



Communication Link

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Project Read

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SENECA, S.C.



Kellett Elementary First Graders trace glued letters "ank"

Project Read Adds Important Components to Kellett Elementary's Language Arts Teaching

Project Read Staff Development Model Improves Student Knowledge and Teaching Excellence

We are so excited about the Project Read training at Kellett Elementary and the impact our teachers believe it will have on the students. Our Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) scores are the lowest of the eleven elementary schools in the county. This is not where we want to be! Even though our population is seventy percent free and reduced lunch, we believe our students can perform as well as the most affluent school population. The key is finding the right program. Our teachers have worked so hard over the years to find a program that will touch all students in our school in a positive way. We believe we have found it in Project Read. Because it is so comprehensive, it has everything that any program needs—and more. The depth is remarkable in every component. If this program is followed as setup, students will be successful.

Some of the things I have observed among my classroom teachers:

- A new enthusiasm for teaching reading, writing, and spelling. The teachers love the symbols and hand motions as much as the students.

- I have noted that the language of Project Read among the faculty is used repeatedly—jewel box words, treasure chest sentences, Bonnie Kline Stories, skeleton, pulling out the subject, framing the sentence, etc.

- Several faculty members have said to me, "This is exactly what we have been needing!"

- I have noted that the children's written work in the halls is better than in past years.

- When I have observed in classrooms, the children are enthusiastic about what they are learning in language arts. In Ms. Rankin's fourth grade, the children enthusiastically yelled, "Yeah!" when she said that it was time to do Project Read.

- The children are more confident now that they have a set of tools. The choral repetition of the definitions along with the hand motions has really caught on with the students, and they are excited about it. As they repeat it frequently and then use it in sentences, I can see the confidence improve. Now in the upper grades they are taking their own sentences from their science and social studies reports to analyze. This should certainly help with transfer.

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PROJECT READ STAFF DEVELOPMENT: COST EFFECTIVE AND EDUCATIONALLY RESPONSIBLE

Language Circle Consultants Take Project Read into Classrooms; Lessons Come to Life

Language Circle Consultants demonstrate Project Read curriculum and teaching strategies in regular education classrooms in South Carolina and elsewhere. Classroom, Title I, and remedial educators observe the consultants teaching Phonology, Written Expression and Comprehension lessons. Here are reflections from two Lanaguage Circle Consultants, telling the benefits of this staff development model.

Andy Stetkevich:

“**T**his staff development model offers many advantages for teachers and students. First, teachers have the opportunity to observe the program in action with their students over a period of days. Second, staff members have time to debrief with Language Circle Consultants and ask specific questions regarding classroom implementation. Teachers are not pulled away from their classroom for 2 or 3 days to attend training. Rather they participate in shorter after-school trainings that are more meaningful since they have directly observed classroom application. Follow-up support by the Language Circle Consultant allows teachers to work with the strategies and discuss classroom implementation issues.

Additionally, Language Circle Consultants can discuss methods for integrating the Project Read program within a particular school's instructional parameters. For example, at Parker Elementary School in South Carolina, the upper grade teachers asked and received guidance on how the Report Form curriculum could support students in preparing for State Assessments with expository text. Thus teachers can see how the curriculum directly relates to high achievement outcomes expected for their student.”



Mary Thrasher:

“**I** love teaching demonstrations because I am able to teach the concepts through Project Read lessons while teachers observe their students' responses to the lesson.

After each lesson the observing teachers debrief with the Project Read Consultants. Teachers are given an opportunity to immediately discuss the lesson and their students' responses. Many teachers comment that students most engaged in the lesson are ones who have struggled with regular classroom instruction. Consecutive lessons help teachers observe the transfer, application and mastery of concepts and skills. Teachers see firsthand the power of multisensory strategies used to lock in skills and concepts that are taught directly.

Teachers and staff at W.E. Parker Elementary in Edgefield, S.C. commented that this is the first staff development to enable them to watch their students progress daily. They thought it was the most effective part of the training. One teacher said, 'I can see the lesson come to life.'

Inservice training in one particular strand continues for two to three hours after school. During this inservice time, teachers learn the curriculum from Project Read teaching guides. Teachers begin to plan for implementing Project Read in their own classroom.

A final benefit—no substitute teachers are required. Demonstrations are held in regular classrooms on normal school days. All across our nation school districts are experiencing tremendous budget cuts and yet there is a greater need for the type of effective staff development that Project Read provides.”

Photo at left: Identifying the vowels as the stars of the alphabet because "Every Word Needs a Vowel!"

EDGEFIELD, S.C.

Project Read Brings Renewed Excitement to Teaching at Parker Elementary



Project Read Consultant Andy Stetkevich (far left) practices Reading Comprehension handsignals with Parker Elementary teachers.

“**W**hat a great reading program! I am excited about being in “full gear” with the program. I have already used many of the Phonology techniques with my first graders.

The students are excited about learning ways to help them better decode words. I feel this program will target ALL learners and learning styles and will be invaluable to those needing a tactile, kinesthetic approach. Many thanks for brining this to Parker!”

—Mrs. Martha Herlong teaches grades 1 – 5 in the Skill Center at Parker Elementary School.

“**W**ords can’t express how excited I am about incorporating the comprehension part of Project Read into my curriculum. I have already taught some of the lessons myself and the students have renewed interest in reading.

One of my hardest students to reach had to come in at recess and I showed him how to take a biography and plug in information on the Project Read category sheet. He worked straight through for 40 minutes! Never did I have to prompt him to keep working!

Learning about Project Read has brought renewed excitement to my teaching”

—Mrs. Genna Cover is a teacher in Parker Elementary’s Skill Center

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Getting Credit



Dr. Ray Locy, Southern Wesleyan University, explains SWU’s graduate credit program to Parker Elementary teachers. Southern Wesleyan University is the liaison institution giving graduate and recertification credit to teachers through South Carolina state funding. Both Kellett Elementary, page 1, and Parker Elementary, page 3, are participating in Project Read staff development through this program.

Language Circle Staff Development

■ *Gain knowledge* ■ *Coaching
in the classroom* ■ *District
Program account*

Language Circle / Project Read Inservice Offerings

Decoding/Encoding

Phonology (grades K-3)
Linguistics (grades 4 to adult)

Reading Comprehension

Story Form Literature Connection (K-5)
Story Form - Literature (grades 4 to adult)
Report Form - expository study skills (grades 1 to adult)

Written Expression

Framing Your Thoughts - writing skills and strategies
from sentence construction to composition writing.
(grades 1 to adult)



Tori Greene, co-author of Project Read

**Contact Language Circle/Project Read
1-800-450-0343 to schedule inservice training**

Project Read courses are in such demand that many **unauthorized** courses are being offered. It is important for you to know that these workshops are not being taught by Language Circle endorsed Staff Development Presenters.

We are concerned about maintaining the integrity of our program and assuring that teachers and students receive the curriculum and methodology that our years of research and implementation have proven to be effective. Please call the Project Read/Language Circle office at 800-450-0343 or visit the training schedule posted on our website at www.projectread.com to assure that the courses you are attending are **authorized authentic Project Read/Language Circle courses**.

Answers Reading First Initiative

through Demonstration and Staff Support ability

STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODEL A

(Full inservice day)

- Project Read curriculum, methodology, and instructional strategies
- Active participation with kinesthetic and tactile strategies and materials
- Demonstration lessons

DESCRIPTION

A Language Circle Consultant provides inservice in one strand of the Project Read curriculum. The consultant presents the methodology, curriculum, and teaching strategies of the selected strand of the program.

The inservice requires the basic materials needed for classroom instruction.

The Language Circle Consultant will do a teaching demonstration with the students during the inservice day if students can be brought to the inservice site.

BENEFITS

- Opportunity to inservice up to 90 teachers.
- Thorough presentation of curriculum, methodology, and teaching strategies.
- Opportunity for teacher to have active participation with materials.
- Opportunity for dialogue between Language Circle Consultants and inservice participants.

Both staff development models encourage schools to identify their own staff development leadership for ongoing demonstration teaching and instructional coaching.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODEL B

(Campus inservice during regular school hours)

- Demonstration teaching
- Project Read curriculum, methodology, and instructional strategies
- Campus coaching and mentoring

DESCRIPTION

A Language Circle Consultant provides inservice in one of the Project Read curriculum areas for a campus.

Each day of the inservice, the Language Circle Consultant demonstrates a forty-minute teaching lesson in three of the grade area classrooms during the regular school day. (In this way, no substitute teachers are needed.)

The other grade area teachers observe the lesson while their students are being supervised. The same classroom students are taught each day during the inservice. It is important to see the same students so the consultant can progress systematically through the concepts and skills of the curriculum. It is also important for the teachers to see how the students respond to the methodology after the initial lesson. At the end of the student day, the teachers attend a three-hour inservice on the Project Read curriculum and program methodology. The inservice requires the basic materials needed for classroom instruction.

BENEFITS

- No substitute teachers needed.
- Observe implementation of the curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Observe district student response to curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Observe the Language Circle Consultant monitor and adjust curriculum and instructional strategies with diverse student learning and behavior profiles.
- Provide opportunity to immediately implement strategies while the Language Circle Consultant is on campus to act as a coach.

CENTRAL, S.C.

South Carolina Teachers Gain Project Read Knowledge, Improve Teaching Repertoire

Three grants, awarded by the South Carolina Department of Education, are being used to develop graduate level courses through Southern Wesleyan University for teacher certification and graduate credit. This project, in cooperation with Project Read, is intended to provide classroom teachers and special needs teachers in grades K-5 with curriculum and instructional strategies for Phonology, Written Expression and Reading Comprehension.

Under the leadership of Dr. Raymond Locy, Director of Adult and Graduate Studies in Education, more than 140 educators in Anderson, Greenville, Oconee, and Pickens counties have received training in the three strands of Project Read curriculum. This is a coordinated effort to improve language arts instruction and provide a firm foundation for entire schools. Teachers have the opportunity to develop their teaching repertoire and obtain graduate credit. Schools have the opportunity to develop their language arts continuum.

Currently K-5 teachers in four pilot schools are reaping the benefits of the grant. Participating schools are all within close proximity

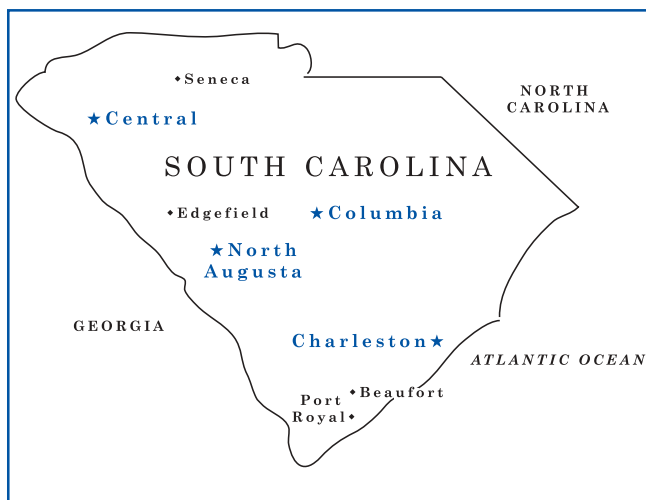
to Southern Wesleyan University (Central S.C.) or one of four SWU Learning Centers statewide. Classroom teachers from J.N. Kellett Elementary, W.E. Parker Elementary, Port Royal Elementary, and Bluffton Elementary are involved in training with more schools to be added.

Training sessions involve actual elementary school students working with the Project Read consultant in a demonstration setting. Classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and special education teachers observe the instruction with students.

Teachers taking part in the grant agree to incorporate Phonology and Reading Comprehension strategies in their classroom instruction. Teachers will also participate in the student assessment process during the 2003-04 academic year.

Graduate credit is awarded through Southern Wesleyan University.

Additional state funding for this program will continue to fund the training of South Carolina public school teachers in Project Read curriculum during the next academic year.



★ Location of SWU Learning Centers

◆ Staff Development School Sites

- ◆ J.N. Kellett Elementary, Seneca, S.C.
- ◆ W.E. Parker Elementary, Edgefield, S.C.
- ◆ Port Royal Elementary, Port Royal, S.C.
- ◆ Bluffton Elementary, Beaufort, S.C.

Phonology and Reading Comprehension Teacher Training Dates:

- May 14-17 Port Royal Elementary, Port Royal, S.C.
- June 9-13 SWU Central, S.C.
- 16-20 Parker Elementary, Edgefield, S.C.
- 23-27 North Charleston, S.C.
- July 7-11 Columbia, S.C.
- July 30-Aug 2 Bluffton Elementary, Beaufort, S.C.

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South Carolina Legislator... (continued from page 8)

impress me more and more. Standardized test scores were improving significantly. One of the things that pleased me as much as anything was the dramatic drop in kids going to Special Education. Kids had been going into Special Education not because they had learning disabilities but because they couldn't read. With the Project Read program at Central Elementary, those kids were not going into Special Education.

In 2000 we attempted to obtain funds through the state budget process instead of applying to the Department of Education. I was unable to get any funding in the budget on the House side, but our neighboring Senator Thomas Alexander who served on the Senate Finance Committee got one sentence inserted into the Senate version of the budget, 'Of the funds (\$3.2 million) provided for Reading Recovery, up to \$50,000 shall be used for piloting alternative teaching methods for reading. Note, we did not specifically name Project Read. The Conference Committee kept the Senate version and so we got \$50,000 for 2001-02.

In the meantime I had been talking with David Spittal, President of Southern Wesleyan University in Central, S.C. Southern Wesleyan is a small private Christian college that was already teaching open courses at six locations around the state. They were interested in getting involved. By the time we got funding from the legislature we had decided Southern Wesleyan would be the coordinating liaison for the \$50,000 Project Read staff development funds. The Department of Education transferred the funds to Southern Wesleyan University and held the University accountable. At the end of the year Southern Wesleyan would report how the funds were used. The Department of Education would not be involved in the program.

With that funding we were able to begin. Southern Wesleyan developed three graduate courses around the three strands of Project Read. As soon as school was out in June we offered training in those courses in the surrounding three county area. It went great; teachers were so enthusiastic. A lot of teachers took the course for graduate

credit; some got certification credits.

In the fall of 2001, the South Carolina voters approved a statewide lottery which went into operation in January 2002. In 2002-03, the budget we are currently in, we were able to retain the \$50,000 from the Department of Education even though they had budget cuts.

Plus, we really went after additional money. The Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee suggested I put two amendments on the desk—one would take \$500,000 (instead of \$50,000) from the Department of Education budget and the other amendment would designate \$500,000 of new lottery money for Project Read. The politics were unreal! Lobbying against the first amendment was so intense that I withdrew it. Meanwhile, I spoke with my caucus every week about Project Read. I carried data from Central Elementary showing improved test scores, reduction in Special Education, and comments from teachers. Working closely with the Ways and Means Committee to maneuver the politics, the final amendment read, 'Of the lottery fund appropriated to the Department of Education \$500,000 shall be used for teacher inservice training and professional development related to Project Read.' Note, we named the Project Read program, but not the liaison institution.

This year we now have \$550,000. One problem has been state payment of the lottery monies that are generated throughout the year, but disbursed on a quarterly basis. The September payment was not made to Southern Wesleyan until December, thus delaying Project Read training. We've had the training now and are setting up other training sites in South Carolina.

As for my plans... The state is facing severe budget cuts next year. They have to cut a billion dollars out of a 51/2 billion dollar budget. Our original intention was to increase the Project Read staff development funds, but with budget cuts we will be glad to maintain the present funding level. As state revenues improve, we will seek increased funding to expand the program"

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South Carolina Legislator, College Educator and Administrator Works for Project Read Funding



Editor's Note: Fueled with a personal passion for helping kids learn to read, Bud Webb spends much of his time helping put in place funds for Project Read teacher training in South Carolina. Dr. Webb's experience includes 42 years in education—20 years in teaching and research in engineering at Clemson University and 20 years as an administrator at Clemson. Even before his retirement in the fall of 1996, he began a legislative career in hopes of being an advocate for education. Dr. Webb served three two-year legislative terms in the South Carolina House of Representatives. We asked him to tell about his legislative advocacy for Project Read funding.

“It all began in the spring of 1998 when Nancy Linwill, Special Education Teacher at Central Elementary School in Central, S.C. (See “Grass Roots Project Read Program Grows,” *Communication Link*, Spring 2002.) contacted me because her school had learned about Project Read through the South Carolina International Dyslexia Association. Central Elementary was enthusiastic about Project Read and wanted more teacher training. Because it was near the end of the fiscal year, I couldn't help them with the state funds. But with private and district monies, there was enough funding for Project Read training and the participation was great.

At that time our new governor came on board. One of his objectives was for every child to learn to read by third grade. His executive budget included \$3,000,000 for the State Department of

Education to establish the Governor's Reading Initiative. Beginning July 1, 1999 the new Governor's Reading Initiative was armed with three million dollars to establish new programs to teach kids to read. When the budget passed, I made an appointment at the Department of Education. Central Elementary's principal and staff members presented Project Read. Subsequently they submitted an outstanding proposal to the Department of Education for funding. I think they got very little consideration because within six weeks they had written us back and said they were sorry they could not fund the proposal. There was no money available. They'd spent the money for programs other than something like Project Read.

The next two years we did an awful lot of talking, but made, I am sorry to say, very little progress. Actually, I don't think that's true. The data the Central Elementary teachers were getting continued to

South Carolina Legislator... (continued on page 7)

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