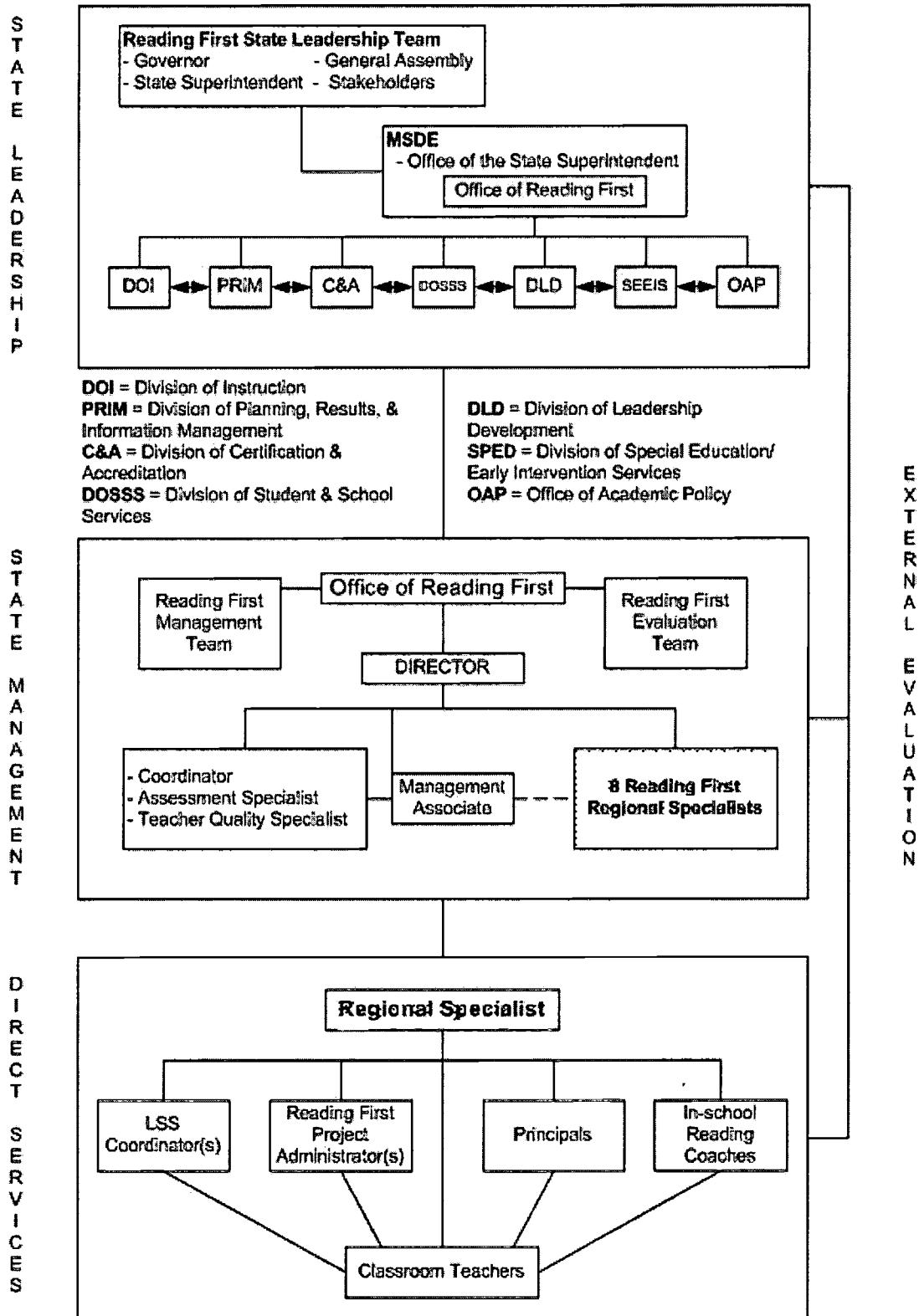
Reading First Management Team

Name	Title	Role and Responsibility
Gertrude Collier	Director of Reading First	Project oversight
Michele Goady	Coordinator of Reading First	Project implementation
Gary Heath	Director of Information Management	Planning, coordination, and implementation of statewide assessment program
Dori Novak	Director of Instructional Professional Leadership	Planning, coordination, and implementation of statewide professional development program
Rolf Grafwallner	Coordinator of Early Childhood Education	Early Reading Readiness
Sarah Hall	Director of Federal Programs	Coordination with Title I and other federally funded programs
Fran Sorin	Specialist, Special Education/Early Intervention Services	Coordination with special education and early intervention programs, communities and families
Frank Edgerton	Specialist in Bilingual Education Programs	Coordination with LEP programs, communities and families
Kathy Volk	Coordinator of English Language Arts	Coordination of all literacy efforts statewide
Elizabeth Glowa	Director of Online Instruction	Coordination of online professional development
Virginia Pilato	Director of Teacher Quality	Planning and coordination of the revision of required reading courses with higher education

Reading First Organizational Chart - MRFI Organizational Structure

The chart on the following page illustrates the MRFI organizational structure including the functions of State Leadership Team, the MRFI Management and Evaluation Team, and the State staff.

Reading First Organizational Chart



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Establishing a State Reading Leadership Team

The Governor and the State Superintendent of Education have appointed the State Reading Leadership Team to set policy for the Reading First state initiative focusing on improving K-3 reading instruction and raising K-3 reading achievement. The State Reading Leadership Team met on October 22, 2002 to give direction to and to approve the Reading First proposal and to develop the mission statement that follows. In the future, the State Reading Leadership Team will assist in the oversight and evaluation of MRFI.

Mission Statement of the State Reading Leadership Team

The mission of the Reading First State Leadership Team is to provide broad oversight of *Maryland's goal to have all students reading on grade level by the end of Grade 3.*

Roles and Responsibilities of the State Reading Leadership Team

The State Reading Leadership Team will coordinate all literacy efforts in support of the team's mission. It will assist the MSDE and the CRE, with support from Reading First, to develop the capacity of LEAs, administrators, and parents to help children learn and teachers teach. The team will focus on the LEAs facing the greatest challenges and will also systematically pursue providing statewide access to exemplary reading research, materials, and personnel. Specifically the Reading First State Leadership Team will:

- Provide oversight to the development, implementation, and monitoring of a competitive subgrant process;
- Ensure that LEAs use available resources to increase capacity to implement programs and practices supported by scientifically based reading research;
- Provide and implement professional development for teachers and administrators;
- Support LEAs and Reading First Schools in motivating teachers to implement the professional development provided through Reading First;
- Oversee MSDE and LEA efforts to bring coordination, coherence, and unity to the resources available for children as they learn to read; and
- Help develop the political support at state and local levels that the Maryland Reading First Initiative will need to succeed.

The Reading First State Leadership Team will serve as a sounding board and broad policy review board as the MSDE develops the MRFI and proceeds to coordinate Maryland's reading efforts statewide.

Members of the State Reading Leadership Team

The membership of the Maryland State Reading Leadership Team is a reading and literacy partnership comprised of the following participants: The Governor Elect of the State; the Chief State School Officer; the chairman and the ranking member of each committee of the State legislature that is responsible for educational policy; state directors of appropriate Federal or State programs with a strong reading component; a representative from at least one Reading First eligible school system, a community-based organization working with children to improve their reading skills, particularly a community-based organization using tutors and SBRR; a parent of a public or private school student or a parent who educates the parent's child in the parent's home; a teacher, who may be a special education teacher, who successfully teaches reading and another instructional staff member; a family literacy service provider; an institution of higher education operating a program of teacher preparation in the State that if based on scientifically based reading research;

a local educational and adult education provider; and a school library or a public library that offers reading or literacy programs for children or families. The participants include:

Reading First Leadership Team

Robert Ehrlich
Governor

Honorable Bennett Bozman
House Ways/Means Committee

Honorable Sheila Hixson
House Ways/Means Committee

Honorable Paula Hollinger
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Valerie Ashton-Holmes
MSDE, Even Start

Rolf Grafwallner
MSDE, Early Learning Branch

Judy Hickey
MSDE, Family Literacy

Bronda Mills
MSDE, Principal's Academy/Intervention

Maria Schaeffer
MSDE, Family Reading Plan

Dixie Stack
MSDE, Director of Curriculum

Teresa Ankney
Parent Advocacy Group for Educational Rights

Ms. Joanne Bogusko
*Harford County Public Schools
Forest Hill Elementary School*

Sherry Burcham
*Elementary Curriculum & Instruction
Calvert County Public Schools*

Nancy S. Grasmick
Chief State School Officer

Honorable Ulysses Currie
Budget and Taxation Committee

Honorable P. J. Hogan
Senate Budget/Taxation Committee

Honorable Howard P. Rawlings
Appropriations Committee

Patricia Bennett
MSDE, Adult Education

Sarah Hall
MSDE, Title I

Valerie Kaufmann
MSDE, Judith P. Hoyer Centers

Jayne Moore
MSDE, School Library Media

Fran Sorin
MSDE, Special Education/Early Intervention Services

Delores Alexander
Baltimore City Public Schools

Debbie Baker
*Harford County Public Schools
Magnolia Elementary School*

Fran Bowman
Maryland International Dyslexia Association

Jeffrey H. Cohen
President, Sylvan Education Solutions

Karen L. Cordell
Baltimore County Public Schools
Dogwood Elementary School

Liz Crosby
President, Maryland PTA

Debbie Drown
*Maryland Association of Elementary School
Principals*
German Crossing Elementary

Patricia Foerster
*President, Maryland State Teachers
Association*

Rochelle Ingram
Johns Hopkins University

Judy Johnston
Mt. Saint Mary's College

Theresa Lochte
*Speech Pathologist, Baltimore County Public
Schools – Catonsville High School*

Kathleen McMahon
Elementary Curriculum and Instruction
Baltimore County Public Schools

Louise Corwin
Ready at Five Partnership

Roger Dow
Frostburg State College

Marietta English
Baltimore Teachers Union

Debi Gartland
*Special Education, Towson University and
Council for Learning Disabilities*

Kathy Ira
*Maryland Adult Literacy Resource Center,
University of Maryland Baltimore County*

Marcia Larkins
Baltimore County Public Schools
Dogwood Elementary School

Marlene McLaurin
Baltimore Reads

Edna May Merson
*Council of Educational, Administrative, and
Supervisory Organizations of Maryland*

Thomasina Piercy
Carroll County Public Schools
Principal, Mt. Airy Elementary School

Karabelle Pizzigati
Maryland State Board of Education

Debbie Shulman
Parent Representative

Sandy Skolnik
Maryland Committee for Children

June Streckfus
Maryland Business Roundtable for Education

II C. State Management Plan

A Sufficient and Qualified Staff for MRFI

➤ *Director of Reading First*

The Director of the MSDE Office of Reading First, Gertrude Collier, is accountable for ensuring that the MRFI addresses all federal programmatic and financial requirements. Formerly, a key person in designing Maryland assessments and K-12 literacy initiatives and co-leader in developing Maryland's essential curriculum, Ms. Collier has been identified by the State Superintendent of Schools as a lead person for the Reading First grant proposal. In that capacity, she is creating an infrastructure within MSDE to augment staff knowledge in SBRR and to ensure that SBRR is fully understood and described coherently within all components of Maryland's revised plan.

To that effect, she is working with the MSDE Executive Team of Assistant State Superintendents to identify within MSDE ranks key professional staff to serve on the MRFI Management Team and to guarantee clear communication about MRFI within MSDE and across the state. A certified teacher of Reading, K-12, she has participated in training events conducted by Dr. Louisa Moats (LETRS- Modules 7-9), and Drs. Edward Kame'enui, Deborah Simmons, and Roland Good III (Institutes on Beginning Reading-IBR- for High Quality Professional Development-HQPD). As Director, Office of Reading First, she is currently working with LEA Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Instruction as well as other educators and stakeholders to build awareness of SBRR statewide. In her continuing function as Director, Office of Reading First, Ms. Collier will assume the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that the MRFI meets all federal programmatic and financial requirements and fit into a cohesive plan.
- Administer the subgrant competition, ensuring that coordinated technical assistance is delivered to eligible schools and school systems.
- Approve all expenditures and monitor budgets.
- Arrange for national experts to provide intense professional development in SBRR and oversee the implementation of statewide professional development in SBRR.
- Provide primary staff assistance to the statewide team using Kame'enui and Simmons protocol for identifying core, supplemental, and intervention programs meeting SBRR criteria.
- Plan collaboratively with representatives from eligible LEAs to plan and schedule DIBELS training and SBRR professional development for central office personnel, principals, and teachers involved in Reading First activities.
- Facilitate meetings of the State Reading Literacy Team to provide updates and solicit recommendations for continuous improvement of project deliverables.

- Promote academies and other forums for building awareness of SBRR and its applications for all K-3 teachers in the state.
- Collaborate with state and national evaluators to ensure impact data is accurate and complete.
- Represent the MRFI at all federally-sponsored meetings and technical assistance meetings.
- Provide direct supervision to the Coordinator of Reading First, the Reading First Assessment Specialist, the Reading First Teacher Quality Coordinator, eight Reading First Regional Specialists, and office technical support personnel.

➤ *Coordinator of Reading First*

Ms. Michele Goady, formerly Language Development Coordinator, has assumed full-time daily operational management of MRFI. In corporate terms, Ms. Goady is Chief Operating Officer while Ms. Collier is Chief Executive Officer. In her five years of previous experience directing reading efforts in Maryland, she has had primary responsibility for developing Maryland's essential curriculum in reading, assuring standards/assessment alignment of the MSA assessment, coordinating the Maryland Reading Networks, and aligning the Maryland Family Reading Plan with content standards and indicators. Ms. Goady is also a Faculty Associate with Johns Hopkins University and teaches the essential reading courses for Maryland state certification. Ms. Goady has participated in state level team training for Institutes on Beginning Reading (IBR) for High Quality Professional Development (HQPD) in Eugene, Ore., conducted by Drs. Kame'enui, Simmons, and Good. Currently, Ms. Goady's role rests in verifying that Maryland's essential curriculum in reading aligns to SBRR as presented in the National Goals Panel Report. In her continuing function as the Coordinator of Reading First, Ms. Goady will assume the following responsibilities:

- Manage the delivery of technical assistance to Reading First systems and schools that builds LEA capacity to produce successful subgrant applications.
- Manage the delivery of direct technical assistance to Reading First LEA systems and schools that correlates professional development in SBRR to Maryland's essential curriculum.
- Provide technical assistance to Reading First schools that connect SBRR to Maryland's outcome assessment tool, SAT 10.
- Ensure LEA compliance of subgrants to Reading First requirements, project schedules, and quality assurance standards.
- Assist the Director in planning, implementing and evaluating professional development in SBRR offered to all Maryland K-3 teachers and K-12 special education teachers during the six year project.
- Organize during year one a fall Research Forum on SBRR.
- Ensure that MRFI activities prepare teachers in the five essential components of reading
- Serve as liaison between MSDE and the LEAs in guaranteeing immediate response to problems, issues, or implementation barriers.
- Arrange program and logistics for annual academies on SBRR for teachers and leadership in managing SBRR for principals.
- Track subgrants, offering technical assistance to LEAs to ensure that budget activities adhere to federal and state requirements.
- Verify that all contracts, purchase orders, and reimbursements meet state guidelines
- Report regularly to the Director regarding whether LEA implemented activities are effective in achieving the purposes of Reading First.
- Coordinate the processing and analysis of impact data.
- Attend meetings of the State Leadership Team to report on the status of coordinated project activities.

➤ *Reading First Assessment Specialist*

The Reading First Assessment Specialist, Karen Shavin, will provide focused technical assistance and professional development to MSDE Reading First Regional Specialists and LEA school based Reading Coaches on SBRR classroom assessment. Ms. Shavin brings to her position eight years of project administration focused on early literacy. During April 2003 in Toronto, Ms. Shavin participated in training on "The New Research on Reading: Implications for Assessment and Intervention" with Dr. Joseph Torgensen and the DIBELS Benchmark Assessment with Dr. Roland Good III. In addition, she was a member of the state team that benefited from the LETRS Training (modules 7-9) in Boulder, Co. with Dr. Louisa Moats and the state team training for the Institutes on Beginning Reading (IBR) for High Quality Professional Development (HQPD) with Drs. Kame'enui, Simmons, and Good in Eugene, Ore., both of which highlighted classroom-based assessment. Currently, Ms. Shavin is designing the professional development in SBRR assessment that will be provided to Reading First districts and school staff. In her continuing function as Reading First Assessment Specialist, Ms. Shavin will assume the following responsibilities:

- Oversee all project assessment activities.
- Coordinate assessment activities with Director of Reading First, MSDE Division of Planning, Results, and Information Management (PRIM) and contracted vendor for evaluation.
- Ensure that districts and schools adhere to timetables for evaluative data collection
- Ensure that MRFI assessments have been approved by the National Reading Assessment Committee or meet the criteria established by the committee.
- Provide technical assistance during the subgrant proposal writing to build LEA capacity for detailing assessment schedules that meet publisher, state, and federal requirements.
- Provide focused training on DIBELS to district staff and teachers in Reading First schools.
- Provide technical assistance to Reading First Regional Specialists, in-school coaches, and teachers in scheduling and managing the DIBELS Screening and DIBELS Benchmark assessments.
- Offer guidance to Reading First Regional Specialists, in-school coaches, and teachers in evaluating class and individual student progress.
- Confer with coaches and teachers to identify appropriate diagnostic tests for students who are not succeeding.
- Provide guidance to principals and teachers in data-driven decision making based on DIBELS.
- Identify appropriate intervention for students who are not achieving well within the core reading program.
- Share information about DIBELS and SBRR assessment practices with representatives from non-Reading First schools.
- Attend meetings of the State Leadership Team to report on the status of classroom-based assessment delivery.

➤ *Reading First Teacher Quality Coordinator*

Dr. Cheryl Wittmann has dedicated the past thirty-three years to the field of education. She is currently working as the Facilitator of Quality Enhancement for the Program Approval and Assessment Branch of the Division of Certification and Accreditation at MSDE. Her background includes advanced degrees in reading as well as teacher professional development. She has extensive experience working with IHEs in Maryland. In her function as the Reading First Teacher Quality Coordinator, Dr. Wittmann will assume the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate State revision of guidelines for reading courses that incorporate SBRR and correlate to credit requirements for teacher certification at all two-year and four-year Maryland IHEs and continuing education.
- Serve as primary liaison in reading between MSDE and IHEs.
- Develop recommendations for new content and sequence in reading programs for pre-service and in-service teachers.

- Communicate SBRR expectations in all revised reading courses to all IHEs and LEAs.
- Attend meetings of the State Leadership Team to report on the status of professional development offered by IHEs and through LEA continuing education.

➤ *Reading First Regional Specialists*

Eight MSDE Reading First Regional Specialists will be funded by the grant. The specialists will be employed by MSDE, but will be housed in the districts and/or regions close to schools that they will serve. Deployment of the specialists enumerated below is based on providing the best service to schools funded in each eligible school system: Baltimore City (3); Baltimore County (1); Montgomery County (1); Prince George's County (1); Allegany and Garrett Counties (1); and Dorchester, Worcester, and Somerset Counties (1). They will provide direct, on-site support to district Reading Coordinators, Reading First Project Administrators, and teachers. Maryland's subgrant application will require eligible LEAs to provide adequate secretarial support on-site so that Specialists can be assured of efficient communication and timely preparation of materials for instructional support and professional development.

Once grant funds are received, the Specialists will be hired according to state human resources guidelines for hiring contractual and reimbursable employees. The Reading First Regional Specialists will assume the following responsibilities:

- Provide technical assistance to central office staff and principals to identify concerns about project implementation and collaborate with key staff to resolve problems immediately.
- Schedule and deliver professional development to administrators and teachers, illustrating effective use of core reading programs and modeling SBRR strategies.
- Meet twice a month in their assigned regions or at MSDE with the Director, Coordinator, and/or the Assessment Specialist to seek clarity on program implementation and to provide data and anecdotal evaluative input re: program success.
- Meet once a month as the cadre of Reading First Regional Specialists to augment knowledge of SBRR, share strategies for working successfully with LEA personnel, and offer suggestions to improve quality of service.
- Conduct annual surveys to determine staff knowledge in the five components of reading.
- Plan with Reading Coordinators, Project Administrators, and coaches to procure consultative services of experts to deliver professional development in SBRR.
- Coordinate, monitor, and provide professional development in SBRR for principals and teachers that addresses second language learners and the inclusion of students with identified language-based learning disabilities.
- Meet with the Assessment Specialist, coaches and teachers to coordinate and monitor an ongoing program of classroom-based assessment and analysis of student performance levels measured on DIBELS or on approved diagnostic tests.
- Guide school based staff in data-based decisions affecting modifications to instruction and plans for professional development.
- Write semi-annual reports documenting the implementation of Reading First in assigned districts and schools including, but not limited to, the following: selection of SBRR core reading programs; implementation of DIBELS; selection of SBRR diagnostic assessments; coordination of professional development; successful instructional strategies; student impact data re: DIBELS, SAT 10, and MSA; barriers to project success; conflict resolution strategies.
- Coordinate with Specialists, coaches, and evaluation vendor schedules for data collection
- Attend meetings of the State Reading Literacy Team to report from the field on the current status of MRFI implementation.
- Represent the goals and competencies of the MRFI to parents, local media, and stakeholders.

Coordination Among Literacy Programs in the State

Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, strongly supports the findings of SBRR and its potential for raising the reading achievement statewide. In creating the Office of Reading First, directly under her administrative supervision, Dr. Grasmick has signaled a redirection in state efforts in beginning reading instruction based on the principles of SBRR.

The Office of Reading First provides immediate linkage and communication among the following MSDE divisions: Instruction; Student and School Services; Special Education; Leadership Development; Planning, Results, and Information Management; Library Development and Services; Academic Policy; and Certification and Accreditation. The Office of Reading First occupies a high profile position within MSDE, and its Director, is creating an infrastructure within the Department to augment MSDE staff knowledge, and through MSDE staff, LEA staff knowledge in SBRR.

The modules for the Maryland Institute's on Beginning Reading (MIBR's) will first be offered to MSDE staff from the above divisions who are identified by their supervisors as leading programs impacting early reading literacy. Thus equipped with augmented knowledge of SBRR, MSDE trained staff will be able to infuse SBRR principles for selecting reading programs, instructional strategies, and assessments in the technical assistance and professional development they currently deliver in fulfilling customary job duty requirements in their divisions and school systems.

Examples of audiences MSDE staff typically meet with on a regular basis include, but are not limited to the following: LEA Superintendents; Assistant Superintendents for Instruction; Coordinators of Reading, Early Childhood, Special Education, Bilingual Education; Local Accountability Coordinators; Staff Development Directors; School Library Media Directors; Deans and Directors of Colleges of Teacher Education; Directors of Public Libraries, Title I Committee of Practitioners; and elementary school principals. Coordination of literacy efforts will be achieved as a result of the SBRR knowledge that MSDE and LEA staff will incorporate in agendas, initiatives, and products.

State Management Plan Timeline/Goals and Benchmarks

The Office of Reading First and the Department Management Team has created a timeline to ensure successful implementation of each step in the Reading First plan for the first year of grant implementation. The detailed timeline of activities is provided below and serves as a summary of what has been described throughout this proposal. As the project is implemented the Office of Reading First and the Department Management Team will continue to develop and assess detailed timelines to ensure that reach project goals and outcomes are met.

Month	Activity	Person Responsible
March 2002-December 1, 2002	Identified Stanford 10 (SAT 10) as the core reading component for the Maryland School Assessment (MSA)	State Leadership Team
	Identified DIBELS as the screening and progress monitoring assessments for Reading First K-3 classrooms	Maryland Management Team
	1st Meeting of the State Leadership Team-pre grant approval	Maryland Management Team
March 2003	2nd Meeting of the State Leadership Team-pre grant approval	Maryland Management Team
April 2003	Meeting of LEA Superintendents re: requirements for MD application for funding	State Superintendent of Schools
	Meeting of LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction re: SBRR and commitment to MRFI	Maryland Management Team
	Meeting of State Board of Education re: requirements for MD application for funding	State Superintendent of Schools
	“New Research on Reading: Implications for Assessment and Intervention”; “Assessment of Big Ideas in Reading” (Toronto, CAN)	Maryland Management Team Representatives
May 2003	Creation of the MSDE Office of Reading First	State Superintendent of Schools
	LETRS Institute for Trainers (Mod 7-9) (Boulder, CO)	MSDE Office of Reading First/DOI Representatives
	High Quality Professional Development in Beginning of Reading-Phase I (Eugene, OR)	7 Person State Team

June 2003	Institute on Beginning Reading (IBR) (Eugene, OR)	Office of Reading First, Reading First Coordinator
June 17, 2003	Meeting of Reading First Sub-Committee of Maryland State Board of Education	MSDE Liaison to State Board; Deputy Superintendent, Office of Academic Policy
	Re-submission of application for funding	Office of Reading First
July 10-11, 2003	Meeting re: RMC, Inc. Technical Assistance for SEA Reading First Directors (Chicago, IL)	Director of Reading First Coordinator of Reading First
July-August 2003	Planning with Drs. Deborah Simmons and Michael Coyne re: training of MD LSS representatives in selection of core reading programs	Office of Reading First
	Prepare public notice of availability of sub-grants	Office of Reading First
	Hold initial meeting of eligible LEAs re: sub-grant personnel requirements	Office of Reading First
	Prepare training materials for MRFI proposal preparation workshops	Office of Reading First
	Review application guidelines presented in proposal and prepare them to be sent to MRFI-eligible school systems	Office of Reading First
	Hire 8 Regional Reading Specialists to support local implementation, professional development and evaluation services	Office of Reading First
	Orient newly hired regional specialists to MRFI	Office of Reading First Director, Coordinator, Assessment Specialist
	Initiate planning for October Research Forum	Office of Reading First
	Hold meeting of MSDE Evaluation Team	Office of Reading First
September 2003	Conduct proposal preparation Workshop 1	Office of Reading First
	Hold 1 st bimonthly meeting of Dept Management Team	Office of Reading First
	Hold 1 st meeting of State	Office of Reading First

	Reading Leadership Team-post grant approval	
	Release RFP for outside evaluator	Office of Reading First
September-October 2003	Representatives from 24 LEAs receive training from Dr. Coyne and colleagues and begin process of selecting core reading programs based on "A Consumer's Guide"	Office of Reading First
October 2003	Hold Research Forum on Large Scale Implementation of SBRR and Introduction of MD Reading Framework	Office of Reading First
	Design and Conduct proposal preparation Workshop 2	Office of Reading First
	Hold meeting of State Leadership Team sub-committee to establish procedures and protocol for sub-grant evaluation	Office of Reading First
	Identify Outside Evaluator	Office of Reading First
October-December 2003	LETRS Training (Modules 1-6)	Office of Reading First
	Present MRFI update at administrative briefings of LEA Assist. Supts. for Instruction and Reading/ELA Supervisors	Office of Reading First
November 2003	CEASOM Conference "Reading is the Next Civil Right"	MSDE and CEASOM Cosponsors
	Design and Conduct Proposal Preparation Workshop 3	Office of Reading First
	Post on MSDE Website "Fall 2003 Maryland Approved Core Reading Programs"	Office of Reading First/Office of School and Community Outreach
November 2003 (continued)	Design and conduct Selecting and Implementing Core Reading Program Workshop 1	Office of Reading First
	Hold 2 nd bimonthly meeting of Dept. Management Team	Office of Reading First
	Meet with outside evaluator	Office of Reading First; Representatives from MSDE Evaluation Team
November 2003-February	Mentoring and Technical	RF Regional Specialists

2004	Assistance re: Proposal Preparation	
November 2003-March 2004	Design and conduct MIBR modules in components of SBRR to MSDE staff, IHE representatives, and LSS central office staff	Office of Reading First
December 2003	Conduct Selecting and Implementing Core Reading Program Workshop 2	Office of Reading First
	Identify review panels for LSS and school proposals	Office of Reading First
January 2004	LETRS Training (Mod 7-9)	Office of Reading First
	Train review panels re: MD rubric	Office of Reading First
	Hold 3rd bimonthly meeting of Dept Management Team	Office of Reading First
January -February 2004	Review panels initiate rating proposals and provide on-site inspection of proposed RF locations; proposals evaluated	Office of Reading First
	Hold meeting of State Leadership Team	Office of Reading First
February 2004	DIBELS Training from Roland Good	Office of Reading First
February-May 2004	Revise MIBR modules in SBRR and prepare materials, arrange logistics for summer regional MIBRs; prepare materials for training meeting of RF principals and coaches	Office of Reading First

March 2004	Census Administration of MSA (SAT 10) in grade 3	Local School Systems
	Notify successful LEAs and RF schools	Office of Reading First
	Hold 4 th bimonthly meeting of Dept Management Team	Office of Reading First
March-May 2004	Provide initial training in SBRR for RF principals and in-school coaches	Office of Reading First
March-August 2004	Provide intensive technical assistance in SBRR to non-successful LEAs and schools	Office of Reading First
	Hold meetings of IHE and LEA representatives to revise reading course guidelines	Reading First Teacher Quality Specialist
May 2004	Hold meeting of State Leadership Team	Office of Reading First
	Hold 5 th bimonthly meeting of Dept Management Team	Office of Reading First
June/July 2004	Conduct 4 Regional MIBRs	Office of Reading First Regional Reading Specialists In-School Coaches Principals
	Disseminate revised reading course guidelines	Office of Reading First; Division of Certification and Accreditation
	Hold meeting of State Evaluation Team	Office of Reading First
July 2004	Hold 6 th bimonthly meeting of Dept Management Team	Office of Reading First

Sufficient Allocation of Resources and MRFI Budget

Maryland's Reading First budget is detailed for 2003-2004 (year one) and for 2004-2005 (year two) based on the implementation requirements of the project as outlined in the federal rubric. Year one outlines specific amounts based on an allocation of \$11,345,141 and year two is based on the increased projected allocation of \$12,604,826. From these amounts 80% will be allocated for competitive subgrants in the eligible LEAs. Detailed budgets for years 3-6 will be provided as project implementation is evaluated and reported to USDOE.

By funding approximately 35- 40 schools, Maryland will be able to provide subgrants averaging in the amount of \$225,000 per school. Schools that currently do not have a core reading program in place may need this amount and more. At the same time, there may be some schools that will not need the full amount. Schools may already be implementing a core scientifically based reading program or may be using local funding for a reading coach. In these cases school grants may vary in size and scope.

MARYLAND'S READING FIRST
Year 1 Budget

Total allocation:	\$11,345,141
Local allocation:	\$ 9,076,113
State allocation:	\$2,269,028
Professional development (65%)	\$1,474,868
Technical Assistance (25%)	\$567,257
Administration (10%)	\$226,903

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
1. Personnel				
Director of Reading First Office	35% 31,237	40% 35,700	25% 22,312	89,249
Coordinator of Reading	65% 46,080	25% 17,724	10% 7,089	70,893
Assessment Specialist	25% 18,271	65% 47,525	10% 7,311	73,107
Reading First Regional Specialist (x8)	70% 46,442 371,536	25% 16,586 132,688	5% 3,318 26,544	66,346 530,768
Teacher Quality Specialist			59,000	59,000
Administrative Assistant			37,009	37,009
Total Personnel	467,124	233,637	159,265	860,026
2. Fringe Benefits				
	55,894	21,498	8,599	85,991
Total Fringe Benefits	55,894	21,498	8,599	85,991

Year 1 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
3. Travel				
In state travel for 8 Reading First Regional Specialist 400 miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	8,486	3,264	1,306	13,056
In state travel for Office of Reading First Staff Director of Reading First 400 miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	1,061	408	163	1,632
In state travel for Project Coordinator and Assessment Specialist 600miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	3,182	1,224	490	4,896
In state travel for Teacher Quality Specialist 200/month at .34/mile for 12 months		816		816
Out of state travel for Reading First staff to attend conferences	6,000			6,000
Total Travel	18,729	5,712	1,959	26,400
4. Equipment				
Fax/copier machine			700	700
Printer			250	250
Laptops 9 @\$2,300 each			20,700	20,700
Total Equipment			21,650	21,650
5. Supplies				
Professional development materials provided to Reading First Regional Specialists and Reading First staff including publication subscriptions and resource books	38,000			38,000
Total Supplies	38,000			38,000

Year 1 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
6. Contractual				
Contract with Sopris West for the services of Louisa Moats and Letrs training including 9 days of training for Reading First Reading Specialists, Reading Coaches, LEA Central Office Reading Coordinators and IHE representatives	75,000			75,000
Reading First Regional Specialists, Coaches, LEA and IHE representatives trained in LETRS, budget including allocations for travel, meals, accommodations and materials	148,464			148,464
Contract with Roland Good to provide professional development on DIBELS to Reading First Regional Specialists and Coaches	16,000			16,000
Contract with Michael Coyne to provide technical assistance in the development of a Maryland Approved Reading Program List		8,500		8,500
Contract with Tim Shanahan to provide technical assistance with the subgrant review process		6,000		6,000
Facilities cost for technical assistance meetings including materials and supplies		17,000		17,000
Development and implementation of the MIBR including stipends, meals, travel, accommodations, materials, equipment, copying and supplies	406,422			406,422
Speakers fees for Reading Research Forum and Fall Leadership Conference	21,000			21,000
Contract for evaluation services measuring LEA project implementation and professional development services		110,000		110,000
Contract for diagnostic testing/services		102,328		102,328
Contract for the development of on-line courses in SBRR and Core Reading Programs	10,000			10,000
Facilities contract for forum and conference expenses including meals, travel, materials and supplies	50,000			50,000
Total Contractual	726,886	243,828		970,714

Year 1 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
7. Construction				
Total Construction				
8. Other				
Cost associated with the establishment of the Reading First office			10,655	10,655
Printing costs for publication	6,000			6,000
Total Other	6,000		10,655	16,655
9. Indirect Cost negotiated with USDE at 11%	162,235	62,398	24,959	249,592
10. Total Costs	1,474,868	567,257	226,903	2,269,028
Total Allocation	1,474,868	567,257	226,903	2,269,028

MARYLAND'S READING FIRST
Year 2 Budget

Total allocation:	\$12,604,826
Local allocation:	\$10,083,969
State allocation:	\$2,520,857
Professional development (65%)	\$1,638,557
Technical Assistance (25%)	\$630,214
Administration (10%)	\$252,086

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
1. Personnel				
Director of Reading First Office	35% 31,237	40% 35,700	25% 22,312	89,249
Coordinator of Reading	65% 46,080	25% 17,724	10% 7,089	70,893
Assessment Specialist	25% 18,271	65% 47,525	10% 7,311	73,107
Reading First Regional Specialist (x8)	70% 46,442 371,536	25% 16,586 132,688	5% 3,318 26,544	66,346 530,768
Teacher Quality Specialist			59,000	59,000
Administrative Assistant			37,009	37,009
Total Personnel	467,124	233,637	159,265	860,026
2. Fringe Benefits				
	55,894	21,498	8,599	85,991
Total Fringe Benefits	55,894	21,498	8,599	85,991

Year 2 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
3. Travel				
In state travel for 8 Reading First Regional Specialist 400 miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	8,486	3,264	1,306	13,056
In state travel for Office of Reading First Staff Director of Reading First 400 miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	1,061	408	163	1,632
In state travel for Project Coordinator and Assessment Specialist 600miles/month at .34/mile for 12 months	3,182	1,224	490	4,896
In state travel for Teacher Quality Specialist 200/month at .34/mile for 12 months		816		816
Out of state travel for Reading First staff to attend conferences	6,000			6,000
Total Travel	18,729	5,712	1,959	26,400
4. Equipment				
Maintenance and repair for equipment			4,000	4,000
Total Equipment			4,000	4,000
5. Supplies				
Professional development materials provided to Reading First Regional Specialists and Reading First staff including publication subscriptions and resource books	55,000			55,000
Total Supplies	55,000			55,000

Year 2 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
6. Contractual				
Contract with Sopris West for additional professional development services to support SBRR and project implementation	75,000			75,000
Contract with Michael Coyne to provide technical assistance in the development of a Maryland Approved Reading Program List		9,000		9,000
Facilities cost for technical assistance meetings including materials and supplies		50,000		50,000
Expansion of the MIBR to Title I schools not meeting AYP including stipends, meals, travel, accommodations, materials, equipment, copying and supplies	646,569			646,569
Speakers fees for Reading Research Forum and Fall Leadership Conference	30,000			30,000
Contract for evaluation services measuring LEA project implementation and professional development services		110,000		110,000
Contract for diagnostic testing and services		131,044		131,044
Contract for the development of on-line courses in SBRR and Core Reading Programs	30,000			30,000
Facilities contract for forum and conference expenses including meals, travel, materials and supplies	70,000			70,000
Web design contract			40,000	40,000
Total Contractual	851,569	300,044	40,000	1,191,613

Year 2 Budget (Continued)

Item	PD	TA	Admin	Total
7. Construction				
Total Construction				
8. Other				
Maintenance of Reading First Office			8,500	8,500
Printing costs for publication	10,000		2,034	12,034
Total Other	10,000		10,534	20,534
9. Indirect Cost negotiated with USDE at 11%	180,241	69,323	27,729	277,293
10. Total Costs	1,638,557	630,214	252,086	2,520,857
Total Allocation	1,638,557	630,214	252,086	2,520,857

III. STATE REPORTING AND EVALUATION

III A. Evaluation Strategies

The Maryland Reading First Initiative evaluation plan is designed to look at all schools that receive Reading First funds. The purpose is two fold: to monitor for the purpose of planning interventions that lead to successful outcomes for children and to monitor to assure compliance with the terms of the grant. In addition to these purposes, a comparison study will determine if the Maryland Reading First Initiative is responsible for changes in reading achievement in Maryland.

Plan to regularly evaluate the progress participating LEAs are making in improving reading achievement.

The Maryland Reading First Initiative, in an effort to assure that all children are reading by grade three, will monitor and evaluate the progress of all Reading First schools. Progress according to the DIBELS assessments and the SAT 10 will be used to monitor schools in addition to monitoring individual students. This information, an important link in the school improvement process, will be used by Reading First Regional Specialists to determine appropriate interventions for individual schools. It will also be used by SEA staff to monitor LEA progress. In third grade, AYP will determine if LEAs are improving reading achievement.

In grades one and two, the outcome assessment, SAT 10, will be used to determine if LEAs and Reading First schools are making progress in reading achievement. Schools will be expected to demonstrate significant progress in reading for all disaggregated student subpopulations.

MRFI will initiate the following six steps for intervention when data indicates that Reading First schools are not making required progress:

Step 1: Review of Data

During July of each year, MRFI Management and Evaluation Committees will review assessment data and information collected from Reading First Regional specialists re: program compliance for schools in question.

Step 2: Notice of Deficiency

During August of each year, the Office of Reading First will use the data review to generate a Notice of Deficiency for each school not making progress that specifies areas of weakness, compliance issues required, and available national, state, and local SBRR resources for support.

Step 3: Corrective Action

Beginning in September of each year, Identified Reading First schools will be required to generate a plan of action within 30 days that outlines measures it will undertake to correct specific weaknesses, comply with program requirements, and improve student achievement.

Step 4: Timeline

The State Leadership Team will review and approve the Corrective Action Plans during October of each year. Reading First schools will implement the plans. Students will be reassessed in May of each year. The MRFI Management and Evaluation Committees will review data to determine identified schools' progress or lack of progress.

Step 5: Recommendation to the State Superintendent

Based on the data review, the Office of Reading First will report to the State Superintendent of Schools on the progress of identified schools. The Office of Reading First will make the following recommendations:

1. Identified schools have made significant progress and can be released from corrective action
2. Identified schools have made limited progress and should remain in corrective action
3. Identified schools have not made significant progress and should have their funds discontinued.

Step 6: State Board of Education

The State Superintendent of Schools will confer with the State Board of Education regarding the discontinuation of funding for Reading First schools not making significant progress.

In addition, MRFI will use the following research questions to determine the extent to which Reading First has impacted reading achievement.

➤ *Evaluation Questions*

Using the data collected with these measures, the Evaluation Team, in collaboration with the outside evaluator, will address the following major questions related to the impact of the MRFI on student outcomes:

1. Are increasing percentages of K-3 students in schools receiving Reading First funds reaching “Benchmark” on DIBELS measures?
2. How well are Maryland’s K-3 Reading First schools meeting AYP and to what extent is performance improving over time?
3. How effective were professional development activities in improving classroom instruction?

State plan to contract with a provider that conducts scientifically based reading research to evaluate and report on its Reading First program.

MSDE, following State procurement procedures, will issue an RFP (see Appendix E for draft) to identify a qualified provider to evaluate the data collected for purposes of evaluation. This data will include DIBELS and SAT 10 test results, teacher general knowledge, pre- and post-tests of teacher knowledge of early literacy instruction, and professional development activities. It will also include demographic information, described in the next section.

Timeline for conduction of the evaluation and description of the valid and reliable measures and instruments that will be used to assess reading achievement.

➤ Documenting Student Progress and Outcomes

The purpose of this part of the evaluation plan is to generate valid and reliable data regarding the effectiveness of the SEA and LEA Reading First initiatives. The focus is on student outcomes.

Each LEA that receives a subgrant will be required to administer DIBELS Screening Assessments and SAT 10 according to the Evaluation Timeline on the following page. All Maryland schools are required to administer in grade 3 the Maryland School Assessment that incorporates SAT 10.

For the purpose of this study, ten (10) schools receiving Reading First funding will be matched with ten control group schools not receiving Reading First funding. Schools will be matched according to demographic characteristics, including student population; student race/ethnicity profile; student SES; student-faculty ratio in grades K-3; number of ESL students; number of special education students. All K-3 students in the 20 schools will be tested using DIBELS and SAT 10 as indicated in the Evaluation Timeline on the following page:

Evaluation Timeline

Grade	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Fluency	Vocabulary	Text Comprehension
K	DIBELS (F/W)-Initial Sound Fluency	DIBELS (F/W/S)-Letter Naming (W/S)-Phoneme Segmentation; Nonsense Word			
1	DIBELS (F)-Letter Naming	DIBELS (F/W/S)-Phoneme Segmentation; Nonsense Word	DIBELS (W/S)-Oral Reading	SAT 10 (S)	SAT 10 (S)
2		DIBELS (F)-Nonsense Word	DIBELS (F/W/S)-Oral Reading	SAT 10 (S)	SAT 10 (S)
3			DIBELS (F/W/S)-Oral Reading	SAT 10 (S)	SAT 10 (S)

KEY: F=Fall W=Winter S=Spring

Use of the evaluation data for program improvement: Each year, a combination of measures from the DIBELS assessments and the SAT 10 will be used as the primary indicators of gains made among the 10 MRF schools as compared to the 10 non-MRF schools. Univariate and multivariate analysis of covariance (controlling for demographic characteristics, as needed) will be used to determine differences between the two groups. In addition, because there are multiple measures of achievement throughout the year, Maryland will be able to employ growth curve methodology to examine growth over time as compared to baseline. Where possible, we will also use hierarchical linear modeling, which takes into account the nested nature of instruction (i.e., within classrooms, schools, districts) to examine student outcomes.

An important aspect of MRFI will be not only to determine growth by using SBRR in and across MRF schools, but also to examine growth among different subgroups receiving instruction based on SBRR. Disaggregated data will be analyzed to examine progress by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, etc.

Teachers in each of the 10 MRF and 10 non-MRF schools will collect DIBELS and SAT 10 data according to the schedule. School based reading coaches at MRF schools and Reading First Regional Specialists at the non-MRF schools will enter the data into the DIBELS database. An RFP will be issued to contract for a consultant to analyze the data. Once the information is evaluated, a State evaluation team will make decisions based on the evaluation.

The State evaluation team that will coordinate the ongoing evaluation process includes members with expertise in project implementation, reading assessments, and data analysis. Mr. Gary Heath, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Planning, Results, and Information Management (PRIM), leads the evaluation

team. Mr. Heath has extensive experience in large-scale assessment and progress monitoring. He is currently responsible for the development of the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), the alignment of state assessments to content standards required by NCLB, and the development of proficiency standards for all state tests. Under Mr. Heath's leadership, the evaluation team will ensure the timely interpretation of assessment results at each level of the MRFI and lead discussions concerning mid-course adjustments to guarantee that all children will be reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

The evaluation team includes:

- Mr. Gary Heath, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of PRIM, MSDE
- Dr. Jesse Pollack, Educational Coordinator, Measurement and Research, MSDE
- Dr. Cheryl L. Wittmann, Professional Development School Facilitator, MSDE
- Dr. Sandra Wallis, Professor, Goucher College, Towson, Maryland
- Dr. Laurie Cutting, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine/Johns Hopkins University/Kennedy Krieger Institute
- Ms. Ann Mintz, Instructional Coordinator, Elementary Language Arts, Howard County Public Schools
- Ms. Carol Hepler, Principal, Fountain Green Elementary School, Harford County Public Schools

➤ *Impact of Professional Development*

The purpose of this part of the evaluation plan is to generate valid and reliable data to examine the effectiveness of the SEA and LEA Reading First initiatives on the professional development of teachers with regard to SBRR.

Each LEA that receives a subgrant will be required to administer assessment of teachers' linguistic knowledge two times per year, and their general knowledge one time per year (see Evaluation Timeline). To assess knowledge of language structure, teachers will be administered the Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling (TPERS) (Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001) in the fall and the Spring of each year. This survey assesses teachers' knowledge on explicit, code-based instruction and implicit, meaning-based or holistic instruction. Because teachers' general knowledge is often discussed as a link to student achievement (Bruschi & Coley, 1999; McCutchen, Harry, Cunningham, Cox, Sidman, & Covill, 2002), each fall teachers' general knowledge will be assessed using the test developed by Stanovich and Cunningham (1993). Finally, each fall Maryland will gather information on the number of years that teachers have been teaching, and ask teachers if they are new to the school in which they are teaching; this is for us to be able to track teacher attrition to determine if it is related to professional development and student outcomes.

The same 10 schools receiving Reading First funding and the 10 control group schools that are participating in the student outcomes component of the MRFI evaluation will be required to participate in this evaluation of professional development. All teachers in the 20 schools will be evaluated for their knowledge of SBRR and general knowledge as indicated in the Evaluation Timeline below:

Teachers for Grade:	Fall	Spring
K	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling• General Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling• General Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Perceptions Toward

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Reading and Spelling • General Knowledge 	Early Reading and Spelling
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling • General Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Perceptions Toward Early Reading and Spelling

In addition to the above examination of students, Maryland will randomly sample 10 first grade classrooms each year to observe teachers' general effectiveness. Observation will take place in the latter 2/3 of the school year after teachers have received professional development and had opportunities to implement these techniques in the classroom. We will do this by using the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS, 1984), a reliable instrument that has been used in other studies (Foorman & Schatschneider, in press).

➤ *Use of the evaluation data for assessment of teachers' growth:*

One of the most important components to MRFI will be to assess the teachers' growth in knowledge of SBRR, particularly as linked to student achievement. Maryland will conduct several types of analyses to examine relationships among different measures of teachers' linguistic knowledge, as well as student outcomes. The State will use within and between analyses of variance/covariance to examine change in teacher's linguistic knowledge from fall to spring. Regression analyses will be conducted to predict student outcomes from teachers' linguistic knowledge and general knowledge, as well as data generated from the TTAS (for the subselection of 1st grade teachers that will be observed). Such analyses will yield important information about the overall effectiveness of MRF in training a new cadre of teachers in SBRR, as well as positively influencing student outcomes.

Decisions related to Maryland Reading First programs will be made based on evaluation outcomes, including intervention with and/or discontinuation of LEAs not making significant progress.

Maryland Reading First programs will be held to the same accountability standards as all Maryland schools. Adequate Yearly Progress, as defined in Maryland's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook and approved by the USDE, will determine both intervention and discontinuation guidelines for MRFI schools. This plan is available online at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/CFP/csas/mdcsa.pdf>.

III B. State Reporting

The evaluation process is carefully designed to provide the data required for an annual report and a midpoint report. The annual report, submitted to USDE, will include information regarding implementation, achievement gains, program effectiveness, and statewide progress in reducing the number of students reading below grade level.

Annual implementation evidence will document that Maryland has met all program requirements and obligations related to project implementation and administration of the Reading First program. Maryland anticipates that this will be a narrative report which will include activities such as conducting the subgrant competition, monitoring and providing technical assistance to LEAs and building and maintaining statewide capacity to teach all children to read by the end of the third grade. Other relevant data from the outside evaluator may also be included.

Achievement gains will be included in the annual report that will name the LEAs and schools that are making the largest gains in reading achievement as measured by the Stanford 10 in grades K-3.

Program effectiveness will be reported in terms of the progress of MRFI LEAs and schools by the following: increased numbers of students in grades K-3 who meet "Benchmark" on DIBELS; are at grade level in comprehension on SAT in grades 1-2; and, reach Maryland's proficiency standard in reading at grade 3 on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) that incorporates SAT 10.

The annual report will describe the SEA's and LEAs progress in reducing the percentage of students reading below grade level and increasing the percentages of students reading at grade level or higher. These data will be reported for specific groups to include low-income students, racial/ethnic groups, LEP students and special education students. This progress report will be based on data from MSA. Maryland will submit the report from the outside evaluator to USDE as a supplement to the required annual report. All reports will protect the privacy of individuals.

The midpoint progress report will be submitted to USDE within 60 days of the end of the third year of the grant period. The midpoint report will indicate the progress that MRFI LEAs and schools by the following: increased numbers of students in grades 1-3 who meet "Benchmark" on DIBELS; are at grade level in comprehension on SAT in grades 1-2; and, reach Maryland's proficiency standard in reading at grade 3 on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) that incorporates SAT 10. The report will also indicate statewide progress in increasing the numbers of students who are reading at grade level or above, including the percentages of low-income students, racial/ethnic groups, LEP students, and special education students. The mid-point progress report will include names of LEAs and schools making the largest gains cumulatively at mid-point.

III C. Participation in National Evaluation

As part of the requirement for receiving MRFI funds, participating LEAs and MSDE will participate in the national evaluation of Reading First.

IV. CLASSROOM LEVEL IMPACT

Implementation of MRFI results in classrooms with characteristics proven through SBRR to be effective in teaching beginning reading. Key classroom characteristics are those that are most often associated with significant growth in student achievement. These elements are expected in all Reading First classrooms, regardless of the school location and demographics, and are summarized below.

IV A. Key Reading First Classroom Characteristics

Implementation of a high-quality reading program based on SBRR

In Maryland Reading First classrooms, high quality beginning reading programs result when the following conditions are evident:

- All children can learn to read by grade three when SBRR reading practices are designed, implemented, and sustained at a school-wide level.
- All teachers and reading coaches are highly qualified, knowledgeable about SBRR, and proficient in the appropriate instructional strategies.
- Ongoing professional development supports teacher competency.
- Building administrators understand SBRR and support the teaching teams.
- Instruction is prevention-oriented.
- Decisions are driven by objective assessment data.

Maryland Reading First schools have a set of strategic goals, identified in the Maryland Essential Curriculum, to guide student instruction. The Maryland Essential Curriculum in Reading specifies the content standards for the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) that are aligned with SBRR. The Essential Curriculum establishes clear reading and literacy goals and expectations for each grade. It defines what a child should know and be able to do. A core reading program, selected through careful analysis using the *Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program* by (Kame'enui and Simmons, 2003), will be aligned to these essential elements. Supplemental materials, based on SBRR, are chosen to fill gaps that might exist in the core reading program and offer additional instructional opportunities for children who need more practice. Intervention materials are selected to support skill development for children who fail to make progress with the core and supplementary program materials. These materials follow a systematic sequence in introducing skills. This sequence is based on SBRR.

Data-based decision making is a hallmark of Maryland Reading First schools. Assessment provides information on what to teach, when to teach it, and the effectiveness of the instruction. Teachers use individual child assessment data to plan effective instruction. Classroom assessment data identifies areas where improvement is necessary. Teachers are involved in professional development to address areas, as identified by classroom assessment data. Maryland Reading First schools show a commitment of resources for staff development.

Coherent instructional design

In the Reading First classrooms, teachers apply instructional strategies that are proven to be effective by SBRR and focus instruction on the five essential elements of beginning reading (phonological awareness,

phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension). Depending on the grade, skill emphasis and time on each skill varies. For example, phonics and phonemic awareness takes a significant amount of time in kindergarten and first grade while using minimal time in later grades; comprehension and fluency skills are emphasized more in second and third grade. The sequence of instruction builds from simple to complex and coordinates with the Maryland Essential Curriculum. For example, children will learn consonants before vowels; single consonants before digraphs; digraphs before blends; and, simple syllables having no blends before syllables with blends.

Ongoing use of assessments that inform instructional decisions

Integral to instruction in the Reading First classroom is assessment. Before teachers can plan instruction, they must identify what the child needs to learn. In September, after students are screened to determine if they are at risk for reading difficulty, teaching teams meet to make instructional decisions for each individual student. For most students, instruction with the core program supports growth in reading skills. Quarterly progress monitoring ensures that these students continue to progress toward benchmark expectations.

The DIBELS benchmark report includes a recommendation with respect to additional instructional support. Students whose screening and/or progress monitoring data indicate need for strategic intervention receive immediate support with supplementary SBRR materials. More frequent progress monitoring ensures that these students remain on track to meet reading outcomes. Students whose data indicate need for intensive intervention according to the benchmark report receive further diagnostic testing and focused SBRR instruction in their areas of deficiency. Instruction for these students is explicit, intense, and continues until the child meets benchmark goals on DIBELS progress monitoring assessments. Progress monitoring assessments for students needing intense intervention are weekly to ensure that instruction translates to learning. Frequent adjustments in instruction are made, based on assessment results, to get the student back on track in order to be a successful reader by the end of third grade.

Classroom assessment data also provides information about the effectiveness of the core program. Additional professional development and coaching is provided to teachers when the data shows insufficient progress. The general rule of thumb applied to evaluation of student achievement is as follows: if it is apparent that more than 20% of the children are failing to achieve benchmarks, the teacher, working with the in-school coach, makes adjustments in the implementation of the core reading program including the use of supplemental materials.

Protected, dedicated block of time for reading instruction

Every minute is important in helping children become readers. All schools are required to schedule a block of uninterrupted time for reading instruction in K-3 classrooms that is no less than 90 minutes every day. Teachers fill every minute of this time with strategies to support learning in the classroom. Some students will need even more time. These students may receive an additional 10-20 minutes of daily small group instruction focusing on assessed needs. Students with more intense needs are involved in an intervention program and may receive 20-60 minutes in additional classroom reading time.

Clear expectation for student reading achievement and clear strategies for progress monitoring

All children are expected to progress consistently from year to year in order to meet expected third grade outcomes. In Reading First schools, children in grades 1 and 2 take the SAT 10, and students in grade 3 take the MSA, which incorporates SAT 10. MRFI expects first and second grade children to read at grade level according to SAT 10. MRFI expects third grade children to meet grade level state proficiency standards on the MSA and for Reading First schools to meet standards for AYP. Outcome measures for individual student achievement in word study, vocabulary, and comprehension are reported.

Small group instruction and on-going assessment

All children receive instruction based on their individual needs during the 90 minute reading block. Small group instruction may revolve around phonemic awareness activities, phonics activities, oral reading, and comprehension skill development. Flexible grouping (one-on-one, pairs, small group, whole group), based on assessed needs, allows children who are working on the same skills to benefit from instruction and provides opportunities for students to be members of more than one group. Change in grouping sustains student interest and involvement and maximizes instruction by focusing on assessed needs.

Active student engagement

Student engagement is a natural result of flexible grouping. The teacher is able to adapt the pacing, content, and emphasis to meet the needs of the student. All students have opportunities to participate in interactive oral reading activities, games and partner activities. For example, in phonemic awareness, students may work in a small group to clap the syllables in words. In phonics, active student engagement may occur as children partner to blend sounds. They develop fluency through student-adult reading, oral reading, choral reading with a tape, reading with a partner and Reader's Theatre. Vocabulary grows as they discuss ideas in small groups. They increase comprehension when they retell what they have read.

Teachers receive training in using SBRR strategies from the in-school reading coaches. These coaches model strategies, co-plan lessons, and provide regular feedback to teachers for continuous improvement in implementing SBRR strategies.

SBRR intervention strategies designed to bring all children to grade level

Instruction is prevention oriented. All students receive good instruction through a variety of SBRR practices. Through screening and frequent progress monitoring, teachers identify students who are not making progress. Immediate and specific interventions are used to prevent reading failure. Highly trained and skilled teachers teach and re-teaches deficient skills through directed instruction in small groups and/or individual tutoring sessions. Using materials aligned with the core reading program and specific to a child's identified skill deficit, the teacher maintains the child's attention to the lesson. Strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting maintain student engagement. A student must be able to perform each identified task with a high level of accuracy before moving on to a new task.

To maintain student motivation, learning is reinforced in a highly consistent and rewarding manner. Corrective feedback ensures that the child internalizes only information that develops proficiency. Highly consistent, repetitive activities over an intense period of time translate to consistent, automatic, and rapid response patterns in the brain. Therefore, a teacher plans more difficult tasks when a student becomes fluent in an identified skill area. Thus, appropriate sequencing of foundational skills leads a student toward benchmark goals. Ultimately, the objective is to integrate the student into class instruction with the core reading program. Frequent progress monitoring with specific instructional support ensures that a student maintains gains and is on target for reading by grade 3.

IV B. Coherence

Federal requirements for funding under Reading First have provided stimulus for reading reform in Maryland based on SBRR. Sections I-IV of this application outline Maryland's effort to establish curricular, instructional, assessment, and professional development models in its Reading First schools that will be linked to a statewide framework promoting reading achievement.

All funded programs and activities are coordinated and descriptions of them contained within this application emphasize their immediate connection to research findings of the National Reading Panel in the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The implementation of core reading programs, classroom-based assessments, intervention strategies, and high quality professional development will provide much needed guidance, structure, and resources to classroom teachers in their effort to help beginning readers become proficient readers.

The narrative, graphics, and appendices contained herein have been organized to illustrate Maryland's unwavering commitment to SBRR and the integration of human, material, and financial resources in response to No Child Left Behind.

APPENDIX A

Summary of the Technical Adequacy of the DIBELS

Summary of the Technical Adequacy of the DIBELS

	Initial Sounds Fluency (ISF)¹	Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)²	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)³	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)⁴	Oral Reading Fluency (OnRF)⁵
Reliability	.72 (alternate-form reliability; January of kindergarten) .91 (average reliability from repeating the assessment four times)	.88 (1 month, alternate-form reliability, kindergarten)	.88 (two-week, alternate-form reliability) .79 (one-month, alternate-form reliability, May of kindergarten)	.83 (1 month, alternate-form reliability in January, first grade)	.72 (Alternate-form reliability, January of the kindergarten year) .91 (average reliability from repeating the assessment four times)
Concurrent criterion-related validity	.48 (DIBELS PSF, January, kindergarten); .36 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised Readiness Cluster score, kindergarten)	.70 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised Readiness Cluster score, kindergarten)	.54 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Readiness Cluster score, Spring, kindergarten)	.36 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised Readiness Cluster score, January, first grade) .59 (WJR Readiness Cluster score, February, first grade)	.48 (DIBELS PSF in January, kindergarten) .36 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Readiness Cluster score)
Predictive validity	.45 (CBM ORF, Spring of first grade) .36 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Total Reading Cluster score)	.65 (Spring of kindergarten; first grade Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery total Reading Cluster score) .71 (Spring of kindergarten; first-grade CBM reading)	.62 (Spring of kindergarten; winter-of-first-grade DIBELS NWF) .68 (Spring of kindergarten; Spring of first grade Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery total Reading Cluster score) .62 (Spring of kindergarten; Spring-of-first-grade CBM ORF)	.66 (January, first grade, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery total Reading Cluster score) .82 (January, First grade, CBM ORF, May first grade) .60 (January, First grade, CBM ORF, May second grade)	.45 (spring of first grade reading on CBM ORF) .36 (Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Total Reading Cluster score)

¹ <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/isf.php>

² <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/lnf.php>

³ <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/psf.php>

⁴ <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/wuf.php>

⁵ <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/orf.php>

APPENDIX B

Subgrant Selection Criteria

(See RFP)

APPENDIX C

Maryland Essential Curriculum

see

http://mdk12.org/share/vsc/VSC_english_grprek3.pdf

APPENDIX D

Résumé's

(on file at the Maryland State Department of Education)

APPENDIX E

Outside Evaluator Draft RFP

SPECIFICATIONS

2.1 BACKGROUND

The United States Department of Education awarded the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) a \$11,345,142 million grant under The Reading First State Grants (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1).

The grant will be used to improve the reading performance of Maryland's kindergarten through third graders living in poverty. MSDE will allocate funds to eligible school systems to support scientifically based reading instruction; classroom assessment of reading; and teacher professional development. Allocation of funds will be through a competitive sub-grant process. The following Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are eligible to compete for sub-grants: Allegany Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore County Public Schools, Dorchester County Public Schools, Garrett County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, Prince George's County Public Schools, Somerset County and Worcester County Public Schools.

This Reading First grant is authorized under Title I Sec. 1003(g) for formula grants to States for a new Assistance for Local School Improvement grant program. States, in turn, make subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) to support school improvement activities under section 1116 of Part A of Title I. Allocations to States are based on current-year shares of funds received under Parts A, C, and D of Title I by the States, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the outlying areas.

In addition to MSDE, the Project Director for Reading First, the State Leadership Team and the State Evaluation Team, which will oversee the entire sub-grant process, will also receive reports.

2.2 SCOPE OF SERVICES

Evaluate the implementation and the impact of the Reading First Program in Maryland, focused on the following areas:

- the implementation of the grant processes at both the LEA and the school level;
- the impact of the various scientifically-based reading programs instituted by targeted LEAs and their Reading First eligible schools on student reading achievement; and
- the impact of professional development activities for teachers in improving student outcomes and reducing teacher attrition rates.

2.3 OBJECTIVES

2.3.1 Collect and assess baseline data for each participating school and LEA.

2.3.2 Provide unbiased and comprehensive evaluation of the Reading First Program in Maryland based on baseline data by:

- documenting design implementation of programs K - 3;
- assessing changes in student achievement;
- monitoring growth in professional development;

2.4 OFFEROR REQUIREMENTS

The Offeror shall meet the following professional competencies in curriculum, measurement and professional development:

- demonstrated affiliation with national professional organizations, such as the American Education Research Association (AERA), the American Evaluation Association (AEA); the American Statistical Association (ASA); the International Reading Association (IRA), the National Staff Development Council (NSDC); and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), promoting beginning reading, professional development and second

- language learning;
- demonstrated familiarity with scientifically based research in reading, and national standards in staff development.
 - demonstrated expertise with a variety of student assessment protocols in beginning reading, including norm-referenced progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments.
 - artifacts illustrating successful experience with formative and summative evaluation design and implementation, including letters of recommendation;
 - commitment of key personnel whose credentials include knowledge of beginning reading, with emphasis on special populations, including English language learners and inclusion special education students;

2.5 PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

The Offeror shall (Dates to be determined at time of contract award):

- utilize statistical analyses and processes including the following: within and between analyses of variance; univariate and multivariate analysis of covariance; growth curve methodology; hierarchical linear modeling and regression analysis.
- work with the Reading First Regional Specialist, in-school coaches, and teachers on data collection to ensure consistency and timeliness in data collecting and reporting;
- establish a timeline for formative and summative evaluation;
- collect and assess baseline data;
- document design implementation of programs K - 3;
- assess changes in student achievement;
- monitor growth in professional development;
- monitor rates of teacher attrition

2.6 MSDE SUPPLIED SERVICES AND FACILITIES

MSDE will provide the contractor with the following services:

- data profiles about student demographics and teacher characteristics;
- assistance with site visits to obtain valuable project implementation and effectiveness information;
- access to data reports based on DIBELS testing;
- identification of study and control groups;
- access to results from teacher surveys and knowledge assessments;
- access to results from classroom observation of teacher;
- monthly meetings and/or teleconferences with Office of Reading First staff and Reading First Regional specialists

2.7 DELIVERABLES

Dates are contingent based on time of contract award.

- a. Contractor must submit to MSDE, the Director of the Office of Reading First, the Maryland Leadership Team, and the State Evaluation Team:
 - quarterly project updates;
 - annual financial reports summarizing how each school has spent funds;
 - a first year evaluation report measuring initial program implementation by June 30, 2004;
 - a second year evaluation report measuring program implementation, student achievement and impact of professional development by June 30, 2005;
 - a third evaluation report measuring program implementation, student achievement and impact of professional development by June 30, 2006; and
 - a mid-point progress report measuring increased numbers of students in grades 1-3 who meet "Benchmark" on DIBELS; are at grade level in comprehension on SAT 10 in grades 1-2; and reach Maryland's

proficiency standard in reading at grade level or above, including the percentages of low income students, racial/ethnic groups, LEP students and special education students.

b. Contractor must submit to LEAs participating in Reading First:

- a first year evaluation report measuring initial program implementation by June 30, 2004;
- a second year evaluation report measuring program implementation, student achievement and impact of professional development by June 30, 2005; and
- a third year evaluation report measuring progress by June 30, 2006;

APPENDIX F

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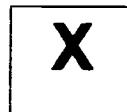


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