



**The Results of the Work of the  
Teen Read  
Adolescent Literacy Task Group**

“Reading has cognitive consequences that extend beyond its immediate task of lifting meaning from a particular passage. Furthermore, these consequences are reciprocal and exponential in nature. Accumulated over time -- spiraling either upward or downward -- they carry profound implications for the development of a wide range of cognitive capabilities.”

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations from the Teen Read Adolescent Literacy Task Force are:

For students *learning to read*, we recommend the district:

1. **Adopt and Use Specific Curricula:** These curricula are designed to help struggling adolescent readers overcome their reading deficiencies and will include systematic instruction in phonics, fluency, vocabulary instruction, and comprehension. We make this proposal in the interest of providing needed consistency throughout the district for struggling readers.
2. **Staff Schools With Reading Specialists:** District 4J fund the staffing of highly qualified reading specialists in each of our secondary schools (in addition to our current learning center staff) to provide a continuum of reading instruction for individual students experiencing substantial reading difficulties and to provide leadership in professional development for staff.
3. **Provide Time for Reading Instruction:** Individual middle and high schools adapt the instructional day for these students to guarantee that they receive no less than 50 minutes of explicit reading instruction daily in addition to their current language arts curriculum.

For students who need to strengthen their skills in *reading to learn*, we recommend that teachers:

4. **Teach Reading Strategies Explicitly:** All secondary schools implement a curriculum design that incorporates direct and systemic reading process instruction where the reader is taught before, during and after reading strategies as appropriate to all curricula/subject areas.
5. **Make Information in Texts More Accessible to All Students:** As appropriate, secondary school staff be trained to identify and modify the text structures of existing texts in all content areas to make them more accessible to struggling readers. Factors to be analyzed include: how the key vocabulary is introduced, how information is organized, and how information is highlighted or reinforced in charts and graphics.
6. **Increase Time Spent Reading:** Schools make efforts to increase the reading volume of all students. In addition, lower performing students will be provided additional support to increase time spent reading at school.

To facilitate the implementation of the above recommendations, we recommend the district:

7. **Staff All Library Media Programs with a Certified Library Media Specialist:** One key to improving reading performance is to staff media centers with librarians who can a) match literature interests of individual students with resources in the collection, b) improve collections to attract a wider range of student interests, and c) work with teachers to enhance overall literacy at school.
8. **Conduct Needs Assessments:** District personnel conduct periodic assessments with secondary teachers to identify student needs and improve current reading practices.

In the area of assessment, we recommend the district:

9. **Implement Reading Assessments:** The district develops and implements individual diagnostic reading assessments in grades 6 through 10.
10. **Establish Norms:** The district establishes district norms in all grades to assist in identifying those students in most need of reading interventions.

In the area of professional development, we recommend the district:

11. **Provide Ongoing Professional Development:** All secondary school teachers receive sustained, ongoing professional development that incorporates the teaching of specific research-based reading strategies. The training provides examples to be used in content area classrooms accompanied by coaching, mentoring, and technical support, and reinforced periodically with follow-up training, troubleshooting, and refreshers.
12. **Develop Support Materials for Struggling Readers:** Compensation will be provided to staffs who develop, independently or collaboratively, instructional materials that provide scaffolds for English language learners and struggling readers in content area classrooms.