Indicator Explanation

CORE FUNCTION	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Instruction	Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction	3B.10 Teachers are guided by a document that includes strategies and resources for integrating evidence-based, explicit instruction in reading across the K-12 curriculum.

Explanation: Students must be equipped with skills and strategies to allow them to become proficient readers who can read effectively for whatever path they choose in the future. Foundational (i.e., decoding) and comprehension skills must be taught through explicit instruction in the early grades, and reading instruction must continue into the upper elementary and secondary levels, with plenty of writing and discussion of complex texts to build background knowledge and critical reading skills. Schools must select instructional approaches and provide professional learning appropriate for the school to foster teachers' capacity to implement to fidelity and sustain evidence-based reading instruction at all grade levels.

Questions: What is the students' level of performance on reading assessments? What do classroom observations and lesson plans reveal about early grades' teachers' capacity to teach foundational reading skills? What do they reveal about teachers' capacity to teach comprehension strategies? Do teachers provide explicit instruction that includes modeling, scaffolding/guided instruction, and plenty of independent practice in the use of reading strategies? Do content area teachers incorporate reading instruction to help their students read and think like an expert? In their discipline? What professional learning is necessary to help teachers provide research-based reading instruction with fidelity?

Instructional transformation requires system-wide changes in classroom instruction, including the use of rigorous evidence-based practices when planning curriculum and instruction (Herman et al., 2008; The Center on School Turnaround, 2017). In schools in need of improvement, teachers must use, with a high degree of fidelity, sustained and evidence-based practices in the area of reading instruction (The Center on School Turnaround, 2018). The importance of building students' capacity to read fluently and with high levels of comprehension cannot be understated. Only approximately one-third of 4th and 8th graders demonstrate proficiency on national tests of reading, with students from disadvantaged communities and those of color having the poorest outcomes (Pimentel, 2018). Most students who cannot read proficiently by 3rd grade either fail to graduate from high school or face a lifetime of poor earning potential (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010). Students must be equipped with strategies that foster their ability to read rich and complex texts in a variety of content areas, help them build their background/content knowledge, and allow them to read with high levels of comprehension (Knowledge Matters Campaign, n.d.; Pimentel, 2018; Willingham, 2017). Schools and teachers must implement research-based reading instruction with fidelity to ensure that students develop the skills to equip them to read effectively in college, career, and life-long readers and learners.

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) recently reviewed research literature that addressed reading instruction in the early grades, and developed evidence-based recommendations on instructional practices that build both foundational reading skills and reading comprehension (Foorman et al., 2016; Shanahan et al., 2010). Foorman et al. (2016) suggest the following for teaching foundational reading skills at grades K-3:

- Teach students academic language skills and vocabulary knowledge
- Develop phonemic awareness
- Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words
- Ensure each student reads text every day to support accuracy, content knowledge, fluency, and comprehension.

Shanahan et al.'s (2010) review of research yielded the following recommendations for early grades:

- Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies (predicting, questioning, visualization, inferencing, retelling).
- Teach students to identify and use the text's organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content.
- Guide students through a focused discussion on the meaning of the text.
- Select texts that support comprehension development (rich text).
- Give students a choice on what to read when appropriate.

Research has also consistently demonstrated that students must be explicitly taught reading strategies that proficient readers use in order to effectively navigate these texts independently in ways that lead to deep learning of the material (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Teachers College, 2014). Exemplary teachers frequently provide direct, explicit demonstrations (modeling) of cognitive strategies that good readers use during reading, then gradually scaffold these strategies by providing practice and feedback to students (Allington, 2002).

Reading instruction must continue as student progress into the upper elementary and secondary years. Writing about text may provide opportunities for higher-order thinking and learning. Recent meta-analysis have revealed that writing instruction and writing about what is read also improves reading comprehension, fluency, and word recognition at both elementary and secondary levels; increasing how much students write also enhances students' reading comprehension (Graham & Hebert, 2011). For example, some researchers have advocated the teaching of argumentation as a reading and writing tool because "when composing an argument, students need to read and think critically and evaluate multiple perspectives in order to measure the strength of their own claim, and make conclusions" (Teachers College, 2014). These types of skills involved in making arguments based on reading have touted as essential for college career readiness (Hillocks, 2010). High-quality discussions about the meaning and interpretation of text in various content areas also promote reading and learning (Kamil, Borman, Dole, Kral, Salinger, & Torgeson, 2008). Kamil et al. recommend that teachers prepare for instruction by using engaging reading selections that can have multiple interpretations, and preparing questions that will stimulate high-level thinking. They should also ask follow-up questions that help provide continuity and extend the discussion and provide a discussion format for students to follow when they discuss texts together in small groups. A recent meta-analysis also suggests that these instructional strategies positively impact students' critical thinking skills as well (Abrami, Bernard, Borokhovski, Waddington, Wade, & Persson, 2015). Close Reading, in which students complete multiple readings of a short piece of text and are guided to deeply analyze and appreciate its important aspects (e.g., choice of vocabulary, tone, imagery, etc.), is an important strategy to foster students' cognitive competency and thus, their learning (Fisher & Frey, 2015; Richel, 2018). Close Reading can be sued beginning at the early elementary level as well (Riche, 2018).

Literacy-rich instruction can help build student motivation and their use of higher-level reading and writing strategies specific to the various disciplines they will encounter in college and careers. In fact, instruction addressing these strategies is critical to the Common Core Standards implemented by many states (Chauvin & Molina, 2012). Berman (2009) argues, "Though content area teachers in middle and high schools are not expected to be 'reading' teachers, they do need to know how to teach their students the reading and writing skills of their disciplines" (p. 4). This may be particularly true at the secondary level, where the literacy demands of specific subjects (e.g., how to interpret a historical document) must be articulated, and content area teachers need to know how to teach these skills. Literacy-rich content area instruction has been

shown to increase students' strategy use, conceptual learning and text comprehension (Cervetti, Pearson, Barber, Hiebert, & Bravo, 2007). Urguhart and Frazee (2012) provide several examples of characteristics of literacy-rich science classrooms in which reading, writing and discussion occur daily:

- Students read a variety of texts, including academic journal articles and scientific websites;
- Student comprehension is also supported through access to electronic media, film, and lab experiences;
- Students actively construct science-specific vocabulary and use reader aids to enhance their understanding of science texts; and,
- Students often discuss, present, and write about their hypotheses, predictions, analyses, and findings.

Literacy-rich content instruction enables students to develop the deep and higher-level critical thinking skills that will allow them to become critical readers and life-long learners (Chauvin & Molina, 2012).

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