

## Fall Focus Group

Focus Group Conducted: August 13, 2021

**Focus Group Topic:** Reading

**Number of participants:** 4

**Total Teaching Experience:** 37 years | 10 Years | 32 Years | 27 Years

**SU Program:** NA

New Teachers	Perceived Preparation Strengths	Perceived Opportunities for Growth
Application of applying the concept of reading	<p><i>"Students have foundational knowledge of each component."</i></p>	<p><i>"They do not know how to apply what they are learning in college."</i></p> <p><i>"They know the textbook part of it, but when it was time to perform outside of those tests, they did not know what to do."</i></p> <p><i>"They can teach a lesson, but are unable to refine the lesson and move them forward."</i></p>
Perception of Teaching Reading	<p><i>"Students are able to articulate the knowledge of reading."</i></p>	<p><i>"[New Teachers] are intimidated by it all, and they do not ask for help. If they do not have an instructional leader in the school, then things do not get better for them."</i></p> <p><i>"Lack of knowledge of what's going on in the classes, the experience that they have not knowing the level of rigor for the new teachers."</i></p>
Preparation of Teaching Reading	<p><i>"When I train teachers, one of the best things I think we can learn from is the reading and recovery model. We had first year teachers in training, and we went behind a one-way glass and taught a lesson to our peers. We had prepared and delivered the lesson, while our peers watched, and then we had to come out in face our peers and discuss our lesson. "</i></p> <p><i>"We do that some [teach guided lesson/provide feedback] now in our coaching for the professional development, which it seems to move projects along more than anything else. We focus on a lesson study analysis, where we meet with teachers, and it's the same concept in what we use in reading and recovery on planning a lesson. So, we are not just showing them how to plan a lesson, but we are also modeling them the thinking that teachers must do to plan a lesson."</i></p>	<p><i>"I think they need to be able to sit and listen to a child read and be able to pinpoint where he/she is. Here's the strength, etc. Sometimes we learn to teach a program, and not a child. The university teaches the theory, but not the application. "</i></p> <p><i>"It would be helpful to the preservice teachers if they had someone who specialized in reading or experience with reading to be in the classroom with them as often as possible during those 7 weeks."</i></p> <p><i>"I think there should be a developed cohort where teachers in training can teach a guided reading lesson in front of their peers and receive feedback. It's about helping them think through how to plan a lesson, then having them deliver the lesson, as well as having in the moment teaching decisions."</i></p>
Collaboration/Support	<p><i>"We try to meet with them frequently, and kind of like how you would do with a student, model as often as possible. Even with lesson plans, because writing a lesson plan in college is completely different from writing a lesson plan when you get into the real world."</i></p>	<p><i>"A lot of the times they would be matched up with mentors that were not right for them. So that would be one of the pitfalls of being assigned a mentor. A lot of the time when you're assigned a mentor, the chemistry is not there. So, you have to be aware of that, and I would even tell your students that if you are assigned a mentor and the chemistry is not there, you're going to have to latch on to somebody that has the right chemistry, and they will</i></p>

*become your unofficial mentor. Assigned mentors do not always work out."*

*"Side by side teaching and debriefing after a lesson is always helpful. The relationship and having open communication (that we all make mistakes)."*

*"Seeing you teach and coach with them and watching them and giving them honest feedback."*

#### **Unexpected Findings**

#### **BRIDGING THE GAP:**

*"The sooner you can put them in the classroom for clinicals and practicum, that's the best."*

*"Nothing will ever compare to being in a classroom in front of a group of students, the more time they have in the field experience or the different opportunities to be in the classroom, the better prepared those students will be."*

*"If you could have a cohort of students going out to one school, so that you can do some of the lesson study analysis that we mention, seems to me would help move them along."*