

TESTIMONY PROVIDED TO: House Education Committee

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TOPIC: Literacy Instruction in Vermont

DATE: January 23, 2020

Preventing Reading Difficulties and the Role of Teachers and Teacher Education

An Outline for Remarks

- I. The "Science of Reading"
 - A. Amplify webinar provides a good starting point
 - B. What other science might inform our thinking?
 1. 45 Years Worth of Insights
 2. An Interactive Model of Ability and (Dis)ability (Lipson & Wixson, 2013)
 3. Responsive Teaching
- II. Improving Literacy Outcomes Will Likely Require more than Mandated Early Reading Instruction
 - A. NAEP results and the role of early literacy skills
 - B. Responsive and tailored teaching (deliberate, intentional, but not necessarily the same) (Connor et al., 2016)
 - C. Thoughtful assessment and fearless use of data
 1. Screening – The challenge of predicting the future (Catts et al., 2009)
 2. Diagnosis – To unmask patterns within the "average" (Valencia & Buly, 2011)
 3. A comprehensive and balanced approach that supports effective decision making
 - D. Attention to self-regulation and social-emotional skills
 - E. A Systemic Approach (see VTmtss Field Guide (2019)
<https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-vtmtss-field-guide-2019>)
 - F. Professional learning and the development of expertise
- III. What Should (and Shouldn't) We Do in Vermont?
 - A. Support efforts ~~already in place~~ to ensure high quality teaching
 1. ROPA (2012)
 2. Praxis

3. National Accreditation at UVM: CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation)
- B. Re-commit to existing legislation and policy
 1. EQS
 2. Act 173 and local assessments
<https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-local-comprehensive-assessment-systems-act173-technical-guidance.pdf>
 3. VTmtss
 4. Embed in PD in the context of school/district data
 5. Identify barriers to improved instruction and intervention
- C. Require Enhanced expertise at the systems level
 1. Reading Specialist and Reading Coordinator roles and the expectation of endorsement in that area
 2. Coaching and district level continuous problem solving as a cultural given
 3. Leadership capable of creating a culture of excellence
- D. Stay the course – the problem of sustainability
 1. Be wary of the quick fix
 2. Apply high standards to both instruction and assessment

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