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DPS: 2023-121

MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Paul O. Burns, Ed.D.

DATE: August 21, 2023

SUBJECT: Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) Schools Identified for 2023-2024

Section (s.) 1008.365, Florida Statutes (F.S.), established the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) within the Florida Department of Education.

The RAISE program establishes criteria for identifying schools for additional support from State Regional Literacy Directors (SRLDs). For the 2023-2024 school year, the criteria includes schools with students in grades three through five, where 50 percent or more of its students, in any grade level, score below a level 3 on the most recent statewide English Language Arts (ELA) assessment; or progress monitoring data collected from the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system pursuant to s. 1008.25(9), F.S., shows that 50 percent or more of the students are not on track to pass the statewide, standardized grade 3 ELA assessment for any grade level kindergarten through grade 3; and at least 10 students must be present for both the second and third full-time equivalent (FTE) survey periods and must be enrolled at the time of the statewide, standardized testing.

Attached are the identified elementary schools receiving direct support in the 2023-2024 school year. Schools identified under the RAISE program will be determined on an annual basis using the criteria established in Rule 6A-6.0531, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). RAISE schools in 2023-2024 will receive support to assist with improving student literacy achievement from SRLDs. SRLDs serve in a regional capacity focused on improving implementation of evidence-based practices and curriculum, instruction and intervention and reading assessments to meet the needs of all students. SRLDs monitor district-level, school-level and classroom-level data to help provide differentiated support to school districts, school-level literacy leadership teams, literacy coaches and teachers. Specifically, SRLDs provide:

- Professional learning, aligned to the science of reading and evidence-based strategies identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(7), F.S.;
- Initial and ongoing professional learning and support for effective implementation of Florida's Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) ELA Standards;
- Professional learning and support for building capacity of school-level literacy leadership teams specified in Rule 6A-6.053, F.A.C.;
- Professional learning and support for literacy coaches, including delivery of the literacy coach endorsement program; and

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- Assistance with:
 - Data-informed instructional decision-making using progress monitoring and other appropriate data;
 - Selection and consistent, coordinated use of scientifically researched and evidence-based supplemental materials grounded in the science of reading as identified by the Just Read, Florida! Office pursuant to s. 1001.215(7), F.S. Identified reading instructional and intervention programs for foundational skills may not include strategies that employ the three-cueing system model of reading or visual memory as a basis for teaching word reading;
 - Reading instruction in other core subject area curricula, with an emphasis on civic literacy; and
 - A multi-tiered system of supports in order to provide students effective interventions and identify students who may require an evaluation for special educational services, including identifying characteristics of conditions that affect phonological processing, such as dyslexia.

In addition, all identified RAISE schools must implement a Schoolwide Improvement Plan (SIP) pursuant to s. 1001.42(18)(a), F.S., using the statewide SIP template found at www.FloridaCIMS.org. All identified schools must complete the SIP and explicitly address strategies for improving reading in grades K-5. In the RAISE portion of the SIP, RAISE schools will identify the Area(s) of Focus (Instructional Practice specifically relating to Reading/ELA), Measurable Outcomes, Monitoring, Evidence-based Practices/Programs and Action Steps to address the Area(s) of Focus. SRLDs can provide support to RAISE schools with developing the RAISE portion of the SIP.

The district may identify an internal due date for the SIP; however, the district must approve the SIP prior to publication in the Continuous Improvement Management System (CIMS) on November 1. District school boards are required to approve the final version of the SIP. Additional resources for completing the SIP can be found on www.FloridaCIMS.org.

For questions regarding the RAISE program, please contact Paige Michael at Paige.Michael1@fldoe.org. For questions about SIP completion, please contact Carla Greene at Carla.Greene@fldoe.org.

PB/lb

Attachment

cc: School District K-12 Reading Contacts
School District School Improvement Contacts