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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet discusses how Ohio is attempting to meet the challenge to eradicate functional illiteracy within the time span of the 1970's. Included in the contents are: planning guidelines, the organizational structure, the overall objectives of the Ohio program, report of the first year of the program, second year developments and accomplishments, and Ohio's participation in the national Right to Read effort. An appendix of the area chairmen and area members of the State Right to Read Commission is included.
(WR)

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1976

a new

IN OHIO

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A NEW SPIRIT OF '76

the right to read



During this current decade, our nation will celebrate the anniversary of its two hundredth birthday. Tribute again will be paid to those patriots who fashioned the democratic structure under which our country has functioned and flourished for the past two centuries; attention again will focus on the ideals of freedom, equality and justice which permeated all that they did—all that they dreamed for this nation to become. The Spirit of '76 again will become a viable influence, not only for renewing our faith in these basic principles, but, hopefully, for reviving our efforts to transform this "patriots' dream" into a functioning reality.

And there is evidence that this is happening—that a new spirit of '76 is already underway, is developing and may reach fruition during this epochal anniversary decade.

Historically, it is quite possible that our present period will be characterized as one in which people became actively concerned about those for whom the American system does not always provide freedom, equality and justice. Minority groups, the poor, the aged, alienated youths, the disadvantaged child, the physically handicapped, the culturally deprived—all, have become living reminders that much still needs to be done if

we truly are to become the land of the free, with liberty and justice for all.

People in education have always been sensitive to human deprivation and inequality. Much of what we do in education is supplementary and compensatory in nature. Little wonder then, when the need for national literacy was so forcibly pointed out by the late Commissioner James E. Allen, that educators should respond to the challenge that Right to Read entails.

A national goal to ensure "that by the end of the 1970's no boy or girl shall be leaving our schools without the skill and desire to read to the full limits of his capacity," is in keeping with true American tradition. The ability of citizens to read well is fundamental to the preservation of our self-governing society; without it, economic sufficiency becomes increasingly unattainable; without it, "equal opportunity" becomes a meaningless mockery.

Education has been challenged to take a giant step. The fervent response of Ohio teachers and their associated publics represents Americanism at its best. It typifies the new spirit of '76.

FOREWORD

This is the story of how one state, Ohio, is attempting to meet the challenge to eradicate functional illiteracy within the time span of the 1970's.

It is a story not a great deal unlike that written some two hundred years ago when the design for our democracy was first conceived and brought into being. Like the story of our country's founding, Ohio's Right to Read program has been guided from its inception by an over-arching human goal--that of providing equal opportunity to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

More specifically, that ultimate goal is to send forth into the Twenty-First Century Ohioans equipped with the tool of maximum reading capability and the desire to be lifetime readers. Reading is the priority skill indispensable for survival in an increasingly competitive, complex world. It lays the foundation for a better informed, understanding, contributing, participating citizenry, both at home and in the World Community.

In this brief report we have attempted to point up the underlying principles upon which the Ohio plan is based, the strategies and organizational plans that are being employed and the results that have been achieved. After two years we are critically examining our Right to Read efforts--our accomplishments, our unmet goals and the roadblocks we have encountered. Through this process it is our hope that this publication will afford us the opportunity to learn from each other. It is also our hope that this record of what one state has done may serve as a guide and reference source for others who are engaged in similar planning activities.

What follows is Right to Read as it is developing in Ohio. As you shall see, it has been a people-oriented approach, reflecting the magnificent creative input of many Ohioans working together. There is a pulse beat for it! It's becoming a happening!

When will this significant beginning really make the difference in terms of reading gains made by individual students? That remains the hard question. May this accounting serve as a catalyst toward the answer.

COMMITMENT

The disconcerting facts about reading deficiencies among our citizenry revealed by U.S. Commissioner of Education, James E. Allen, came as a distinct shock to many. The priority status given to reading improvement by the U.S. Office of Education signaled the urgent need for a concerted, nationwide attack on this condition.

RESPONSE BY THE STATE BOARD

In Ohio there was an almost immediate response. In November of 1969 the Right to Read program was inaugurated by resolution of the State Board of Education endorsing a plan designed to stimulate new approaches and effect new accomplishments in the reading capabilities of Ohio students. This action served to point the way for boards of education in local communities to join with professionals, parents and community groups to seek solutions.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE RIGHT TO READ

Immediately following this action, Dr. Martin Essex, State Superintendent, appointed a State Right to Read Commission to provide organizational leadership, to function as an idea bank and to disseminate research data.

The basis for membership selection to this body has proved to be a key factor in the success of the Ohio program. Dr. Essex followed the principle of diversification in naming members to the Commission to involve a broad spectrum of leaders from many sectors of American life. Included are educators representative of all types of professional positions in the public and non-public schools and in teacher training institutions. Among non-educator constituents are citizens, agency professionals, librarians, school board members and representatives from such school-related organizations as the International Reading Association and the Ohio Congress of Parents and Teachers.

In addition to becoming a model for area and local committees that subsequently were formed, this membership pattern has made possible the effective linkage system that is characteristic of Ohio Right to Read.

PLANNING GUIDELINES

Among those who did the preliminary planning for Right to Read in Ohio, there was little question about the ultimate goal they hoped to achieve and the humanitarian purpose to be served. The stakes of the endeavor were high, dealing as they do with feelings of personal worth, fulfillment, participating citizenship and economic sufficiency. The paramount problem centered around the organizational plan required for the undertaking of such massive proportions.

The need was recognized for establishing basic, guiding principles to provide unity and consistency to overall planning. The following were agreed upon and have been incorporated into the Ohio Right to Read plan:

To utilize a broad-based, people-oriented approach

The approach to the problem of reading deficiencies must be broad-based, involving all segments of the community. The program must be people-oriented, recognizing the individual as the central figure in the process. The program must be flexible, allowing for local adaptation and innovation. The program must be continuous, recognizing that reading is a lifelong process. The program must be comprehensive, addressing all aspects of reading instruction and materials. The program must be collaborative, involving all levels of government and the private sector. The program must be evaluated, to ensure that it is meeting its goals and objectives.

To recognize the centrality of the need for local involvement

The program must be based upon local initiative and leadership. Local communities must be encouraged to take responsibility for their own reading programs. The program must be tailored to meet the specific needs of each community. Local involvement is essential for the success of the program. The program must be supported by the local business and industry community. The program must be supported by the local media. The program must be supported by the local educational community. The program must be supported by the local government. The program must be supported by the local parents and citizens.

To provide a structure for achieving Right to Read goals, but to encourage local interpretation and local adaptation

The program must provide a framework for local action. The program must be flexible enough to allow for local adaptation and innovation. The program must be supportive of local initiatives. The program must be supportive of local leadership. The program must be supportive of local participation. The program must be supportive of local responsibility. The program must be supportive of local accountability. The program must be supportive of local evaluation. The program must be supportive of local improvement.

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The network of councils in the organizational plan was designed to place each Ohio teacher in contact with the Right to Read program.

The schematic shows how this has been accomplished.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Initially, Title III funds amounting to \$180,000 were made available to Area Councils to carry on their regional activities and to finance the various information, planning and inservice meetings necessary for initiating the program and creating general awareness. In each of the following two years, this amount was increased to \$300,000 for program operation in the twelve areas.

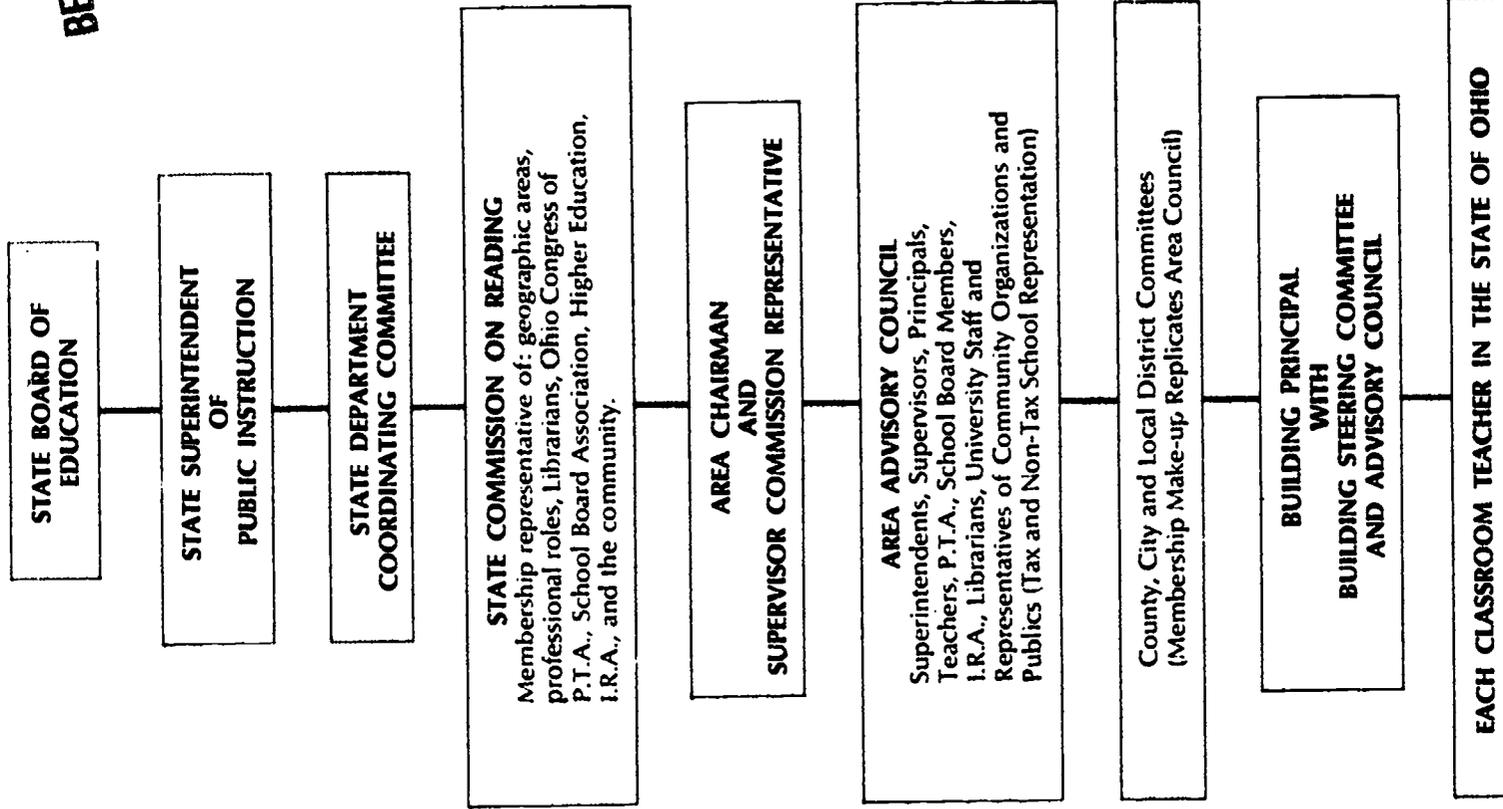
As previously stated, a unique feature of the Ohio plan has been its provision for local interpretation and local adaptation. No attempt was made to stereotype work of the Area Council other than to assure that proper fiscal control was maintained. In fact, a differentiated approach was encouraged so that reading improvement programs would be tailored to meet the unique needs and interests of each area.

As a guide for program development overall, long-range objectives were formulated and made available. In addition, as a format for initial planning by Area Councils, specific first-year objectives were formulated. In essence they include (1) planning inservice (types and extent of meetings), (2) creating a climate for exchange of ideas and cooperative efforts, (3) locating and identifying leadership resources, and (4) developing plans and support services for local programs.

The basic, overall objective of the Ohio program is two-fold:

1. to provide every elementary and secondary school student in Ohio with opportunities to secure reading skills which enable optimum personal, academic and social development; and
2. to provide every professional staff member in Ohio's elementary and secondary schools with opportunities to secure training which develops optimum competence necessary to achieve the first purpose most effectively and efficiently.

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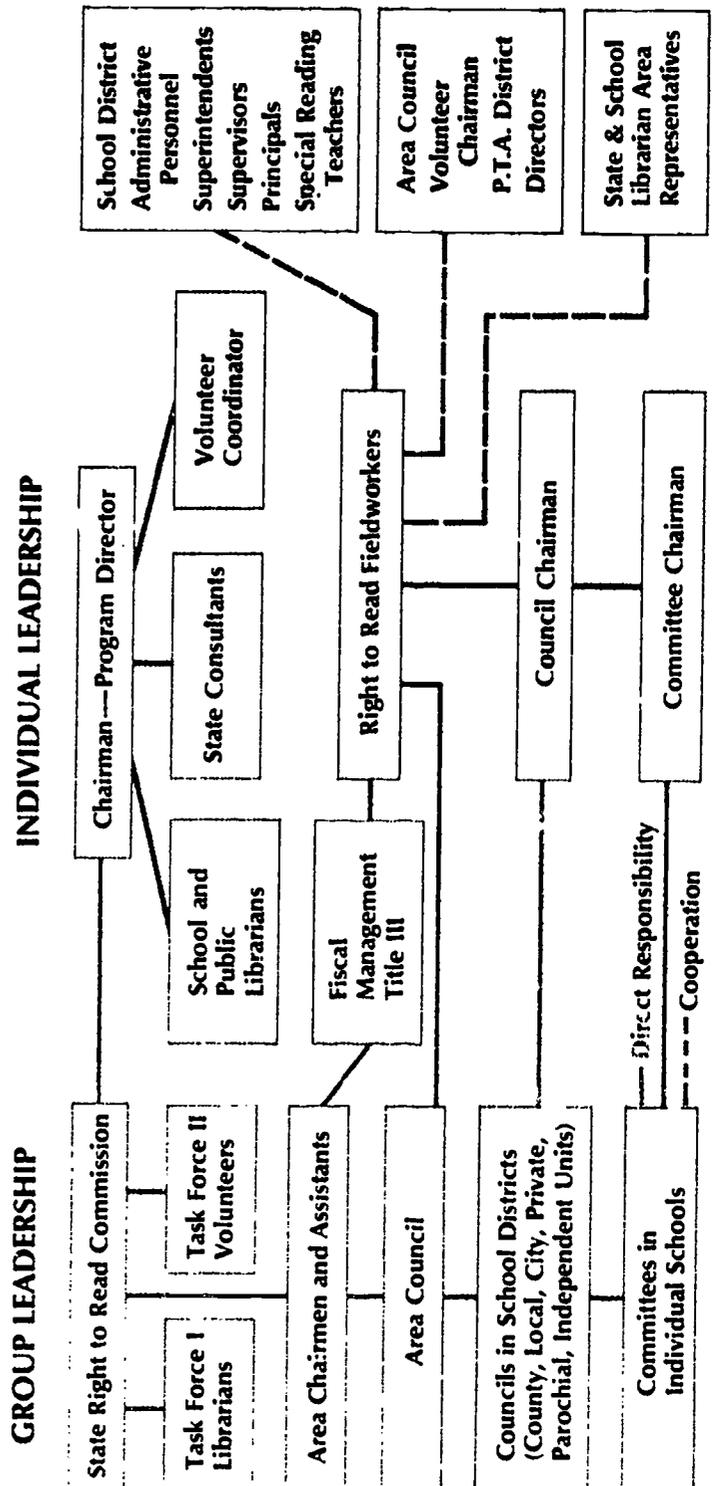
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The specific objectives are as follows:

- To improve reading instruction on all grade levels K-12
- To apply diagnostic teaching methods to provide varied and effective learning experiences for all students represented on the ability spectrum
- To teach reading in an integrated meaningful relationship to all aspects of language development on all grade levels and in all subject areas
- To select and use a variety of multi-level materials to meet the learning needs and interests of students
- To be concerned about the quality of encouragement and motivation which surrounds the learner in his encounter with the printed page
- To strengthen early childhood learning opportunities through a thoughtful approach to reading experiences in the kindergarten in terms of early identification and the provision of suitable learning activities
- To provide diagnosis and treatment of reading problems ranging from slight to severe
- To utilize research and develop experimental programs to reach identified problems which exist in individual classrooms, schools and communities
- To work with parents to help them to understand the reading process and to learn how to help their children
- To train non-professionals who work in our schools for their support roles as they relate to reading



TEAM PROGRAM ORGANIZATION CHART



HEADWAY

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THE ACTION BEGINS

During the first year of the program, the progress within the twelve areas vividly demonstrated the excitement and enthusiasm with which Ohioans accepted the challenge that had been presented. Area Councils went into action, each with its own ap, roach adapted to its own local conditions and needs, but directed toward one common goal—a better reading program for Ohio children.

The quality and variety of Right to Read activities reflected the diligent, creative planning efforts of the newly formed Area Councils. Similar patterns of attainment and difficulty were experienced along the progress spectrum. Ranges of success levels, caused by various contributing factors, were evident.

INFORMATION MEETINGS HELD

Efforts the first year centered on generating an awareness of Right to Read purposes and goals. Recognizing the need to establish a communications network and to activate a working organizational structure, Area Councils sponsored meetings for the educators and community representatives of Ohio's 626 school districts. Attendance at these meetings ranged from 25 to 1,400; but, regardless of the size or constituency of the audience, the purpose was always the same—to tell the story of Right to Read and to enlist commitment.

RIGHT TO READ BECOMES NEWSWORTHY

A breakthrough to community awareness came in the media coverage of these forums. The mere fact that they were held produced accounts of Right to Read in local newspapers and on radio and T.V. Additional news stories resulted from the adoption of resolutions of endorsement by local boards of education. Editorials appeared in newspapers throughout the state—some calling for assessment of local reading programs, others commending local groups for their involvement in the Right to Read effort.

A LINKAGE SYSTEM DEVELOPS

Another significant development was observed. Across the state a design for cooperative action emerged linking Right to Read with civic service clubs, Parent and Teachers Associations and professional organizations such as the International Reading Association.

An exemplary partnership between personnel of the Ohio Department of Education and the State Library resulted in a series of summer Right to Read Caravan Meetings. This cooperative undertaking set the stage for uniting further the roles of educators and librarians. The alliance has proved to be a natural one since both professional groups work closely with potential readers and the world of books.

FIRST-YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A host of other accomplishments emerged from Area programs. Among these were: planning for the use of volunteers, arranging course work for the training and certification of reading specialists, establishing diagnostic reading centers, locating superior classroom reading models, identifying competent reading teachers and compiling rosters of resource personnel for reading inservice.

SOME ROADBLOCKS ARE ENCOUNTERED

At the close of the 1970-71 school term a State Commission meeting was held to evaluate the work of the first year as a basis for modifications that might be required. Area chairmen reported both the progress they had made and the difficulties they had encountered.

Some of the reported deterrents to progress were regional in nature. Among these were travel and transportation difficulties experienced in a seventeen-county area; the disparity between rural and urban societal requirements; the need for broader-based, more-frequent communications within communities; the lack of immediate involvement by some administrators, teachers and communities; and the absence of

mutually agreeable arrangements for released time for teachers participating in the project.

Three major areas of concern emerged as being most significant to the future of the program.

Overriding all of these was the need for full-time coordinating personnel. Superintendents serving as Area Chairmen expressed the limitations in program development that resulted from their inability to devote sufficient time to this purpose.

A second pressing need common to most areas was for the development of appropriate and effective inservice training programs for volunteers and the teachers whom they assist. It was pointed out that as instruction became more individualized, many schools were utilizing the vast reservoir of interested people who are willing to serve both in the classrooms and in the libraries.

A third area in which additional assistance appeared to be necessary was in the assessment process. Local planning groups were asking for both a procedure and an instrument for evaluating their programs as a basis for their initial reading improvement strategies. Still other groups were requesting guidance and assistance in providing for the continuous evaluation of reading improvement programs that already were underway.

SECOND YEAR DEVELOPMENTS

The most significant modification characterizing second-year operation was the addition of full-time coordinating personnel. At the State Department level, the program director was given full-time consultant assistance.

Similarly, at the area level, fieldworkers were employed to assist volunteer chairmen and to provide the continuous, ongoing leadership that the expanding programs required. The role of the fieldworker broadly included responsibilities along the entire leadership spectrum--he was to serve as a researcher, an evaluator, a planner, a teamworker and a communicator.

THE TASK FORCES OF THE OHIO PLAN

As the scope of Right to Read in Ohio broadened, two task forces became integral parts of the organizational structure--one involving library services, the other, volunteer enlistment and training. Staff members from the State Department were given leadership roles in each of these areas.

Two workshops were held, one in each task force field. The first of these brought fieldworkers and educators from the twelve areas into contact with personnel from the National Reading Center who conducted a two-day workshop in volunteer training. Participants in the workshop have since become the nuclei around which the twelve area volunteer training groups have been organized.

The second task force workshop involved fieldworkers, school librarians, public librarians and personnel from the State Library of Ohio. Various areas of mutual interest were explored and a potentially productive working relationship was established.

SECOND YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A remarkably similar pattern of progress was reported by the twelve Area Councils during the second year of Right to Read in Ohio. To varying degrees, each council was successful in accomplishing the following:

Inservice was provided extensively as needed.

This tended to be geared to specific local needs; however, some meetings were county or city-wide in character involving as many as 1,500 educators.

Communications within the area and between areas were greatly improved.

All areas published monthly newsletters. A circulation pattern developed that placed each Ohio educator in touch with what was happening in Right to Read in his area, throughout the state and at the national level.

Other media used effectively included radio and TV, the newspaper, exhibits and slide-tape presentations.

Area organizational structures were expanded and made more functional.

Most areas operated on the recommended area-county-building council plan. Many councils expanded their membership to more completely replicate the suggested pattern.

All areas compiled a directory of innovative and exemplary reading programs within their district.

The primary purpose of the directory was to promote and facilitate intra-area visitation and communication and to

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activity in which they could be employed. Several of these teachers were organized in a computer room, a resource source for local planning groups, and continued building tables, bookshelves, and other pertinent resources in their schools.

Key resource people in reading were identified. Lists of available college personnel and regional teachers with expertise in reading were compiled and circulated to area schools.

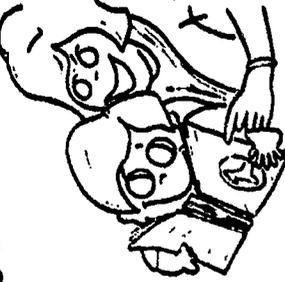
Volunteer aides were recruited and trained. Right to Read cooperated with other organized efforts in enlisting and training hundreds of volunteers for Ohio classrooms. The use of this human resource potential has made it possible for many schools to provide the personalization of instruction that reading requires.

Local planning groups were provided up-to-date and pertinent information about reading. Publications and print materials of various types were distributed. Included were research items, reports, pamphlets, word lists, bibliographies, books, evaluation instruments and locally prepared, special purpose items.

No attempt has been made to single out any outstanding achievements at this point. In the "Idea Mart" that follows, some of these have been pictured and described.



Reading Resources



E.S.E.A. Title III Project
45-70-120-1



THE RIGHT TO READ IN OHIO

The Ohio Right to Read campaign was organized in 1970, and by 1972 it had become a statewide effort. The campaign is an application and battle for responsibility in the reading achievement of Ohio's students.

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Involves Every Teacher in Ohio

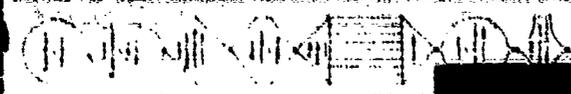
- Research**
- Evaluate**
- Apply**
- Develop**

Right to Read

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Division of Curriculum • Division of Instruction • Division of Research • Division of Technology • Division of Planning • Division of Evaluation

Right to Read Ohio



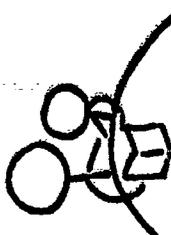
THE ABILITY TO READ IS EVERYONE'S RIGHT IN OHIO

Right to Read Ohio



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Assembly

Right to Read Ohio



“You can't buy what a Volunteer gives!”

RIGHT TO READ PROGRAM

SPINOFF

A key spinoff of the Right to Read effort has been the working relationships that have developed among groups who have been accustomed to "going it alone." Geographic barriers are practically non-existent in Right to Read affairs. The sharing of personnel, materials, inservice opportunities and professional know-how has been common practice throughout the twelve regional divisions.

This also extends to other areas of human relationships. County and city teachers, public and non-public, elementary and secondary, rural and urban have, in many cases, experienced the joys and advantages of working and planning together.

Colleges too have recognized the scope of the movement and are adapting their teacher preparation programs to the training needs of those in the field. The increased demand for reading specialists who qualify for certification under the new Ohio Teacher Education and Certification Standards has been eased, in part, through field courses taught on location in sequences adapted to the needs of those enrolled. A retreat-type reading conference for administrators needing course credit was arranged by one university.

It is difficult to determine the extent to which Right to Read should take credit for these developments. The important thing is they are happening. There is a pulse beat! Things are coming alive!



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OHIO'S PARTICIPATION in national RTR effort

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In addition to conducting its own program, Ohio participates extensively in the national Right to Read effort sponsored by the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Ohio sites were nominated as Right to Read Centers for demonstration and redirection. Berea, Cleveland and Morgan County are now receiving federal assistance in planning and implementing their model reading improvement programs.

Through Title II grants totaling \$969,092, seventeen Ohio high schools have been designated as "Lighthouse Centers" in a project designed to determine the relative effectiveness of various materials and media as they are used in certain teaching strategies. At least one center is located in each Right to Read area.

In addition, the national Right to Read office recognized Ohio as a model state by awarding a special purpose grant. Ohio's plan to utilize these funds follows:

TARGET—READING IMPROVEMENT

Plan Design—1972-73

The umbrella objective is to viably activate the Right to Read effort in each school in the state. Planning and efforts at the area and state levels concert toward this goal with the means identified as:

- needs assessment
- development of an action plan
- implementation
- consistent evaluation
- staff development

Leadership staff involvement coordination of reading programs and related efforts

On the state level it is proposed that grant funds will be utilized to employ staff facilitators and to institute inservice programs for school administrators and staff.

The Personnel Component

part-time director
a three-member technical assistance team (the members to possess skills in evaluation, planning, and expertise in reading instruction)
consultant
fieldworkers

The Staff Development Component

area principal meetings to deal with: needs assessment, program management and awareness of effective instructional strategies and learning materials
teacher clusters to deal with diagnostic teaching, goal-directed instruction, performance evaluation

Continuing efforts would be directed toward:

identification and validation of model programs
the involvement of related organizations: The International Reading Association (request for each unit to develop a Right to Read project); public and school librarians; parent teacher organizations; state and federal legislators
the initiation of consortium meetings of the teachers of reading and deans of teacher training institutions to view preservice instruction in reading methods in terms of amounts of time and content

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IDEA MART

Pictured on these pages are examples of typical activities that have been a part of the Right to Read effort throughout Ohio. The collection falls far short of being a comprehensive depiction of the myriad of innovative pursuits and practices that have grown out of local reading improvement programs. Rather, the action that is pictured here is symbolic of what has been common to most of the twelve areas during the two years that the program has been in effect.

For this reason people and places have not been identified. The action that is pictured here has taken place in many locations in varying manners.



OUTREACH

Ohio has a great heritage. It was here that McGuffey produced a reader, Harvey a grammar, and Spencer introduced his script. It is here, also, that the Ketterings, Rockefeller, Firestones and many other pioneers and leaders in all fields of human endeavor received education which enabled them to serve society. As Ohio's Neil Armstrong made his "giant step for mankind" on the moon, we join together to make a giant step for Ohio's youth in improved reading for all, and overcoming illiteracy for those who have not benefited in the past.

In keeping with democratic tradition, unity but not uniformity hallmarks Ohio's "Right to Read" effort as the state plan is school-based and learner-centered. The rally call is for the accomplishment of purpose through varied and creative approaches for solutions to reading difficulties.

As we approach the two-hundredth anniversary of our nation's founding, it is our earnest hope that this important event may take on more meaning to many of our young people who may not have otherwise attained the basic skills of reading and that our nation will have a brighter future for all as a result of these efforts.

Martin W. Essex
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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