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Pennsylvania Educational Leadership

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Educators impacting teaching and

learning through leadership.

Pennsylvania Educational Leadership

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Foreword

The articles in this issue of *Pennsylvania Education Leadership* promote the stated mission of the organization, which is **Educators impacting teaching and learning through leadership.** Specifically, this issue addresses issues facing educators as they strive to implement processes designed to impact teaching and learning: curriculum design in support of common core standards, assessment of student skill acquisition, teacher evaluation, implementation of change, and identification of outside forces that impact student behaviors.

In the lead article *Joseph Lachowicz* describes a process for supporting teachers to incorporate Common Core standards into instructional practice. He lays out a professional development plan to help teachers "unpack" the standards so that they can scaffold the learning, assisting students in developing the necessary skills to meet the expectations of the standards.

In addressing the assessment of student skill acquisition in the primary grades, *Timothy Runge* describes his study of psychometric issues related to phonemic awareness tasks as screeners for first graders. His preliminary analyses from a group of first grade students indicate that group-administered instruments measuring rhyming and blending skills meet minimal standards of reliability and sensitivity to growth. An individually administered segmenting instrument met standards of reliability and demonstrated moderate predictive validity as well. These instruments may be appealing to educators, given that they are free and more efficient than other commonly used assessment instruments.

In the third article *Paul Healey* examines concerns to be addressed in developing or refining a teacher evaluation system. The author identifies key elements that should guide the development and implementation of a quality teacher evaluation and supervision system designed to improve teacher practice.

The fourth article chronicles a study to explore the idea of developing consensus through climate change and development of a shared understanding as the beginning step in the change process. *Christina Godard* reports that her study's results indicate that while consensus and shared understanding developed for participants, underlying issues of trust continued to derail change efforts. This study highlights the impact of issues of trust when undergoing a change initiative.

In the final article, *Colleen Lelli* reports on a mixed-methods study to examine pre-service teachers' awareness of domestic violence and its impact on student learning. She describes professional development that was provided to the pre-service teachers to provide a clearer understanding of recognizing signs that children may be witnessing domestic violence and the importance of using children's literature to discuss sensitive topics.

We hope that you find the articles to be stimulating reading. Feel free to contact the authors about their work and ideas. If you have an idea for an article, please submit it for consideration.

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Incorporating the Reading Literature Common Core Standards into the Classroom

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There is a wealth of information about Common Core standards, their purpose and importance to student learning. The Common Core standards emphasize a higher level of comprehension skills than previous standards. It is no longer acceptable to provide the vast majority of America's children with a fill-in-the-blank, answer-the-questions, read-the-paragraph curriculum that equips them to take their place on the assembly line. (Calkins, Ehrenworth, Lehman, 2011). However, the important concept with the Common Core standards is how teachers can incorporate the standards into the classroom. How do teachers take the common core standards and develop lessons to improve student learning? Standards are not enough to ensure student achievement. Teachers need to be able to translate the standards into actual classroom practice. How will this translation improve student learning? Teachers must be cognizant of the standards in knowing the concepts they need to teach, how best to assess student learning, and how best to teach these concepts.

What Challenges Do Teachers Face in their Curriculum Development of the Common Core Standards?

In implementing the Common Core standards, teachers face a few challenges. One challenge is this: With the number of standards in literacy, how can a teacher expect to teach all standards with a depth of understanding for students to become college and career ready? Robert Marzano from the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning states that it would take some states double the present time to cover all standards adequately. It is common agreement that there are too many standards and therefore need to be reduced to effectively implement the standards (Ainsworth 2011, Reeves et al., 2011, Schmoker, 2011). It is evident that all standards cannot be taught. Therefore, which standards are most important and need to be taught in-depth?

Schools, in a systematic approach, need to decide which standards are the most essential in preparing students for their next level of learning. Larry Ainsworth (2003) in *Power Standards* calls these essential standards "power standards." Doug Reeves calls them "priority standards." The power or priority standards are a subset of the Common Core standards that are absolutely essential for students to be college and career ready. But what are the power standards? What are the criteria for determining the power standards? What is the process of deciding the most important learning for students?

In *Rigorous Curriculum Design,* Ainsworth (2010) suggests three criteria in determining the power standards. First, we need to look at what students need to know and be able to learn at each level (School). His second criterion is what students need to know and be able to do to be successful after formal schooling (Life). Students learning the concepts and skills that are highly represented on high-stakes assessments are Ainsworth's third criterion (Tests). Along similar thinking, Reeves also has provided three criteria to determine the power standards. The three criteria include Endurance, Leverage and Readiness for the next level. Reeves defines Endurance as the standards that provide students with the knowledge and skills that are of value beyond the tests. Leverage is the skills that students can use in other disciplines. His third criterion of

Readiness for the next level includes the skills and knowledge that are necessary for the next level of instruction. Based on these criteria, Ainsworth states that teachers need to consider the following question to help guide them in the selection process: "What do students need to know and be able to do by the end of each school year or course in order to be successfully prepared to enter the next grade level or course of study?" (p. 54)

The second challenge is for teachers to be able to "unpack" the standards. Once the priority standards are determined, it is imperative to understand the expectations of each standard. Teachers must be able to discern the student expected learning. What is each standard asking of students? When developing lesson plans based on the Common Core standards, how will students move from the knowledge dimension to the expectation of each standard? The standards are at a higher level of comprehension so how can they be "unpacked," broken down into the required learning to take students to the higher level of learning? For example, a standard may ask students to "analyze a piece of writing." Unpacking will allow teachers to scaffold the learning so that students can develop the necessary skills to "analyze" as per the standard.

**Preparing Teachers to Meet the Challenges
of Incorporating the Standards into the Classroom**

Effective professional development is essential in preparing teachers to implement the Common Core standards into their teaching. Teachers need training to develop their skills in writing effective curriculum that addresses the standards. The curriculum encompasses the power standards, the big ideas, essential questions, skills, assessments, vocabulary and learning activities. All these concepts must be aligned to create the most effective curriculum for the purpose of creating the best opportunity for student learning. A review and discussion to provide academic background of curriculum and curriculum mapping is needed.

In the initial professional development training, it is important to provide educators an overview of the concept of curriculum, its purpose and the systematic approach to creating curriculum. As Lisa Carter stated in *Five Big Ideas* (2011), "Curriculum must be aligned to existing state standards, and teachers must have a very deep understanding about what students are expected to learn and how their mastery of that content will be assessed" (p. 18). The emphasis of this training is allowing teachers to recognize the importance of an aligned curriculum. How to enhance, analyze and enrich the curriculum are also essentials of this first training.

The process and importance of curriculum mapping is the focus of the second professional development opportunity. In this training, educators are provided the theory and practice of curriculum mapping. Based on the work of Heidi Hayes Jacobs (2004), teachers are walked through the process of developing a curriculum map for a current lesson that they are using in their classes. It is important that the curriculum-mapping format is developed to ensure teachers are focused on the essential components. Teachers will learn and practice the concept of unpacking the standard to determine the learning required of students. From the unpacking, teachers will be more cognizant of the skills, big ideas and essential questions to help focus the learning. Finally, both formative and summative assessments will be developed that align to the learner outcomes. From this training, teachers will develop the skills necessary to begin mapping the common core standards. When teachers begin working with the common core standards, having this background knowledge and experience will allow teachers to focus on the unpacking of the standards.

After these two trainings, teachers can now begin the process of developing an understanding of the Reading Literature Common Core Standards. An overview of the standards and the changes from the Pennsylvania Academic Standards is provided to demonstrate to teachers the shifts in the English Language Arts Standards. Along with these discussions, teachers will meet to determine the best method of aligning their curriculum. What will the topics, themes or concepts be in order to align all the standards? One thought is to use the five big ideas of reading, which includes the following: phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with text, vocabulary, and comprehension. Ainsworth recommends aligning to David Conley's intellectual skills. These four skills are the following: read to infer/interpret/draw conclusions, support arguments with evidence, resolve conflicting views encountered in source documents, and solve complex problems with no obvious answer. Utilizing a thematic approach and incorporating a reading series into the standards are other options. There is no one best way. How the standards are aligned should be based on the vision and needs of each particular school district.

Horizontally and Vertically Aligning the ELA Common Core Standards

Now that teachers have recognized the importance of an aligned curriculum and have learned the process of "unpacking" the standards, they can begin the process of applying this knowledge to understanding the Common Core standards. This training will provide teachers the opportunity to study the standards in understanding what is being asked of student learning, determine the priority standards, align them both horizontally and vertically, and unpack them to begin the development of their curriculum.

Although not imperative, starting with the Reading Literature standards seems the best place to begin since this is what most teachers utilize in their classrooms. The following steps provide the necessary training for teachers to begin the process of developing their lessons incorporating the common core standards. (This process can be used for studying and evaluating all of the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards.)

Step 1:
With all Common Core standards posted around the room, and teachers in the same-grade level teams, they examine the PCCS to determine how their current curriculum aligns to the PCCS. For this activity, teachers mark on the chart:
- Put an "X" – not in your curriculum or taught
- Put an "O" – in the curriculum, but not taught with fidelity
- Put a "$" – both in the curriculum and taught with fidelity

After this quick activity, teachers debrief of their findings. What usually happens is that teachers realize that they already teach many of the standards. They also recognize the depth that they must now incorporate into their teaching.

Step 2:
In this step, teachers determine the standards that are the priority standards. A review of the work of Reeves and Ainsworth is provided to remind teachers of the reasons for determining the priority standards. As stated previously, "power standards" are the essential standards that students need to learn for understanding. They focus on the "in-depth" teaching and learning in the lesson. They should be the focus of the learning throughout the school year. Although there is no specific number of how many power standards are needed, it is the general consensus of experts that it is impossible to teach all standards in-depth. The standards that are not chosen as

priority standards are not ignored. They are taught, not as much in-depth as the priority standards, but act as more of a supporting standard for the priority standards.

In this exercise, teachers are divided into teams: Pre-K through 2, 3-5, 6-9, 10-12. In their teams they determine the priority standards for their grade level. For example, in the team of 3-5 grade teachers, begin with grade 4. All three grade-level (3, 4, 5) teachers individually determine the priority standards for grade 4. Repeat this process evaluating the grade 3 standards and again for the grade 5 standards. After each grade, discuss the reasons for the choices. Are there consistencies in the standards chosen? Are there gaps or repetitions in the chosen standards? What standards need to be addressed that weren't chosen as a priority standard? Are the standards vertically aligned and do they meet the needs of our learners?

Step 3:
Once the power standards have been determined by each grade level, teachers gather together PreK-12 to discuss their findings. The purpose of this discussion is to provide teachers with the ability to share what their students need to learn in each grade level. Discussion of each level's power standards will provide the teachers the opportunity to discuss and debate the essential learning needed by all students. Each grade level presents what they have determined are the power standards for their grade level. From this activity, teachers become knowledgeable of the vertical alignment of the priority standards. They become aware of what is being taught at each grade level but, more specifically, what is being taught at the grade level below them. This will provide teachers a better understanding of the knowledge that students should bring to their classroom.

Step 4:
The Common Core standards were developed with a learning progression from grade to grade. As students move from grade to grade, the skill levels of the standards are increased incrementally. This exercise will provide teachers the awareness that they do not have to "teach it all," When teachers complete the following activity, it will help them feel less overwhelmed by allowing them to experience the requirements of each standard at each grade level.

For this activity, teachers work individually based on their grade level. For the Reading Literature standards, they should begin with the first standard "Key Ideas Theme." Each teacher reads the standard beginning with the Pre-K level to grade 12. This activity will allow teachers to view the learning progression of the standards. After reading the standards, each grade level teacher should underline the new expectations of their level based on the previous grade's standards. For example, fifth-grade teachers will underline the expectations of the learning in their standards that are different than the fourth-grade standards. Again this will demonstrate to teachers the learning progression and, more specifically, their responsibilities for their teaching and learning. The next activity will include a discussion of Pre-K through 12 teachers of their findings. Beginning with the Pre-K level, each teacher provides a brief explanation of their expectations of the learning. This activity again will allow teachers to verbalize the learning progression of the level of complexity of each standard and support the concept of an aligned school curriculum.

This process should be repeated for the remainder of the Reading Literature standards. This activity will reinforce the idea of a learning progression for each standard and provide teachers the opportunity to dissect their own standards. In addition, it allows for the realization of the vertical alignment of each standard.

Step 5:

Now that the power standards have been determined and teachers are cognizant of the standards, they can now begin the process of curriculum mapping their standards. They should begin with a priority standard to develop a unit of study. The curriculum mapping process includes "unpacking" the standard, developing the Big Idea of the lesson, creating though-provoking Essential Questions, and developing assessments that align to the skills. "Unpacking" the standards allows teachers to determine the content and skills that students need to learn. By "unpacking" the standards, educators are better able to examine the actual wording of a standard to decide the significant student learning outcomes. As stated earlier, unpacking will allow teachers to scaffold the learning so that students can develop the necessary skills to learn the expectations of the standards. The Big Idea provides the value of the learning for students. Through the Big Idea, students can recognize the importance of the concepts being taught. The Essential Question is an engaging, open-ended question that provides the focus of the learning. It is the essence of what is being learned. The Big Idea and Essential Question are closely related. The Big Idea answers the Essential Question as these two concepts will provide students the expectations of the learning. The assessments provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts.

Conclusion

It is imperative that teachers are provided the time and support to develop their curriculum. Curriculum mapping the PCCS is an ongoing process. Breaking down the standards into effective learning requires continuous, sustainable professional development that allows teachers to discuss and share their thinking and ideas. In working with teachers on implementing the standards into the classroom, comments such as "We already teach many of the standards. We just have to go into more depth" and "The standards aren't as difficult as I thought" are evidence that teachers will not be overwhelmed with the standards…and therefore be more open to embrace the standards.

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An Invitation to Write for Pennsylvania Educational Leadership

Denise G. Meister and Judith L. Zaenglein - Co-Editors
Pennsylvania Educational Leadership

The readership of *Pennsylvania Educational Leadership* consists primarily of classroom teachers, intermediate unit and school district curriculum leaders, building principals, district-wide staff developers, assistant superintendents, superintendents, educational consultants, and college and university professors. Regardless of their roles in education, our readers are seeking guidance for improving educational practices – curriculum, assessment, instruction, professional development, policy support.

So, if you have something that might help them, we want to hear from you!

As editors of *Pennsylvania Educational Leadership* we try to publish a variety of types of articles: reports of successful practices, stories of teacher inquiries in the classroom, analyses of research and scholarly literature on current issues, critical analyses of educational policies and practices, thoughtful visions for improving education and schooling, and reports of more traditional research projects.

See the page 51 of this issue of *Pennsylvania Educational Leadership* for details regarding submission of manuscripts.

Reliability and Validity of Phonemic Awareness Screeners in First Graders

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Introduction

Phonemic awareness is the capacity of an individual to hear individual sounds, termed phonemes, in spoken language and perform a variety of mental tasks on these sounds (Bradley & Bryant, 1983). This skill is further operationalized as a number of distinct, yet related subskills. Rhyming is the capacity to identify words with the same rime. Sound categorization requires the individual to identify which words have either the same or different sounds in a particular, pre-determined position (e.g., beginning, end). Blending is the accuracy with which an individual can mentally combine a string of isolated phonemes into a word. Segmenting, the opposite of blending, requires the individual to separate a word into is constituent phonemes. Lastly, phonemic manipulation is achieved when an individual can perform a mental task (i.e., delete) on an isolated phoneme within a word (Adams, 1990).

A substantial corpus of literature unequivocally demonstrates that phonemic awareness is imperative to the acquisition of reading skills in English-based languages (e.g., Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Mann, 1984, 1993; Vloedgraven, & Verhoeven, 2007; Yopp, 1988) and across non-English cultures and languages (e.g., Betts, Reschly, Pickart, Heistad, Sheran, & Marston, 2008; Cardoso-Martins, 1995).   In fact, the overwhelming evidence led Hollis Scarborogh (1998) to conclude that the phonemic awareness skills of preschool and primary children are the single best predictor of future reading success. It is undeniable that a child's mastery of the discrete components of the oral language is significantly more predictive of future reading skills than intelligence, vocabulary, memory, receptive language, concepts of print, and visual-motor integration. Only letter identification and reading readiness demonstrate comparable predictive validity to future reading success; however, phonemic awareness developmentally precedes these skills, thus making it a notable predictor of reading.

It is not surprising, then, to observe the emphasis of phonemic awareness instruction within federal regulations (e.g., No Child Left Behind) and the Reading First initiative. Furthermore, considerable empirical work and practical application of explicit phonemic awareness instruction has emerged in preschool and primary educational systems over the past decade. Concurrent with this instructional focus has been an increasing demand for periodically assessing the growth of learners' pre-literacy and literacy skills. The emergence and relative pervasiveness of phonemic awareness assessments like the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS; Good & Kaminski, 2002b), AIMSweb (NCS Pearson, 2010), and Edcheckup (Edcheckup, 2005) in American public education is evidence that educators understand the value of regular, systematic evaluation of students' acquisition of phonemic awareness using brief screening measures.

The construct of phonemic awareness is considered along a developmental continuum with rhyming emerging first then sound categorization, blending, segmenting, and phoneme

manipulation (Adams, 1990; Schatschneider, Francis, Foorman, Fletcher, & Mehta, 1999).
Studies attempting to codify the construct of phonemic awareness seemingly converge on the
understanding that rhyming is a distinct, yet related skill to the other indicators of phonemic
awareness (Runge & Watkins, 2006) and that multiple measures of various subskills within
phonemic awareness may be redundant.   Evidence from phonemic awareness intervention
studies further support a two-dimensional definition of phonemic awareness. Ehri et al. (2001),
for example, reported that specifically targeting one or two of the higher-level phonemic
awareness skills (i.e., sound categorization, blending, segmenting, or manipulation) is more
efficacious than instruction focused on a host of different phonemic awareness skills.

Consequently, it is advisable that, when attempting to identify phonemic awareness
screening measures, educators select separate instruments for rhyming and other, higher-level
phonemic awareness skills.   Doing so ensures that the two-dimensional construct of phonemic
awareness is comprehensively assessed without unduly taxing limited resources and time.   Once
educators are armed with quality data on a child's development of phonemic awareness skills,
instruction and intervention can be planned accordingly.

Selection of appropriate benchmarking and progress monitoring tools should include a
consideration of psychometric and practical issues. From a technical perspective, the instrument
should demonstrate appropriate levels of reliability. Psychometricians generally recommend
reliability estimates for screening instruments to exceed .70 (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001).
Likewise, multiple lines of concurrent and predictive validity evidence should be documented.
From a practical perspective, screeners should be brief, easy to administer and score, and
interesting to the examinee. Group administration, although not a requirement of screeners, is
generally preferable over individually-administered instruments simply due to substantial
reductions in allocation of time to complete a screening of large numbers of students. Lastly,
reductions in school budgets may make free instruments more appealing than commercial
products of equal psychometric merit.

The present study attempts to establish the psychometric qualities of free, brief, and
visually appealing phonemic awareness tasks for use in primary grades. Moreover, efforts were
also undertaken to convert individually-administered phonemic awareness instruments to a group-
administered format while not sacrificing the psychometric integrity of the instrument.
Specifically, group-administered measures of rhyme and blending were developed and their
psychometric properties evaluated. Additionally, a screener of segmentation was also created;
however, group-administration of a segmenting task was not possible given the modality of
student responding required in a segmenting task. Respondents typically orally segment
phonemes from a word on such tasks, thus group-administration is not possible.   It is hoped that
results from this investigation will provide educators with a viable, free, and less-time consuming
set of instruments by which to screen the development of phonemic awareness in primary-aged
students.

Method

Participants

One hundred-fifteen first grade students (40 female, 75 male) enrolled in two rural,
central Pennsylvania elementary schools participated in the district-endorsed universal screening.
All participants were native English speakers. Special education eligibility, socioeconomic
status, and race / ethnicity data were not collected to protect participants' anonymity.   Publicly

available data for the population within each school indicate a relatively homogeneous student body that was predominantly white in both schools (91.5% and 89.1%, respectively). The percentage of students in each building who were eligible for free- and reduced-meals was 56.6% and 45.3%, respectively. The mean percentile rank of 5th graders on the statewide No Child Left Behind accountability assessment in reading was 34% and 73%, respectively.

Instruments

Three instruments were selected for inclusion as components of a universal screener administered to all first grade students in the two schools. Two of the instruments were modified from research measures used in previous studies by altering the item presentation and / or response modalities so they could be administered in groups. Items on the segmenting instrument were modified from its original design, although it remained an individually-administered test.

Rhyming recognition. The rhyming recognition instrument was adapted from the original test developed by Muter, Hulme, Snowling, and Taylor (1997). The original version of this instrument was administered individually by an examiner who verbally identified four pictures (e.g., cat, fish, gun, hat) and the child was asked to point to the picture that represented a word that rhymed with the first picture (e.g., cat). For the purposes of the present study, the original instrument was adapted to be administered in a whole-class format. Items remained the same while the response format was changed from the original version to require the student to circle his or her desired response. Three practice examples with corrective feedback preceded the 10 test items.

Psychometric qualities of the original Muter et al. (1997) instrument were reasonable, with alpha coefficients ranging from .80 to .92 across a two-year period of annual testing among preschool and primary age students. Predictive correlations with the British Ability Scales Word Reading Test (Elliott, Murray, & Pearson, 1983) and the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability – Revised (Neale, 1989), administered two years later were .48. The internal consistency of the adapted version used in the present study was .82 for a sample of kindergartners (Runge & Watkins, 2006). No predictive validity data were available for the adapted version.

Blending recognition. Burgess and Lonigan (1998) developed the original version of this instrument in which the child was asked to indicate what word was created when individually-present linguistic units were blended. Stimulus presentation of the first eight items in the original version were both verbal and in pictorial format. Responses to these items were provided either verbally or nonverbally via pointing to the desired picture. Stimulus presentation and response format were exclusively verbal for the remaining items in the original version. For the modified version of the blending instrument utilized in the present study, all items and stimuli were presented both verbally and pictorially. Student responses were provided nonverbally by circling the desired picture. Three practice items preceded the 15 test items.

Linguistic properties of the stimuli were taken into consideration when developing test items. The size of the linguistic unit was specifically controlled resulting in two word-level items, two syllable-level items, one onset-rime-level item, and 10 phoneme-level items. Phoneme-level items contained a variety of stop, continuant, and cluster phonemes. The number of phonemes in the 10 phoneme-level items ranged from three to five.

Internal consistency of the original version of this instrument was .91 for a sample of four-year-old children (Burgess & Lonigan, 1998). No predictive evidence was located for this instrument. The internal consistency of the group-administered, pictorially-presented adapted instrument was .88 for a sample of kindergartners (Runge & Watkins, 2006).

Segmentation production. This instrument was modified from the original version created by Stahl and Murray (1994) in which the child was required to segment orally presented words into constituent phonemes. Stimulus presentation and response modality were not altered from the original version. The modified version, instead, contained some different items from the original. Three examples with corrective feedback preceded the 15 items. The linguistic unit was maintained at the phoneme-level to avoid confusing directions and task. As with the blending instrument, stimuli included a variety of stop, continuant, and cluster phonemes. Five of the items contained three phonemes and ten items contained four phonemes.

Runge and Watkins (2006) administered the modified segmenting instrument as described above. Cronbach's alpha for the sample of kindergartners was relatively high ($r = .88$). Predictive validity for the original or adapted version is not known.

Oral reading fluency. The Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) measure from DIBELS - 6th Edition (Good & Kaminski, 2002b) is a one-minute timed test of oral reading speed and accuracy. Students are asked to read three passages aloud, each for one minute. The examiner records errors and, at the conclusion of one minute, scores the student's performance for correct words per minute (CWPM). This is repeated for three probes, and the student's median score is recorded as the total CWPM.

The psychometric properties of DIBELS ORF are well documented. Median alternate-form reliability estimates for DIBELS ORF across grades two through sixth range from .92 to .93 (Good & Kaminski, 2002a) and three-week test-retest reliabilities range from .92 to .98 (Baker et al., 2008; Good & Kaminski, 2002a). Predictive estimates of ORF with nationally-normed tests administered one to three years later are typically .60 or higher (Baker et al., 2008; Riedel, 2007; Roberts, Good, & Corcoran, 2005; Roehrig, Petscher, Nettles, Hudson, & Torgesen, 2008; Schilling et al., 2007).

Nonsense word fluency. The Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) measure from the DIBELS - 6th Edition (Good & Kaminski, 2002b) was individually administered to all participants. Students were required to blend as many letter-sound correspondences into nonsense words (i.e., pseudowords) as they could in one minute. Raw scores are reported as Correct Letter Sequences.

The technical properties of the DIBELS NWF are well-established. Alpha coefficients for first grade probes range from .83 to .94 (Good et al. 2004; Harn, Stoolmiller, & Chard, 2008). Predictive validity estimates of NWF administered in first grade with proximal outcomes were stronger than with more distal outcomes. For example, first grade NWF was moderately correlated (median $r = .67$) with end-of-first grade Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement - Third Edition Total Reading Cluster (Good et al., 2004); however, predictive correlations with second grade TerraNova and third grade SAT-10 Comprehension were .12 (Goffreda, DiPerna, & Pedersen, 2009) and .29 (Chard et al., 2008), respectively.

Procedure

Participants were enrolled in first grade classrooms in two elementary schools in a rural central Pennsylvania school district. All students in these classrooms were screened as part of the district's universal screening efforts in mid-October, early-March and early-June of the academic year. Assessment windows for each time period were less than two weeks. Participants completed the three phonemic awareness instruments at each screening period and the DIBELS assessments in March and June.

Each examiner was trained to administer the instruments as part of the Reading First initiative in the schools. The author served as the lead examiner which also included speech language pathologists, classroom teachers, and Title I reading specialists. The Rhyme and Blending instruments were completed as whole-class activities with students placing upright folders on their desks to shield their responses from peers. The Segmenting and DIBELS instruments were completed individually with students per standardized instructions.   A free, downloadable copy of the Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments is available at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=124318.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

After accounting for attrition and missing data, complete fall, winter, and spring longitudinal data were available for 89 first grades students. Participants for whom complete longitudinal data were not available performed statistically weaker than participants with complete longitudinal data on fall Rhyme, $t(109) = -3.33$, $p = .001$; fall Segmenting, $t(109) = -3.25$, $p = .002$; and winter Blending, $t(92) = -2.36$, $p = .020$. All other mean differences between participants with and without complete longitudinal phonemic awareness data were non-significant. Subsequent analyses were performed using data from only those participants for whom complete longitudinal data were available.

Mean differences on the phonemic awareness instruments and DIBELS assessments were not significant for sex, teacher, and school. Therefore, subsequent data analyses were conducted with the entire set of longitudinal data merged across sex, teacher, and school. Descriptive statistics, indices of univariate normality, and alpha coefficients are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Indices of Normality, and Alpha Coefficients of Phonemic Awareness and DIBELS Instruments Across First Grade

	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Fall							
Rhyme	1	10	7.89	2.59	-1.07	-.12	.84
Blending	0	15	12.26	3.98	-1.75	2.16	.92
Segmenting	0	15	6.29	3.97	.23	-.75	.88
Winter							
Rhyme	3	10	8.98	1.87	-1.77	1.92	.82
Blending	7	15	14.51	1.15	-4.08	21.58	.70

	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Segmenting	0	15	9.42	4.42	-.78	-.40	.90
ORF	3	132	37.83	23.64	1.33	2.64	n/a
NWF	0	130	40.01	23.63	1.04	1.86	n/a
Spring							
Rhyme	3	10	9.42	1.44	-2.93	8.35	.82
Blending	9	15	14.66	1.10	-3.89	15.14	.78
Segmenting	0	15	10.97	3.71	-1.10	.49	.87
ORF	3	166	51.79	34.40	1.03	.72	n/a
NWF	0	140	51.26	30.46	.94	.74	n/a

Notes. $N = 89$. ORF = Oral Reading Fluency; NWF = Nonsense Word Fluency.

Review of skewness and kurtosis statistics revealed that the winter Blending, spring Rhyme, and spring Blending were substantially negatively skewed and leptokurtic, suggesting a ceiling effect was present in these instruments. All other performance indicators met univariate assumptions of normality. Internal consistency of the three phonemic awareness instruments across the three assessment periods met minimal standards for use as screeners.

Inter-Correlations

Inter-correlations of the three phonemic awareness instruments and DIBELS tasks administered across the three universal screening periods are presented in Table 2. Half of the inter-correlations were moderate ($r \geq .30$). The strongest correlations observed were between the same instrument administered at a different time period.

Table 2

Inter-correlations of Phonemic Awareness and DIBELS Instruments Administered Across First Grade

Instrument	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Fall Rhyme	-											
2. Fall Blending	.17	-										
3. Fall Segmenting	.21*	.19	-									
4. Winter Rhyme	.52**	.15	.22*	-								
5. Winter Blending	.04	.42**	.38**	.26*	-							
6. Winter Segmenting	.26*	.08	.52**	.28**	.22*	-						
7. Winter ORF	.36**	.12	.38**	.37**	.23*	.32**	-					
8. Winter NWF	.27*	.23*	.32**	.31**	.21*	.35**	.65**	-				

Instrument	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9. Spring Rhyme	.41**	.17	.24*	.68**	.23*	.32**	.33**	.37**	-			
10. Spring Blending	.07	.44**	.26*	.07	.35**	.17	.19	.20	.05	-		
11. Spring Segmenting	.11	.09	.47**	.16	.17	.64**	.28**	.28**	.35**	.20	-	
12. Spring ORF	.32**	.20	.31**	.30**	.24*	.34**	.87**	.66**	.35**	.20	.31**	-
13. Spring NWF	.36**	.16	.30**	.33**	.22*	.38**	.76**	.78**	.31**	.23*	.25*	.74**

Note. N = 89.
* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01

Phonemic Awareness Growth

Mean performance for each of the phonemic awareness instruments was analyzed using a paired sample t-tests to determine if the instruments were sensitive to change over time. When data violated underlying assumptions of the t-test (i.e., highly skewed or kurtotic distribution), a paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was employed (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Growth of Phonemic Awareness and Reading Performance Across First Grade

Task and Time Period	Mean Difference	*t / z*	*p*
Rhyme			
Fall to Winter	-1.09	-4.51	< .000
Winter to Spring	-0.44	-2.77	.006
Fall to Spring	-1.53	-5.35	< .000
Blending			
Fall to Winter	-2.25	-6.03	< .000
Winter to Spring	-0.15	-1.75	< .000
Fall to Spring	-2.40	-6.52	< .000
Segmenting			
Fall to Winter	-3.12	-7.10	< .000
Winter to Spring	-1.55	-4.18	< .000
Fall to Spring	-4.67	-11.11	< .000
ORF			
Winter to Spring	-13.96	-7.28	< .000
NWF			
Winter to Spring	-11.25	-5.59	< .000

Notes. N = 89. *t* values reported for paired sample t-tests (*df* = 88). *z* values reported for paired sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Tests. ORF = Oral Reading Fluency NWF = Nonsense Word Fluency.

Rhyme. A paired sample t-test from fall to winter on Rhyme revealed a statistically significant change over time, $t(88) = -4.511$, $p < .000$. Results of nonparametric procedures, likewise, revealed significant growth from winter to spring, Wilcoxon $z = -2.77$, $p < .000$, and from fall to spring, Wilcoxon $z = -5.35$, $p < .000$. These results indicate that the Rhyming instrument is sensitive to change over time across the first grade year, although ceiling effects from winter to spring exist.

Blending. Due to the skewed and kurtotic distribution of performance on winter and spring administrations of Blending, nonparametric paired sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank tests were performed to determine if significant growth occurred across time. Significant growth was noted from fall to winter, Wilcoxon $z = -6.03$, $p < .000$; and fall to spring, Wilcoxon $z = -6.52$, $p < .000$. Although a statistically significant difference was observed from winter to spring on the Blending task, Wilcoxon $z = -.1.75$, $p < .000$, these results are interpreted cautiously given ceiling effects on this instrument. Overall, these results indicate that the Blending instrument is sensitive to change over time across the first grade year.

Segmenting. All data from the Segmenting task were normally distributed thus allowing for paired samples t-tests to be conducted. Statistically significant growth was noted from fall to winter, $t(88) = -7.10$, $p < .000$; winter to spring, $t(88) = -4.18$, $p < .000$; and fall to spring, $t(88) = -11.11$, $p < .000$. These results suggest that the Segmenting instrument is sensitive to change over time across the first grade year.

Growth of Reading Skills

Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements in ORF from winter to spring, $t(88) = -7.28$, $p < .000$ and NWF from winter to spring, $t(88) = -5.59$, $p < .000$. On average, ORF increased by nearly 14 words per minute and NWF improved by over 11 sounds per minute. These improvements are consistent with national trends (Good & Kaminski, 2002a).

Predictive Validity of Phonemic Awareness and DIBELS Instruments

An analysis was conducted to determine the predictive correlations of the phonemic awareness and DIBELS instruments administered in first grade to third grade performance on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). Complete longitudinal data were available for 57 students from the original sample. The 36% attrition rate from the original sample was due primarily to students transferring out of district. Descriptive statistics for this sample are presented in Table 4, and results of predictive correlations are summarized in Table 5.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for First Grade Phonemic Awareness and DIBELS Predictors of Third Grade PSSA and ITBS Performance

	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Fall 1st Grade						
Rhyme	2	10	8.39	2.381	-1.515	1.162
Blending	0	15	12.18	4.293	-1.738	2.018

	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Segmenting	0	15	7.04	3.914	.058	-.846
Winter 1st Grade						
Rhyme	5	10	9.56	1.165	-2.996	8.518
Blending	11	15	14.60	.863	-2.900	9.372
Segmenting	0	15	10.32	3.714	-.898	.167
ORF	13	132	43.86	24.017	1.505	2.956
NWF	5	130	43.77	23.857	1.104	1.981
Spring 1st Grade						
Rhyme	4	10	9.72	.978	-4.749	24.335
Blending	10	15	14.65	1.094	-3.580	12.400
Segmenting	2	15	11.35	3.528	-1.012	-.018
ORF	14	166	58.60	34.412	1.179	.920
NWF	12	140	58.04	29.991	.948	.722
Spring 3rd Grade						
PSSA Reading	912	1633	1270.79	193.191	-.043	-.929
ITBS Reading	142	213	179.30	16.789	-.075	-.711

Notes. *N* = 58. ORF = Oral Reading Fluency; NWF = Nonsense Word Fluency; PSSA = Pennsylvania System of School Assessment; ITBS = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.

Table 5

Predictive Correlations of First Grade Phonemic Awareness and DIBELS Instruments to Third Grade PSSA and ITBS

	3rd Grade PSSA Reading	3rd Grade ITBS Reading
Fall 1st Grade		
Rhyme	.37**	.40**
Blending	.35**	.20
Segmenting	.37**	.35**
Winter 1st Grade		
Rhyme	.22	.22
Blending	.23	.27**
Segmenting	.13	.22
ORF	.47**	.52**
NWF	.29*	.26
Spring 1st Grade		
Rhyme	.26	.35**
Blending	.38**	.33**
Segmenting	.27*	.39**
ORF	.35**	.42**
NWF	.44**	.37**

Notes. *N* = 58. ORF = Oral Reading Fluency; NWF = Nonsense Word Fluency; PSSA = Pennsylvania System of School Assessment; ITBS = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

ORF administered in first grade, generally, demonstrated the strongest predictive correlations with PSSA and ITBS administered in third grade. Specifically, first grade winter and spring ORF was moderately correlated with third grade PSSA, $r = .47$ and .35, respectively. Likewise, first grade winter and spring ORF were moderately correlated with third grade ITBS, $r = .52$ and 42, respectively. Winter NWF was moderately correlated with PSSA, $r = .29$, but not ITBS. Spring NWF was likewise moderately correlated with PSSA, $r = .44$, and ITBS, $r = .37$.

Significant predictive correlations were also noted for fall Rhyme ($r = .37$ and .40 for PSSA and ITBS, respectively), fall Segmenting ($r = .37$ and .35 for PSSA and ITBS, respectively), and winter Segmenting ($r = .27$ and .39 for PSSA and ITBS, respectively). Although Blending was, at times, significantly correlated with PSSA and ITBS (*cf* spring administration), the highly skewed and kurtotic nature of these data somewhat devalue the meaning of these correlations.

Discussion

Results of these analyses indicate that the Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments meet minimum standards of internal consistency for use as a screener (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001). Directions are simple and administration can be completed by teachers and support staff. Notably, the Rhyme and Blending tasks are administered in groups, thus giving them greater appeal for use in classrooms. All phonemic awareness tasks were sensitive to growth from beginning to middle, middle to end, and beginning to end of first grade; therefore, educators may find these instruments helpful in monitoring the progress of first grade students over time. The ceiling effects noted on Rhyme and Blending in winter and spring are consistent with developmental models of phonemic awareness that suggest these skills are typically mastered by the end of first grade (Adams, 1990).

The Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments should be considered as reliable indicators of growth across first grade. Considerably more growth was evident from fall to winter compared to growth in the second half of the year. Other studies measuring phonemic awareness growth in first grade (e.g., Good et al., 2004) and ORF (e.g., Christ, Silberglitt, Yeo, & Cormier, 2010) suggest a similar seasonal effect. That is, the present study confirms results from previous work indicating steeper growth rates on measures of phonemic awareness in fall semesters compared to spring semesters. It is also plausible that ceiling effects on the Rhyme and Blending instruments artificially deflated otherwise stronger spring growth rates. Minimally these instruments can be used to monitor growth across the first grade.

Concurrent validity of these instruments, although not the focus of the present study, was previously documented by Runge (2003) with a sample of 161 students who completed a number of phonemic awareness measures in spring of their kindergarten year. The correlation of the Rhyme instrument to three other measures of rhyme recognition and production ranged from .45 to .47. Concurrent validity estimates of the Blending instrument with two other measures of blending recognition and production ranged from .50 to .63, respectively. The Segmenting instrument utilized in this study evidenced concurrent reliabilities with two other segmenting tasks of .57 and .79.

Predictive validity for the three phonemic awareness instruments used in the present study was established. Specifically, the Rhyme and Segmenting instruments demonstrated moderate predictive correlations with third grade performance on PSSA and ITBS. These data

further support the well-established causal relationship of phonemic awareness with reading skills (Adams, 1990; Ball, 1993; Velluntino & Scanlon, 2001). Additionally, educators can be assured that these instruments utilized in this study are equally predictive of future reading as other available measures of rhyme and phonemic segmenting skills (e.g., DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency [PSF]). ORF and NWF also demonstrated significant predictive correlations with PSSA and ITBS.

Limitations

Some psychometric characteristics of the Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments need further investigation, namely test-retest reliability and concurrent validity evidence with other measures of phonemic awareness tests. Although the former limitation is real, given that these instruments are intended for periodic administration (e.g., three to four times a year), test-retest reliability may be of utmost concern. The latter concern of concurrent validity is mitigated by previously documented strong concurrent validity in a sample of kindergarten students (Runge, 2003).

Given that the Segmenting instrument is individually-administered, further evaluation of the inter-rater reliability (IRR) is warranted. That is, how consistently do two examiners score responses from the same student? Evidence of IRR above .70 was reported with a sample of kindergarten students and nine different examiners using the instrument employed in the present study (Runge & Watkins, 2006), so it is believed that IRR with a population of first graders would be comparable.

DIBELS NWF and PSF were not administered in fall of first grade for the students in this sample - a contradiction to standard benchmarking procedures. It will be important to validate the instruments used in this study with DIBELS PSF as well as consider the relative predictive validity of the Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments administered in fall of first grade compared to NWF.

Lastly some caution is made when interpreting the longitudinal growth of students in this sample given the significant differences between participants with and without complete data. Certainly these instruments demonstrate promise as a set of viable alternatives to existing instruments, and their appeal is certainly complimented because they are free and, in the case of Rhyme and Blending, administered in groups. Despite these limitations to the study, educators are encouraged to consider these free, technically sound Rhyme, Blending, and Segmenting instruments for use as screening and / or progress monitoring tools.

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Teacher Evaluation Needs to
Support Teacher Growth

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Teacher evaluation has gained renewed interest in many states as educators reconstruct their evaluation processes to meet the requirements of the Race to the Top grant. Many state departments of education are supporting an evaluation tool that includes an aggregate of artifacts; for example, student performance on state and national exams, classroom observations, and student and parent input. This focus to include multiple measures, while extremely important, may force school personnel to concentrate solely on collecting and analyzing individual teacher data. The unintended consequence of this process may be the loss of supervision, which is paramount to helping teachers attain professional self-efficacy.

The dilemma, then, is finding an effective way to combine supervision with evaluation. Supervision differs from evaluation because it is not aimed at making judgments about the person's worth to the organization or the teaching profession. It is an ongoing process designed to provide constant feedback and renewal for the teacher. The supervision definition offered by Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969) is still very applicable today and suggests that supervision is a developmental process aimed at directing, guiding, and supporting the instructional behavior of teachers for the purpose of improving classroom instruction.

Even though evaluation and supervision are two distinct processes, they both serve certain functions for the organization, and they can operate in unity if their functions and roles are clearly understood by all. Each process can and should complement the other. Teacher evaluation can become the basis for supervision efforts that set the stage for a continuous, cyclical process of effective supervision and evaluation. Effective teacher evaluation and supervision programs are not developed overnight. A commitment to developing, maintaining, and enhancing these processes will require constant attention.

Several individuals have conducted research regarding effective evaluation and supervision programs, and their findings can assist states and districts in the development of new or revised programs. Studies conducted by McGreal (1983), Wise, et al. (1984), Patrick and Dawson (1985), and Goldsberry, Harvey, and Forlenza (1985) have led to the following combined themes about effective evaluation and supervision programs:

- Supervision must be a separate function from evaluation
- A visible commitment to both processes must be clearly evident.
- Teachers must be involved in the formation and discussions of teacher supervision and evaluation plans and practices.
- There is no substitute for face-to-face communication between the observer and the teacher.
- No single technique or method of strategies should be employed for all individuals.
- Ongoing training and appropriate resources for both evaluation and supervision needs to exist.

- Coordination should be made between the staff development programs in the district and the teacher supervision and evaluation programs.

Dukes and Stiggens (1986) write, "Done well, teacher evaluation can lead to improved performance, personal growth, and professional esteem. Done poorly, it can produce anxiety or ennui and drive talented teachers from the profession" (9). Teacher evaluation while proposed to be an avenue for improved performance has rarely accomplished this goal because evaluations carried out in most schools and districts are brief, superficial, formal processes involving a few moments of classroom observation every year or two, followed by the completion of a required evaluation form which is filed away and never seen again (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984; Stiggens & Bridgeford, 1985).

In order to transform teacher evaluation from a process that is meaningless for most educators to one that fosters professional growth, McGreal (1983) suggests that school districts must address two key issues. The first is the examination of the present evaluation system, particularly with regard to its purpose, processes, and instrumentation as it meets new state department mandates and goals. Second, all members of the organization must be provided with adequate training and resources to effectively implement and maintain the teacher supervision and evaluation system. Designing an effective evaluation process is a complex task. Understanding the key issues related to an evaluation process that has as its primary focus improvement and growth is paramount to the effectiveness and success of the process and its impact on the learning community. The review and revision of a teacher evaluation system should take the following key areas into consideration:

- *The process is never finished.* We make a huge mistake in viewing the revision of teacher evaluation practices and policies as a task we accomplish every five or six years. The improvement and sustainability of quality teachers demands ongoing attention to an evaluation plan that is best achieved by a standing committee of stakeholders who annually review and improve the process and policies.
- *Teacher evaluations must include clearly articulated competencies.* Looney (2011) suggests, the teacher evaluation process, if it is to be effective, must embrace defined standards and competencies for high-quality teacher performance and include strategies and development needs to help teachers achieve competencies.
- *The feedback loop must be both timely and informative.* All too often, teachers express dissatisfaction about the evaluation process because the feedback they receive is not timely and/or void of information aimed at improving instruction and the impact on student learning.
- *Multiple measures to assess performance must be collected and utilized.* As stated previously, no single source should be used to judge the quality of one's performance. Teaching is too complex to utilize an evaluation system based on a single data point. Multiple measures must be clearly defined and span a number of years.
- *Resources need to be allocated to foster professional growth.* An effective evaluation plan not only assesses teacher performance but also identifies professional growth opportunities and provides supports to foster growth.
- *Teacher evaluation cannot exist in isolation.* The processes and practices employed for teacher evaluation should be aligned with the district's teacher supervision plan, which, in turn, should be connected to either professional development and district goals or initiatives.

While the conversations are ramping up about teacher effectiveness, now is not the time to add more confusion or misunderstandings about teacher evaluation. The impetus for redesigning teacher evaluation should be to improve teacher performance and foster growth rather than to satisfy any state or federal grant. It will take a collective effort on the part of stakeholders to construct a framework and processes that support both effective teacher supervision and evaluation practices.

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Organizational Change Derailed By Trust Issues

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Every year, districts receive the results of their students' progress toward achieving Pennsylvania State Standards as required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002) and spend time examining these results to determine areas for improvement within their curricula. The focus on test results as the main source of data for improvement meets the definition put forth by Firestone (2009) of a "culture of accountability," which he cited as less effective for the achievement of true improvement in school systems than that of a "culture of learning" (p. 673). According to Firestone, systems that display a culture of learning are more organic, democratic, and focus on integrating ideas from within various levels of the organization when deciding on change and improvement steps. In this way, the approach includes not just the leaders, but rather a collaborative problem-solving approach specifically focused on student learning (Sheppard & Brown, 2009). To achieve this environment effectively, districts often look to organizational change research. Researchers Argyris and Schon (1996) have described two types of business models – model I theory (unilateral control) and model II theory (shared control). As described, model I theory places emphasis on winning through the achievement of the defined purpose. It involves control and typically unilateral decision-making. Model I theory is typically found in business and K-12 systems. Model II theory abandons both the ideas of winning and losing and of hierarchical decision-making found in model I by focusing on the achievement of consensus through a shared-control model where participation includes design and application facets. The purpose of this study was to apply model II learning theory principles as a means for developing consensus in a district undertaking one change initiative - the development of Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) model within its K-5 buildings.

Theoretical Foundation

Organizational Change

For organizations to achieve change successfully, Glover and DiPerna (2007), Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (2009), McGuire, Palus, Pasmore, and Rhodes (2009), and Morris (2009) agree as follows: (1) systems' cultures should intertwine with its needs; (2) there is a focused energy on achieving organizational goals; (3) there is a coordinated resolve over time; and (4) there is coordination among the approach leaders use. Beagrie (2004) and Stringer (2007) have added the importance of communication to the picture. Kramlinger (1998) moves a step further, indicating that it is through communication that a common belief system (consensus) develops. In addition, Herr and Anderson (2005) point out that the most successful change occurs when the change comes from within the organization itself rather than imposed.

Whereas Argyris and Schon (1996) and Collinson, Cook, and Conley (2006) have described multi-leveled collaborative efforts as an integral component, not all organizations view change efforts in this manner. In some systems, collaboration occurs only at the leadership level or at the teacher level. Though the collaborative model, the collaborations are independent of each other and seem to impede the achievement of consensus across the organization. However, as Louis and Wahlstrom (2011) have pointed out much of the research on organizational change evolved in the business realm rather than the educational realm. Mulford (2005) has added that in change undertakings it is difficult to quantify specific events and link the change to the outcomes.

Though the field remains difficult to quantify and has been often untested in the educational setting, change remains an integral part of the evolution of K-12 systems and requires further exploration.

Culture of Learning

Sheppard and Brown (2009) examined the current research regarding school culture and found that, for schools to improve, the culture needs to focus on student learning. While this seems a basic understanding for systems charged in the educational field, many K-12 systems do not meet the definition as put forth by Firestone (2009) of a true culture of learning. Instead, they fall into the culture of accountability, where systems focus on instructional issues as a means to comply with standards or rules imposed by others, teaching is routine work, and decisions are centralized and hierarchical in nature. Alternately, a culture of learning exists when district personnel feel a responsibility for the learning of all students, not just those in their classroom, and there is a collaborative effort to hold these students to high expectations with teachers and leaders problem-solving to reach them. Firestone further clarifies that for a culture of learning to be achieved systems need an infrastructure in place that deals constructively with controversy, encourages and supports multi-level collaboration, permits generalizations and diversity, and has a common belief system. Additionally, Gregory's (2008) research has linked school improvement efforts with the development of a culture of learning. She found that in systems where a culture of learning developed other areas improved as well, including organizational structure, relationships, and practical experience, thus linking culture of learning ideas to organizational change theory.

This connection to organizational change research demonstrates the possibility to achieve a culture of learning through organizational change efforts. However, many K-12 systems remain hierarchical with layers of leaders. Patel and Patel (2008) have described the hierarchical systems as process-oriented, focused on long-term goals and bound by tradition. It is a top-down model focused on chain of command that appears to conflict directly with learning culture standards and to conflict with organizational change research. In addition, often teachers continue to focus on a sense of ownership for only a small portion of the system referring to students as "mine" or "yours" rather than sharing ownership of all students within the system (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011). According to Sheppard and Brown (2009), achievement of a culture of learning is a complex task that occurs over time and requires trust, a shared vision, and continual improvement efforts. The result is a greater emphasis on student learning –a goal for K-12 organizations.

Method

In this action research study, principles of model II theory- shared control, encouragement of alternate viewpoints, and inclusion of participants in the product – were applied as a change process tool to help involved district personnel achieve consensus about an RtII model for its K-5 buildings. The application of model II principles included a focused approach for RtII in the K-5 buildings, a change in the learning climate (particularly in the areas of power, role, achievement, and support) and the development of a shared understanding of RtII in the district's K-5 building.

The study was a mixed methodology where the group determined the district's strengths and weaknesses in each of the core component areas of RtII as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Figure 1), developed an overview process for each of the tiers of the mult-tiered system, tested the new process through collaborative prediction and discussion, discussed solutions for identifying possible refinement needs, and submitted the final recommended process to the Superintendent.
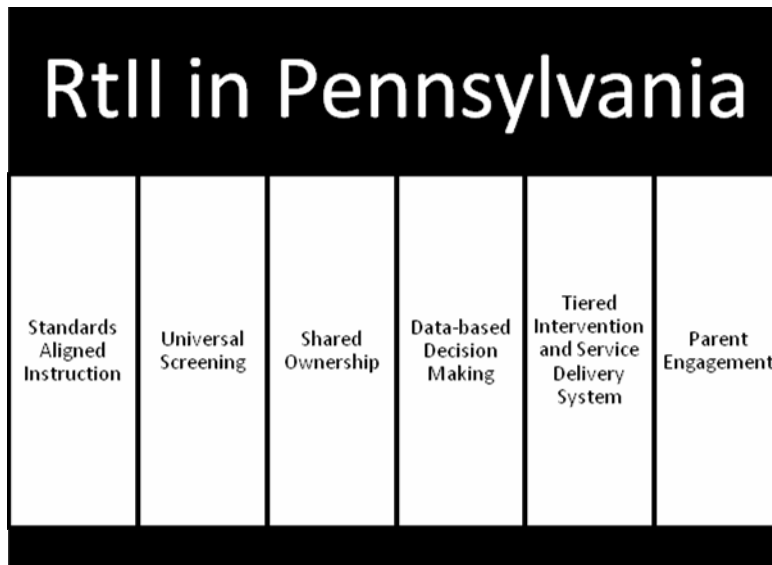
RtII in Pennsylvania

| Standards Aligned Instruction | Universal Screening | Shared Ownership | Data-based Decision Making | Tiered Intervention and Service Delivery System | Parent Engagement |

Figure 1. Components of Pennsylvania Department of Education's Response to Instruction and Intervention Model.

Smith (2001) described a six-phase process for implementation of model II theory, based on the work of Argyris and Schon (Figure 2). The first four phases of the approach were applied during three half-day meetings with 15 participants spanning various levels within the district.
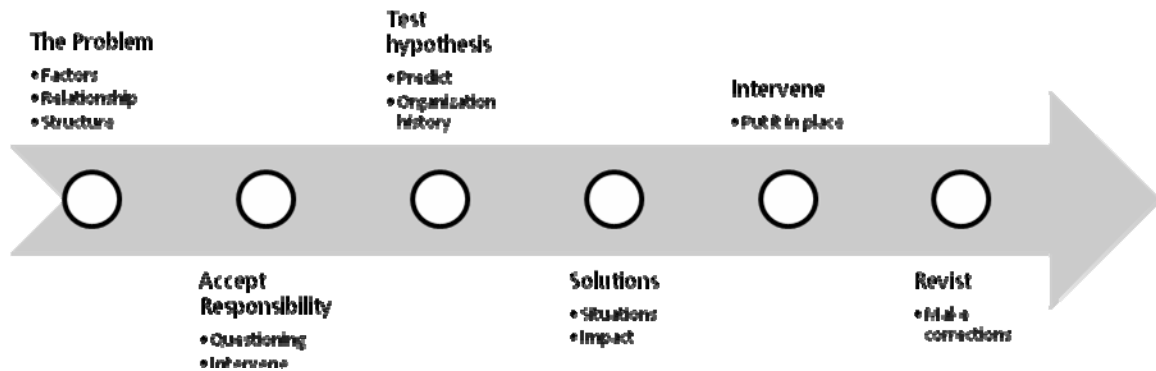

Figure 2. Argyris and Schon's Six Phase Approach

Data collection used pre- and post- survey completion, note-taking, journaling, and review of recorded meetings. Qualitative data were analyzed by looking for common themes as

related to the research questions posed, while quantitative data were gathered from survey results. The research questions answered included:

1. To what extent does the implementation of the principles of model II theory develop consensus for participants regarding RtII in the K-5 buildings?
   a) What components of the RtII process achieved consensus and what components do not?
   b) In what ways does the implementation of the principles of model II theory bring about consensus regarding the RtII process?
2. What changes are brought about to participant views regarding the learning climate, specifically in the areas of "power, role, achievement, and support," by the implementation of model II theory principles (Harrison & Stokes, 1992, p.100)?
3. In what ways does the implementation of model II theory principles develop a common understanding of RtII for participants?

Results

The implementation of model II principles allowed consensus to be achieved in all six aspects of RtII. However, though consensus was achieved, there was also an agreement among participants that several of the six areas were not immediately ready for implementation without more effort, time, and development.

The use of model II principles allowed for the development of consensus in two ways. First, all parties participated. Review of data from notes, observations, and recordings indicated that 100% of participants contributed freely (defined as not called upon or required to answer) in each of the meeting times. Participants regularly offered dissenting opinions and accepted these opinions without conflict. Second, participants noted an increased understanding of the general topic of RtII. Post-survey responses indicated that 80% of participants noted an increased understanding as a benefit of participation. Additionally, 92% of participants indicated that the process used during the half-day meetings (model II learning principles) was beneficial.

Pre- and post- survey results measured changes to views of the learning climates. Examination of the means yields small differences between pre- and post-intervention. The order of ranking for each of the cultural areas changed as seen in Figure 3. The mean for the area based on acquiring a common vision and purpose (achievement) increased 0.30. The mean for the area based on the functions, structures, and procedures for leaders (role) decreased 0.18. The mean for the area based on access to resources (power) increased 0.67. Finally, the mean for the area based on trust between individuals and the organization (power) decreased 0.78. Furthermore, the participant survey results identified trust issues as a stumbling block for implementation of RtII. While the group consensus recognized the process as a work-in-process and not a completed process, there were concerns that factors of trust would prevent implementation.

Figure 3. Rank order of cultural areas measured

Finally, a *T-test* (Paired Two Sample for Means) was applied to the data gathered through the pre- and post-test to determine if the change in climate was statistically significant. Results across power, achievement, support, and role are found in Table 1. Analysis of the *P-value* of .02 is less than the threshold value (alpha) of 0.05. However, examination of the four climate areas separately yields *P-values* that are above the 0.05 threshold and therefore not statistically significant. *P-values* for each area can be found in Table 2.

Table 1

T-test Results

	Pre-Test	*Post-Test*
Mean	2.38	2.35
Variance	0.51	0.49
Observations	60.00	60.00
Pearson Correlation	0.99	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0.00	
do	59.00	
t Stat	2.34	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.01	
t Critical one-tail	1.67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.02	
t Critical two-tail	2.00	

Table 2

P-Values

Climate Area	Mean Pre	Mean Post	P Value (two –tail)
Power	1.45	1.44	0.93
Achievement	3.07	3.02	0.11
Role	2.23	2.18	0.07
Support	2.79	2.76	0.38

Discussion

This action research study is one small step in a larger undertaking by the district, and it also provides considerations for future actions. Participants identified an increased understanding of RtII as a benefit of the implementation of model II principles. Collin (2006) described a necessity for structures for learning to occur. The results of this study indicated that model II principles can serve as these structures in an education setting, which is further supported by McGuire's, et al. (2009) belief that successful change in organization requires systems, structures, and processes.

The qualitative data gathered indicated that not only was individual understanding increased, a shared understanding developed as a part of the collaborative nature of model II principles. Participants accurately could describe the recommendations and share why the recommendations were suggested. This development of a shared understanding is a key factor when organizations undertake change. In addition, it is a component in the development of a culture of learning. Though only a small group participated, it is important to recognize the opportunity for expansion. As participants return to their individual roles, they return with the ability to vocalize rationales and ideas that are a functional part of the change process. The shared understanding that developed from the group in a coordinated manner has the opportunity to expand throughout the organization at all levels.

The issue of trust brought forth through the measurement of climate changes appears to have a strong ability to derail the change process. For participants, the issues of trust overshadowed the achievement of a recommended process for RtII and the shared understanding that developed. Therefore, it seems that regardless of shared understanding, climate, or changes undertaken, trust is paramount to success. Louis and Wahlstrom (2011) supported the assertion that trust is imperative for change to occur. According to Argyris and Schon's (1996) research, in organizations using model I principles, such as most K-12 organizations, distrust exists. In this small study, it does not appear that the use of model II principles could overcome issues of trust within an organization. Barrett (1995) and Louis and Wahlstrom (2011) have discussed the need for trust within organizations undertaking change efforts and recognized that trust does not develop in organizations naturally; however, missing was a discussion of how to cultivate trust in organizations where distrust exists. Argyris and Schon (1996) have suggested that trust can possibly develop with the implementation of model II principles; however, it remains to be seen if the implementation of model II principles can overcome distrust

present in an organization. Because trust is a key component in both change theory and the development of a culture of learning, this is an area for further exploration by organizations before undertaking change efforts within their system.

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Teaching All Children: Domestic Violence Awareness and Children's Literature

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Introduction

While living in their own homes, children are witnessing violence and experiencing trauma daily and, in turn, are expected to go to school and learn. Trauma can undermine children's ability to learn, children will have difficulty forming healthy relationships, and they will have difficulty functioning appropriately in the classrooms (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Haeseler, 2006a; Spath, 2003; Edelson, 1999b; Barrett-Kruse, Martinez & Carll, 1998; Kearney, 2001; Hughes, Graham-Bermann & Gruber, 2002; Coster & Cicchetti, 1993). Because of the fact that family violence is frequently undisclosed from school personnel, children are often misdiagnosed with other learning issues while at school (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005).

Need for the Study

Teachers often are the first to notice that a child is having difficulties. Therefore, school professionals must be trained in identifying warning signs of children of abuse, as these children either witness and/or incur abuse in their environment (Haeseler, 2006a). Teachers have many opportunities to observe children's behaviors and socio-emotional functioning and are in a position to monitor academic achievement and cognitive development.

It is necessary to educate pre-service teachers with the possible signs that a child may be witnessing domestic violence. Using literature as an aesthetic experience in the classroom can also help students make connections between their lives and the lives of the characters in the given literature. Pre-service teachers also need to be able to guide students to using literature and responding to literature from an aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt, 1982, 1991, 2005).

As a result of the review of literature, it was discovered that only two researchers, Melear (1997) and Hazzard (1984), have explored pre-service teacher's knowledge of domestic violence. Due to the fact that there is little research exploring pre-service teacher's knowledge of domestic violence, this showed a strong need for this study. This paper provides a research study that investigates the impact of providing professional development in domestic violence on the attitudes and awareness of pre-service teachers.

Review of Prior Literature

The Massachusetts Advocates for Children (2005) and Edleson (1999a) found that between 3.3 million and 10 million children in the United States witness violence in their own homes each year. Given these statistics it is easy to understand why many children come to school frightened, angry, afraid, lonely, confused, ashamed, unprepared to learn, and emotionally unstable because of witnessing family violence in the home.

**Effects of Domestic Violence: Children Traumatized
by Domestic Violence and Succeeding in School**

Domestic violence not only adversely affects those being abused but also the children who witness the violence. These children have been called the "silent," "forgotten," and "unintended" victims of adult- to-adult domestic violence (Edleson, 1999a, b).

Research reveals many lasting negative effects of domestic violence. First, children witnessing domestic violence experience developmental delays and have increased behavioral and emotional problems (Spath, 2003; Edelson, 1999a,b; Barrett-Kruse, Martinez, & Carll 1998; Kearney, 2001). Succeeding in school, including academic achievement and social competence, poses a huge hurdle for children who have witnessed domestic violence. Shonk and Cicchetti (2001) found that maltreated children show more severe academic problems than do comparison children. They also found that maltreated children are more likely to receive special educational services, to have below grade level achievement test scores, to be retained in a grade, and to be rated by teachers as showing poor work habits.

Children traumatized as a result of witnessing domestic violence face obstacles such as the inability to process information, meaningfully distinguishing between threatening and nonthreatening situations, and struggle to form trusting relationships with adults and with peers (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001). Children who have witnessed domestic violence have difficulty regulating emotions, which can lead to the inability to form relationships with peers (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001). Verbal problem solving skills may not have been emphasized in the home for those children traumatized by domestic violence. Children who are socially withdrawn have limited problem solving skills and non assertive strategies. Many times, peers will often reject these withdrawn children as well as children who are aggressive in nature (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001).

Furthermore, as Masten and Coatsworth (1998) point out, prerequisites for excelling in the classroom include the ability to self-regulate attention, emotions and behavior. Language and communication skills, organizing narrative material, cause-and-effect relationships, attending to classroom tasks, processing verbal information and engaging in the curriculum can all be hampered for a child exposed to domestic violence (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005).

Traumatic experiences can hinder a student's ability to organize material sequentially, leading to problems such as reading, writing and oral communication (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; De Bellis, 2005). Early in life, children begin to remember memories and information episodically as a collection of events rather than a narrative (Craig, 2008). When children have consistent environments, children develop the capacity to remember things sequentially. Children then encode new information within the context of prior experience. Children exposed to violence are often deprived of the types of care giving experiences that nourish the development of sequential memory. Due to the fact that the development of sequential memory is delayed and the ability to sequentially remember new information is impaired, children witnessing domestic violence will have difficulty organizing and processing the content of academic lessons for later retrieval and application (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; De Bellis, 2005; Craig, 2008).

The School's Role in Prevention and Intervention of Domestic Violence

In-service teachers and pre-service teachers have the arduous task of providing instruction, which includes strategies for teaching in an environment where all children can learn. Furthermore, the regular contact that educators have with children and parents render schools an exceptional environment for intervention and prevention (Haeseler, 2006a). Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) discuss the need for teachers to understand basic research on how people (specifically children) learn, and the influences of different conditions, including strategies on that learning. Furthermore, Darling-Hammond and Bransford's (2005) research provides knowledge of learning in different social contexts and contributes to understanding the development and the significance of language for students. Ultimately, the child is more important than the subject matter.

Literature-Related Classroom Conversations About Domestic Abuse

Literature can be used in all classrooms to help teachers connect with their students and open the doors for discussion on tough, realistic topics. Using books opens the door to conversations the teachers can have with students. The students can talk about the story characters to discuss topics or issues that may otherwise be difficult for them to talk about openly. Reading is an active experience in which students can interpret the story and thus engage with the text. Teachers should model strategies that should be used while reading. Research has shown the importance for strategic reading (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Moreover, children who grow up in unpredictable environments, such as those witnessing domestic violence, often need direct instruction in strategic reading to help them approach text in a purposeful manner (Craig, 2008, Haeseler, 2006b).

Method

Participants and Design

The population sample was taken from an undergraduate reading methods course, and approximately six hours was devoted to this professional development. The college is a small, Catholic liberal arts college in southeastern Pennsylvania, west of Philadelphia with a population of 1,700 students in the undergraduate program. Topics for this course include the following but are not limited to: comprehension strategies, reading and language arts assessment to drive instruction, teaching of the writing process, vocabulary development, bibliotherapy, language acquisition and using children's literature for instruction. Each class had approximately 14 students, and the classes were predominately female. Forty-two students were participants in the study.

Surveys, journal responses, and interviews were the instruments used to collect and analyze data for this study. The use of each of the instruments is explained here.

Surveys. Pre- and post-surveys were administered to the pre-service teachers, and data from the survey were analyzed, coded and quantified to determine if pre-service teachers' attitudes and views about identifying signs of domestic violence changed after the professional development and readings of the given literature. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The survey included questions about the pre-service teacher's attitudes and awareness of domestic violence and knowledge of how children's literature can help children who are suffering emotionally. After the six-hour professional development was completed, the pre-service teachers took the survey again to determine if their attitudes or awareness of identifying domestic violence in the

classroom was changed. The survey was administered electronically using Surveymonkey (www.surveymonkey.com).

Journal entries/responses. The journal response data collected for this study were analyzed and coded to determine if pre-service teachers' attitudes, views and dispositions were impacted or changed regarding identifying those children affected by domestic violence. This language analysis was validated by the triangulation of the survey and journal responses. The participating pre-service teachers were required to answer questions distributed after each group of assigned journal articles were read and after each lecture. The requirements for each entry were to answer a set of questions and then discuss their responses in literature groups in the classrooms. Each article had different questions related to the content of the given articles. Anonymous responses to the questions were given to the researcher after each discussion group. The responses were coded to determine the usefulness of the information on domestic violence, their overall feelings on using children's literature to discuss sensitive issues in the classroom either in whole group, small group or individual setting and to determine their thoughts on the issues surrounding domestic violence they may encounter in the classroom.

The same procedure, including collection of responses, was followed after an exploration of children's literature with themes and content related to domestic violence. Students participated in two jigsaw cooperative learning group activities (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). The first jigsaw activity explored children's books related to feelings and the second jigsaw activity investigated children's literature related to domestic violence. Students were asked to develop activities that could be completed in coordination with the given books.

Interview. At the conclusion of the study, a representative group of the pre-service teachers were interviewed. Approximately eighteen interviews were conducted with the researcher and one pre-service teacher at a time. The interview questions focused on pre-service teachers' awareness and dispositions towards domestic violence, and how their awareness and dispositions changed as a result of using children's literature for instruction and reading professional literature related to domestic violence for their own professional growth. These questions were also coded and used as qualitative data. The researcher taped the interviews and then later completed a language analysis of the taped data.

Results

This study collected and interpreted data to find answers to the following questions:
1. Based on the domestic violence survey, how did pre-service teachers' awareness of and dispositions towards domestic violence change as a result of their professional development?
2. What themes or recurring issues were evident from the pre-service teachers' survey responses after reading professional literature on domestic violence?
3. In what ways had previous understandings of domestic violence changed as a result of the pre-service teachers' interview responses after reading professional literature and children's literature?

Results for Question One

Question One asked: *Based on the domestic violence survey, how did pre-service teachers' awareness of and dispositions towards domestic violence change as a result of their professional development?*

Prior to the professional development on domestic violence, the survey results show that 92.3% of the students surveyed were familiar with the term domestic violence. After the professional development on domestic violence, the survey results show that 100% of the students surveyed were familiar with the term domestic violence. When asked to define the term domestic violence, many of the respondents reported domestic violence included physical, verbal, or emotional abuse towards a spouse, partner or someone in the family within the same household. Prior to the professional development, 16 of 40 respondents reported that domestic abuse included physical, emotional, verbal and/or sexual abuse. After the professional development, 20 of the 29 respondents reported domestic abuse included: physical, emotional, verbal, psychological and/or sexual abuse. An analysis of the data shows after the professional development, a higher percentage of the pre-service teachers indicated they felt more prepared to recognize signs that a child is witnessing domestic violence in their home.

In the pre-survey, the data also show some students had personal knowledge of domestic violence. The results indicate that 32.5% of the respondents reported a family member was abused, 30% indicated a friend was abused, 10% indicated they themselves were abused, and 52.5% reported none of the above.

Another pre-survey question asked the pre-service teachers what types of domestic violence they had either witnessed or personally experienced. The respondents answered 27.5% were abused, 37.5% were emotionally abused, 20% were intimidated, 5% were affected by economic abuse, 15% were affected by male privilege, 12.5% were affected by isolation, 15% were affected by coercion and threats, and 57.5% responded none of the above. This question was not repeated for the post-survey.

One question on the survey asked: What could elementary teachers do regarding domestic violence? Pre-survey responses yielded six themes; post survey responses yielded eight themes. Four common themes were evident in both pre- and post-survey responses: reporting the abuse, providing a safe environment for the child who has witnessed, documenting and observing the behaviors of the child and asking for assistance from school leaders.

During the pre-survey and post-survey, pre-service teachers were asked if books about particular social topics could help students with their problems and why or why not. All respondents agreed that books were helpful in addressing specific social topics and helping students with their problems. Thirty-six (36) pre-service teachers responded to the pre-survey, and 27 responded to the post-survey. One finding clearly indicated respondents believed using literature helped students because they were able to relate to the story characters (22% on pre-survey and 44% on post-survey).

The pre-service teachers were asked about their disposition toward domestic violence and how these dispositions have changed over time. Prior to the professional development, 5 of the 33 responding pre-service teachers' (15%) discussed the effects domestic violence can have on children. After the professional development, 15 of 27 respondents (55%) discussed the effects domestic violence can have on children. This increase between pre- and post responses seem to be caused by the professional development and training that was provided in the reading/language arts course. The pre-service teachers' post responses indicated they had learned the importance of recognizing signs or behaviors of their students who may have witnessed domestic violence in their home. They reported they were better informed as to what procedures to follow if they are faced with this type of situation in the classroom.

The second research question posed for this study was: *What themes or recurring issues were evident from the pre-service teachers' survey responses after reading professional literature on domestic violence?*

During the course of the professional development, pre-service teachers were given three sets of articles to read; all were selected by the course instructor. After reading, questions about the articles were assigned to be answered in written form. The first set of articles discussed domestic violence and the signs in which a child may be witnessing domestic violence, while the second set of articles discussed how teachers should respond to a student's witnessing of domestic violence in the home. Pre-service teachers were asked to record sentences or phrases they felt were important information to remember. An analysis of the data revealed five themes related to the first set of readings, four themes for the second set, and eight themes for the third set.

When responding to the first set of articles regarding detecting signs of domestic violence, the following five themes emerged from the pre-service teachers' responses: (1) responsiveness of teachers to children affected by DV; (2) support for the teacher; (3) strategies for teachers to help children affected by DV; (4) behavioral or emotional signs that students are affected by DV; and (5) school is a safe, secure place for children affected by DV. The most frequently occurring response was behavioral or emotional signs that students are affected by DV. This concern appeared 23 times among responses. The second most frequent response (14 times) was responsiveness of teachers to children affected by DV. There seems to be a strong link between these two responses since the pre-service teachers incorporated these themes most frequently in their written responses.

The third set of readings detailed how to use books to create conversations with children. The term bibliotherapy was discussed in class and in the articles given to the pre-service teachers. The articles discussed the term bibliography and detailed specific ways to use children's literature to discuss sensitive topics. The pre-service teachers answered a variety of questions following the readings. As a result, seven themes were found. Table 1 presents the themes and the frequency of times each theme occurred in a pre-service teacher's response.

Table 1

Themes and Frequency of Responses from Third Set of Readings

Themes	Frequency of times noted
A Using children's literature to discuss sensitive issues is beneficial	8
B Children can relate to the characters in the books	11
C Role playing can be used	1
D Appropriate age level to use children's literature detailing sensitive issues	4
E Concern about upsetting students or parents	7
F Literature circles can be used	1
G Journaling can be used	3
H Safety of child needs to be considered when discussing sensitive topics	1

Results for Question Three

Question three asked: *In what ways had previous understandings of domestic violence changed as a result of the pre-service teachers' interview responses after reading professional literature and children's literature?*

In response to the third question, pre-service teachers were interviewed at the end of the professional development. Interview questions referred to three areas: signs a child may be witnessing domestic violence, using children's literature to discuss sensitive issues, and how their participation in this research would change their practice and dispositions toward domestic violence. Table 2 presents the most frequently occurring theme for each question. These themes are listed because they occurred at least twice in the responses by the interviewees.

In the first three interview questions, pre-service teachers stated the importance of recognizing the signs and behaviors for which a student may witness domestic violence in the home. They recognized the importance of talking to administrators, the importance of anecdotal Records, and the importance of talking to children about the behaviors the teachers are noticing. In questions four through eight, the use of children's literature to discuss sensitive issues was discussed. Common themes among all five questions were the understanding that books help students make connections by relating to the characters and their life. The pre-service teachers also felt it was important to use literature to discuss issues which may be uncomfortable to broach. Questions nine through eleven discussed ways in which their participation changed their concerns and dispositions towards domestic violence.

The most frequent response reported pre-service teachers' increased awareness of domestic violence and the effects witnessing can have on children. The last question asked the pre-service teachers if they had anything else to add. The most frequent responses were that the presentation was helpful and that the pre-service teachers felt it was important for all educators to know how witnessing domestic violence can affect children.

Table 2

Themes of Responses from Interview Questions

Interview Question	Most frequently occurring themes
1 Signs or behaviors child may be witnessing DV	physical, aggressive, isolated, protective of siblings
2 What to do as a teacher if a child shows signs of witnessing DV	talk to administrator, question child, anecdotal records
3 If a student confided in you that there is DV what would you do	talk to administrator, reassure child of safety in school
4 How to use children's literature to create conversations in classroom	books help make connections, journal, use literature circles

5 Overall feelings on using literature to discuss sensitive issues	give solutions, helpful to discuss issues and feelings
6 Why or why not is children's literature helpful to discuss sensitive issues	relate to characters and their life, helpful to discuss sensitive issues
7 Would you present literature that may discuss sensitive issues	would present literature that may discuss sensitive issues
8 Concerns using literature to discuss sensitive issues	concern about parent's reactions, concern about making students uncomfortable
9 Concerns changing as result of professional development	greater awareness of DV and better prepared, use of books help with awareness of sensitive topics
10 Changes in practice as a result of professional development	more aware of DV, will use literature to discuss sensitive issues
11 Changes in disposition towards DV	aware of DV affecting all levels of society, aware of how students may be affected by DV,
12 Anything to add	presentation helpful, important for all educators to know how children can be affected by DV, using books to discuss issues is helpful

Discussion

The discussion begins by addressing findings related to the three targeted questions for this research. Results and information from pre-service teachers' interviews follows each research question below.

Research Question One: Based on the domestic violence survey, how did pre-service teachers' awareness of and dispositions towards domestic violence change as a result of their professional development?

Teachers have many opportunities to observe children's behaviors and socio-emotional functions and are in a position to monitor academic achievement and cognitive development and will notice if a child is having significant difficulties. Therefore, school professionals must be well versed in identifying warning signs of children of abuse, as these children either witness and/or incur abuse in their environment (Haeseler, 2006a; Craig, 2008). Before the professional development, 15% of the pre-service teachers responding to the survey discussed the effects domestic violence can have on children. After the professional development, 55% of the pre-service teacher respondents clarified during their interviews and in their post-surveys their understanding of the effects domestic violence can have on children. This increase between pre- and post-responses seems to be caused by the professional development training provided in the

reading/language arts course. The pre-service teachers' posted responses indicated they learned the importance of recognizing signs or behaviors of their students who may have witnessed domestic violence in their home. For example, one pre-service teacher responded she learned more about appropriately facilitating the topic of domestic violence with students when the topic is related to children's literature. Another pre-service teacher reported she understands the effects witnessing domestic violence can have on children. The comments made by respondents for the survey are supported by research (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Kearney, 2001; Spath, 2003; Edelson, 1999a,b; Barrett-Kruse, Martinez, & Carll, 1998; Carlson, Furby, Armstrong & Shales, 1997; De Bellis, 2005; Daro, Edleson & Pinderhughes, 2004).

Overall, after the professional development, pre-service teachers reported they felt more informed about procedures to follow if faced with this type of situation in the classroom and about the kind of support to offer children who are suffering from domestic violence. Furthermore, after the professional development, the respondents reported they were more comfortable with helping the children in the classroom as an initial intervention and after the intervention reporting the information to the appropriate administrator. Although they saw the importance of reporting the suspected domestic violence to the administrator, the respondents felt they had a greater understanding of how to reach the children emotionally and academically in the classroom. One pre-service teacher commented, "The teacher needs to know what he or she can do within the walls of the classroom to promote healing and understanding without offending the student's sensibilities. The teacher should be able to use literature privately or with the whole group; when appropriate, to aid the child in the healing process."

Research Question Two: What themes or recurring issues were evident from the pre-service teachers' survey responses after reading professional literature on domestic violence?

After the professional development and reading the assigned materials, pre-service teachers identified what they felt were the most important parts of the materials. The most frequently occurring response was the information on the signs or behaviors students are showing to indicate they may be witnessing domestic violence. It is important for teachers who educate students from unsafe homes to have sufficient knowledge to best educate and help these students. Therefore, teachers should be trained to recognize the signs or symptoms of domestic violence. It was evident from the questions answered that the pre-service teachers understood the importance for a teacher to know and evaluate signs for which a child may be witnessing domestic violence.

For example, one student stated the importance for the teacher to support a student who makes a disclosure. Also, the pre-service teacher stated, "When a student is dealing with a serious issue ,he or she may drop hints, and it's important for the teacher to pick up on this and be able to deal with it." Another student stated that the most important task for a teacher who may see signs of domestic violence in a particular student would be to properly respond to that child's needs and emotions in the classroom. These aforementioned thoughts provided by the pre-service teachers are supported by research (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Kearney, 2001; Spath, 2003; Edelson, 1999a,b; Barrett-Kruse, Martinez, & Carll, 1998; Hughes, Graham-Bermann and Gruber, 2002; De Bellis, 2005; Daro, Edleson & Pinderhughes, 2004).

A few respondents (67%) mentioned the need for intervention and prevention initiatives within the school community. One respondent noted, "Teachers may be the caring adults who make a difference in the lives of students who may be in distress in their home." Acknowledging the need for these interventions demonstrates pre-service teachers recognized the importance of (1) teachers understanding the warning signs presented by a child who is witnessing domestic

violence and (2) responding accordingly to help the child emotionally and academically so that the child is able to succeed in the classroom.

*Research Question Three: In what ways had previous understandings of domestic violence changed as a result of the pre-service teachers' interview responses after reading professional literature and children's literature***?**

In response to the third question, pre-service teachers were interviewed at the end of the professional development. Interview questions referred to three areas: signs a child may be witnessing domestic violence, using children's literature to discuss sensitive issues and how their participation in this research would change their practice and dispositions toward domestic violence.

In the first three interview questions, pre-service teachers stated the importance of recognizing the behavior signs for which a student may witness domestic violence in the home. Interviewees recognized the importance of talking to administrators, the importance of anecdotal records, and the importance of talking to children about the behaviors the teachers are noticing. When asked, "What would you do if you felt a child had witnessed domestic violence in the home?"one pre-service teacher replied, "The first thing you want to do is reassure the student by creating a safe environment in the school. Also, the behaviors you see at school you want to monitor and keep track of them. You want to consult with a principal or social worker within the school for advice and ask them what steps to take next." That comment made by the pre-service teacher is similar to comments which appear in the research literature in regard to the necessity of collaboration among school staff and the initiation and implementation of a domestic violence school safety plan (The Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005; Craig, 2008; Haeseler, 2006a). In a domestic violence school safety plan, the school faculty and staff are involved in helping children who may be witnessing domestic violence in the home.

The next five questions of the interview covered the use of children's literature to discuss sensitive issues. A common theme among all five questions was the realization books help students make connections by relating to the characters and their life. When asked about their overall feelings on using children's literature to discuss sensitive issues in the classroom, one pre-service teacher responded by stating, "I think it's a good idea because they will be able to see it's not just them going through it and they can relate to the characters in the story."

Forgan (2002) suggested using books which deal with the same issues children are facing may help students to gain insight into their personal problems and may perhaps help to find a remedy for their problems. The pre-service teachers surveyed also felt it was important to use literature to discuss issues that may be uncomfortable to broach. Pre-service teachers were asked, "Do you think using children's literature to present sensitive issues to children would be helpful to students? Why or why not?" One pre-service teacher responded saying, "Children's literature opens up connections to text and you can ask students' questions about what they find in the text, and it provides good communication in the classroom. It helps them to develop their expressive language and also they can talk about their feelings. You can use strategies such as reading logs, literature circles, and readers' theatre to get them to express their feelings." This pre-service teacher's response demonstrates her understanding of children who grow up in unpredictable environments, such as those witnessing domestic violence, often need direct instruction in strategic reading to help them approach text in a purposeful manner (Craig, 2008).

The last three questions discussed ways in which the pre-service teachers' participation changed their personal concerns and dispositions towards domestic violence. In response to the

question, "How are your concerns changing as a result of the professional development?", one pre-service teacher replied, "I think I have a greater awareness of domestic violence, and it affects so many more kids and people than I thought. As a professional you need to be aware of domestic violence and know what the signs are since you are working with kids every day." Another student replied to the same question, "I learned that we as teachers need to discuss these issues in the classroom and we can use literature to do so." As noted earlier, it is difficult to link their statements to research because little research has explored pre-service teachers' knowledge of domestic violence and because of this fact this study was needed.

Pre-service teachers were also asked during the interview how participation in this research changed their practice. One pre-service teacher replied, "I had no idea there were so many books that discussed sensitive topics like domestic violence. As a result, I will explore more books with sensitive topics for my own classroom." As stated previously, this student now has an understanding of how books can create conversations with students. Good readers make connections between their own experience and what they read (Pressley, 2000). When readers read fiction from a predominantly aesthetic stance, they are more likely to interpret story events, apply their experiences with literature to life, and generalize abstract or create new possibilities as a result of their encounters with literature (Galda & Aimoneete-Liang, 2003). Overall, the pre-service teachers understand how using books can help children who are witnessing domestic violence.

Conclusion

The data in this study showed a significant increase in pre-service teachers' knowledge, skills, and awareness pertaining to recognizing behaviors and other signs in students that may be indicative of exposure to domestic violence. The data further revealed that the increase was due to the use of children's literature and professional journal articles as part of their professional development.

Teachers need to be able to identify if a child may be witnessing domestic violence and know appropriate interventions and strategies to help these children learn in the classroom. Faculty development should be provided for all members of the school community. Resources, such as community referrals, family seminars, and prevention handbooks, should be made available to all faculty and staff in the school system. Other community members, such as social workers, police officers, shelter staff and hospital staff, should participate in these professional development opportunities to begin to provide an integrative process across fields. By involving these various social service groups within the community, all members will have a better sense of what each field encounters when helping children who have witnessed domestic. With proper school intervention abused children and children who witness abuse can cultivate healthy relationships (Kearney, 2001). Teachers and other school personnel can use various strategies to help the child, who is suffering in the classroom, become successful members of their school community.

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All submissions must be prepared using word processing software and saved in *Microsoft Word* (DOC) or rich text format (RTF). Manuscripts must comply with the guidelines in the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association, sixth edition, 2009. Double-space all text, including quotations and references, use 1-inch margins for top and bottom, and use 1.25-inch right and left margins. All text should be Times New Roman 11-point font. Complete references should be placed at the end of the manuscript, using the "hanging indent" function. Additional article publication formatting details are listed on the *PEL* web site (http://citl.hbg.psu.edu/pel).

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