

# Questions and Answers about Reading Recovery

## **Who provides the financial support for the training of Reading Recovery teachers?**

The training of teachers is supported by their respective schools, the Special Projects Office, and district. Reading Recovery is a non-profit program based at university sites, which authorize the use of its royalty-free trademark to districts complying with the guidelines of the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

## **How many schools in LBUSD are involved in Reading Recovery?**

The program currently operates in 7 elementary schools: Addams, International, Lee, Lincoln, Muir, Signal Hill, and Willard.

## **What is full coverage and how can it be distinguished from full implementation?**

**Full coverage** is achieved when there are enough Reading Recovery teachers to serve all the first grade children at risk of reading failure in a school. **Full implementation** is achieved when there are enough Reading Recovery teachers to serve all first grade children at risk of reading failure in a district. Reading Recovery is most successful as an intervention program when there is full coverage at a school and full implementation within a district. At that point there is a very great likelihood that almost every child entering 2nd grade will be a grade-level reader and writer.

## **Can a school participate without full coverage?**

Yes. Schools can participate in Reading Recovery without full coverage, but the goal should be to work towards full coverage. Schools without full coverage may choose to assign their Reading Recovery teachers to work with 1-2 classrooms depending upon the need at their schools. When schools assign their Reading Recovery

teachers to too many classrooms, the impact of the program is reduced.

### **What are the training requirements?**

Reading Recovery teachers begin by participating in a one-year training course. Teacher training involves graduate level coursework provided by Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders. In addition to their regular half-day teaching assignment, teachers in training attend weekly classes, work with four children daily, and participate in school visits. Following the training year, Reading Recovery teachers refine their expertise through a variety of professional development activities, including monthly continuing contact sessions, colleague visits, and conferences. All Reading Recovery teachers have opportunities to teach their students behind a one-way glass during training and continuing contact sessions to further support their efforts to put theory into practice.

### **How are students selected for the program?**

It is important to note that most first grade children do not require the detailed and meticulous Reading Recovery procedures or any modification of them, however the one-on-one instruction is necessary for the lowest 10-20% of children as small group interventions do not meet their unique learning needs. Reading Recovery is designed for children who are the lowest achievers in a first grade cohort. Any low-achieving child in his/her first year of first grade may be considered for Reading Recovery. Critics have sometimes argued to exclude some children or to save places for children who might “benefit the most”, but that is not using the full power of the program. It has been one of the surprises of Reading Recovery that children with all kinds of difficulties can succeed.

### **How long do students participate in the program?**

A complete Reading Recovery program is 12-20 weeks. When students no longer need the additional help, the Reading Recovery service is *discontinued* for that student and another student begins.

### **What is *Discontinuing*?**

A child has successfully *discontinued* from the Reading Recovery program when he or she can be placed in a group within the average of the class and continue to make progress with the support of a good classroom literacy program. Follow-up support is necessary for some Reading Recovery children because while they perform well in their classrooms, they remain at-risk and are easily thrown by life circumstances. The Reading Recovery teacher needs to maintain contact with the classroom teachers in subsequent years.

### **What percentage of students are successful?**

In LBUSD, approximately 75% of the lowest achieving first graders receiving a full program become successful readers and writers and are discontinued from the program. In addition, most of these discontinued students pass their first grade benchmark books prior to the completion of their program. Some of the children who do not reach grade level status move from the district before their program is complete or they do not have time to complete the program because the school year ends. A small percentage of those who complete the 20 weeks do not achieve average progress and require a longer term intervention program.

### **Can second grade students participate in Reading Recovery?**

When a school has achieved full coverage and has enough teachers to serve all the first grade children at risk of reading failure in their school, first grade students whose program was interrupted when the school year ended can continue in the Reading Recovery program in second grade.