



The Power of Language:

Building Strong Family and Community Partnerships

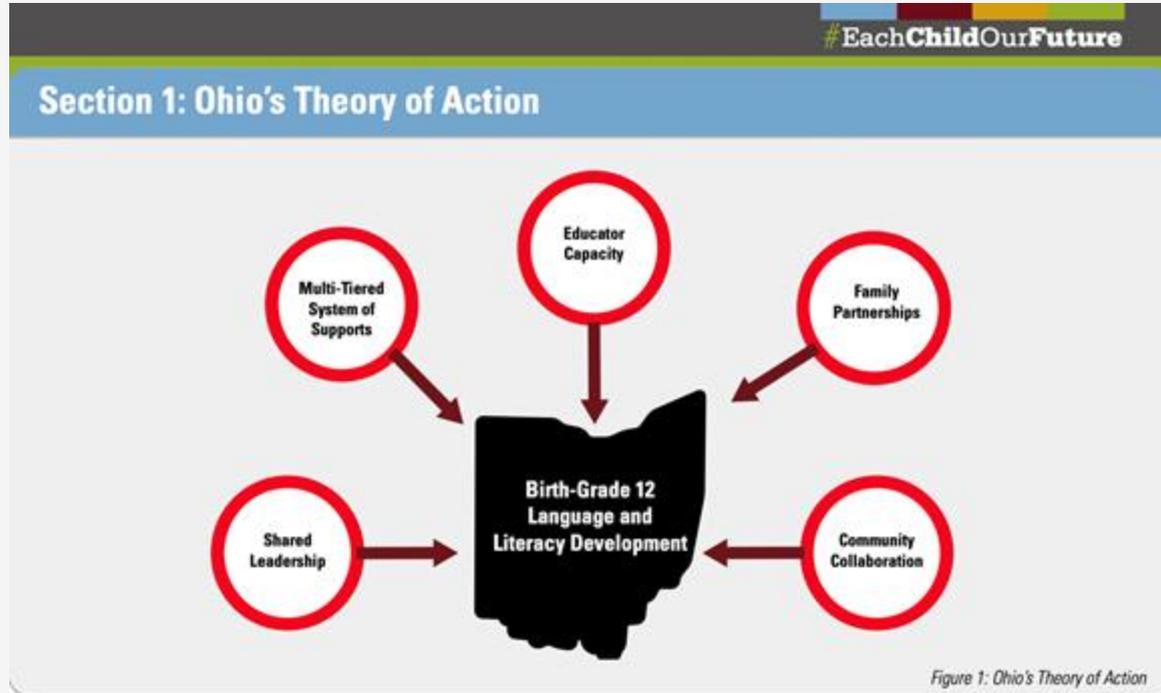
Juakita Bowens, Regional Early Literacy Specialist
Jen Griffing, Regional Early Literacy Specialist



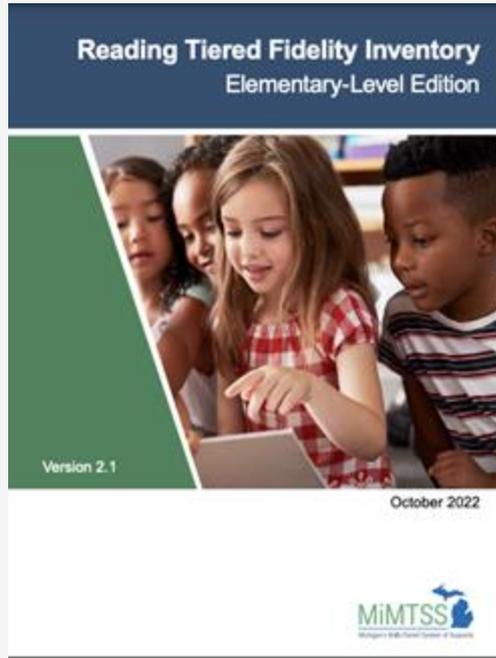
My advice is that we see our families and community members as co-creators and co-producers of the excellent schools and learning opportunities that we want for all of our students.

Karen L. Mapp

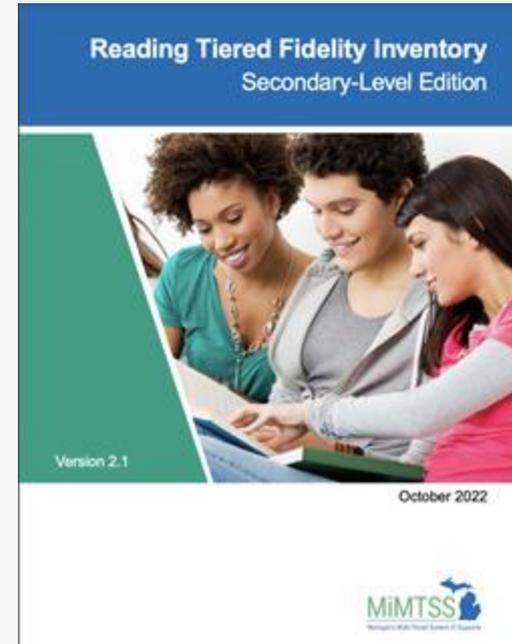
Five Theories of Action



Reading-Tiered Fidelity Inventory (R-TFI)



School leadership teams assess the fidelity of implementation to identify what parts of their MTSS are already in place, what needs to be improved, and what still needs to be done.



R-TFI Item	2 Points	Suggested Data Sources	1 and 0 Points
<p>1.1</p> <p>A School Leadership Team supports the implementation of the Tier 1 reading components of an MTSS framework.</p>	<p>The team includes the school principal, and members are collectively responsible for doing all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Maintaining a current committee audit to prevent staff overloading, team redundancies, or teams with conflicting scope of work. 2 Distributing leadership for implementing the reading-related data, systems, and practices needed for an MTSS framework. 3 Establishing procedures for staff to access professional learning, coaching, and engage in ongoing collaboration. 4 Requesting and allocating resources to support implementation. 5 Over seeing the use of a comprehensive assessment plan. 6 Analyzing aggregated student data and implementation fidelity data to determine the overall effectiveness of the school-wide reading supports for students. 7 Collaborating with families to ensure students have successful literacy experiences in and out of school. 8 Monitoring a dynamic MTSS Implementation Plan. 	<p>Meeting schedule</p> <p>Meeting minutes</p> <p>Action plan with notations of progress</p> <p>Implementation fidelity data</p> <p>Professional Development Plan</p> <p>Documentation of family engagement</p> <p>Team effectiveness survey</p>	<p>1 point: At least 5 of the 2-point criteria are in place.</p> <p>0 points: The criteria from the 2-point or 1-point response are not in place.</p>

R-TFI Item	2 Points	Suggested Data Sources	1 and 0 Points
<p>1.3</p> <p>The school has an Implementation Plan for the adolescent literacy components of an MTSS framework</p>	<p>The plan is informed by assessment data.</p> <p>AND: The plan's goals are SMARTER (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time Bound, Equitable).</p> <p>AND: The types of activities included in the plan address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Resources Department Teams need to implement their discipline-specific instructional plans. 2 Collaboration between and across grade-level teachers, special educators, and interventionists to support students' ability to apply intervention strategies/routines across instructional settings. 3 Implementation supports needed (ongoing training and coaching). 4 Opportunities for family-school partnerships with bi-directional communication and shared decision-making. 	<p>Current Implementation Plan</p>	<p>1 point: The plan is informed by assessment data.</p> <p>AND: The plan includes activities that address at least 3 elements outlined in the 2-point response.</p> <p>0 points: The criteria from the 2-point or 1-point response are not in place.</p>

Evidence-Based Strategies in Family Engagement and Structured Literacy



Lancaster City Schools



Leverage the work the work you are already doing to engage families

What is the goal for students?

How will students benefit?

How will families benefit?

How will teachers benefit?

#EachChildOurFuture

Appendix F: Changing Emphasis of the Subskills of the Five Components of Reading

Changing Emphasis of the Subskills of the Five Components of Reading
(Adapted from Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative, 2017)

Component	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th and Beyond
Phonemic Awareness	Blend & Segment	Phoneme Analysis: Addition, Deletion & Substitution; Spelling Dictation				
Phonics	Sounds/Basic Phonics	Advanced Phonics & Multisyllabic			Multisyllabic & Word Study	
Fluency	Sounds and Words	Words & Connected Text			Connected Text	
Vocabulary	Speaking & Listening		Listening, Reading & Writing		Reading & Writing	
Comprehension	Speaking & Listening		Listening, Reading & Writing		Reading & Writing	

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#EachChildOurFuture

Appendix G: Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy

Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy

(Adapted from Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices: A Practice Guide, 2008)

Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Adolescent Literacy: Practice and Evidence-Level	
Provide explicit vocabulary instruction	Strong Evidence
Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction	Strong Evidence
Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation	Moderate Evidence
Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning	Moderate Evidence
Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists	Strong Evidence

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How Can I Help My Middle Schooler Read Multisyllabic Words?

— Five Helpful Steps —

Many words that students read in middle school have two or more syllables. These are called multisyllabic words. As children progress through school, the number of multisyllabic words they encounter in texts increases. When struggling readers are confronted with long words in their school texts, they often give up or read the words incorrectly, not understanding that some simple steps and strategies make reading long words easier.

How will you know if your child struggles with multisyllabic words? When helping your child with an assignment, have your child read aloud. Only by listening to your child read aloud can you determine which words are difficult to decode.

By recognizing that long words are made up of familiar units (syllables, root words, prefixes, and suffixes), students can gain confidence in multisyllabic word reading. Following is a simple strategy you and your child can use to help decode long words.

Step	Helpful Directions and Feedback
1. Underline the vowels. Syllables have one vowel sound. Sometimes, two vowels work as a team to make one sound, like <i>ea</i> in <i>eat</i> .	Child: He was <i>in-ter-rogat-ed</i> . Parent: Let's underline the vowels in his word. This will help us break it down into syllables. We know that when there is a vowel, there is a syllable.
2. Look for familiar syllables and word parts.	Parent: What syllables do you recognize? Child: I see <i>in-</i> and I know the suffix <i>-ed</i> at the end. I also see the word <i>gate</i> .
3. Read all of the syllables together slowly.	Parent: Excellent. Try to read each part separately from the beginning. Child: <i>in-ter-rogat-ed!</i>
4. Read the syllables at a faster, more fluent rate and then read the whole sentence with the word.	Parent: Now, read all of the syllables together faster and let's put it back into the sentence. Child: Interrogate. He was interrogated by his mother when he got home late.
5. Check for understanding.	Parent: What do you think that means? Child: Does that mean that his mom asked him a lot of questions? Parent: You're right!

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PACT PLUS
Partnership for Assessment and Learning

Lancaster City Schools



Lancaster City Schools

The screenshot shows the website for Medill Elementary, part of Lancaster City Schools. The header includes the school logo and name, and a navigation menu with links for Home, Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, and Third Grade. The main banner features the title "Literacy Help for Parents" and a video placeholder for a "Welcome Video from Principal Woods". Below the banner are five buttons for various literacy resources: "Games to Support Early Literacy Skills", "Introduction to Phonemic Awareness", "What's in the Literacy Kit?", "Parents & Families: Supporting Lexia Core5 at H...", and "Reading Buddies Website- Fun videos to learn L...". At the bottom, there are four large colored squares representing grade levels: a pink square with the letter "K" for Kindergarten, a cyan square with the number "1" for First Grade, a yellow square with the number "2" for Second Grade, and a green square with the number "3" for Third Grade.

Medill Elementary

Home Kindergarten First Grade Second Grade Third Grade

Literacy Help for Parents

Welcome Video from Principal Woods

Games to Support Early Literacy Skills

Introduction to Phonemic Awareness

What's in the Literacy Kit?

Parents & Families: Supporting Lexia Core5 at H...

Reading Buddies Website- Fun videos to learn L...

K

1

2

3

Kindergarten First Grade Second Grade Third Grade

What do we know about how the
brain learns to read?



It all starts with language!

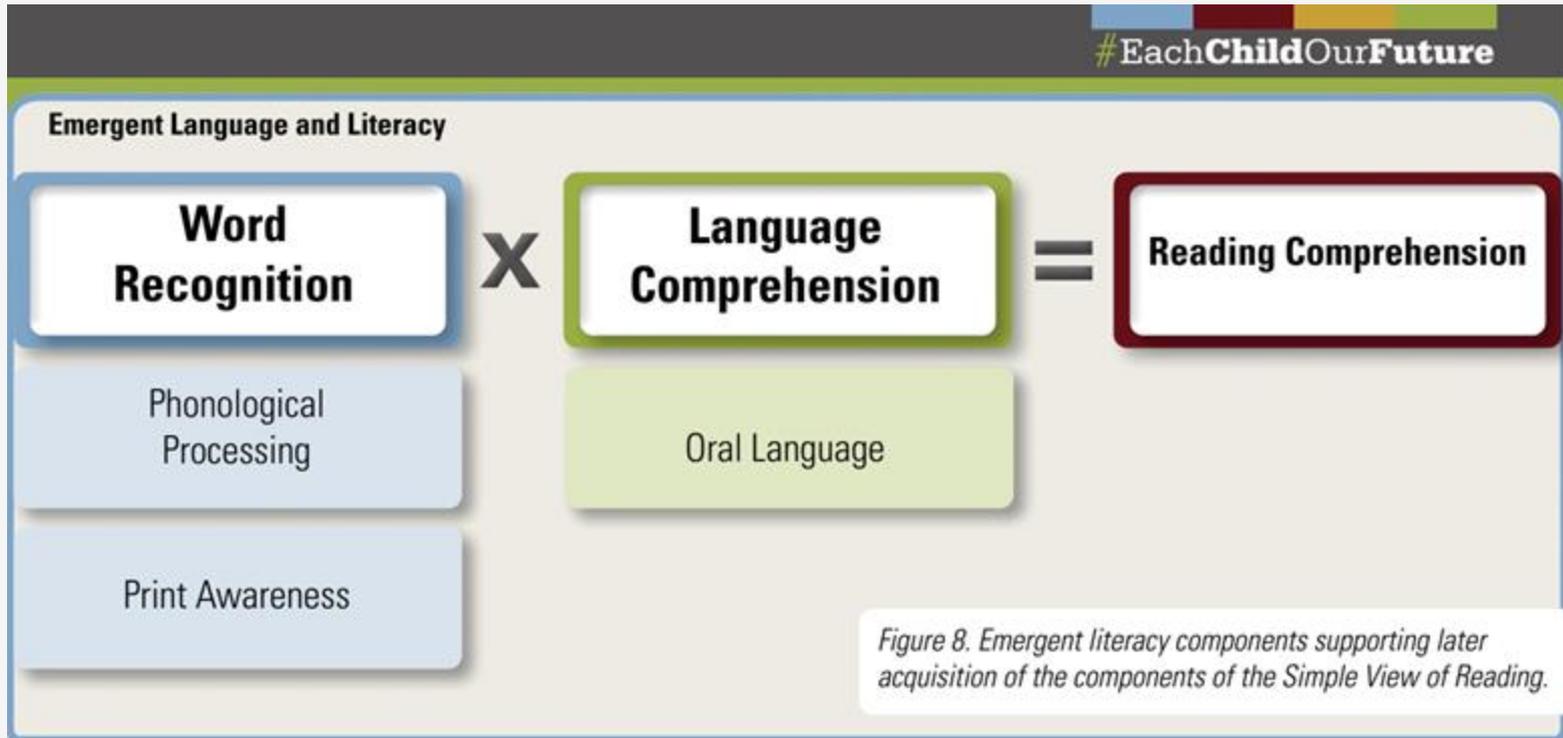
-  Our brains learn to read from speech to print.
-  Reading is not natural, it is a human invention.
-  Linguistic exchanges not only foster cognitive development, but build trust through responsive interactions that help our brains to feel safe (survive), so we can perform functions like reading (thrive).

Oral language:

Young children benefit from interactive, child-directed conversations with caregivers who are responsive to their comments, questions and levels of understanding (Suskind, 2015). Conversations in which the caregiver and child take turns responding are important to brain development, and taking turns has shown to be a more powerful influence on brain development than the sheer number of words heard by children (Gabrieli & Romeo, 2018).

Opportunities to increase vocabulary and expand background knowledge occur when caregivers repeat what children say, expand their sentences and ask open-ended and closed questions. Reading children's literature aloud continues to be one of the best ways to expose and teach new vocabulary to children, and a strong evidence base has emerged for reading aloud to promote understanding of text (Hudson & Test, 2011). These concepts are critical to developing effective communication. That communication can be in the form of traditional verbal speech or another mode, such as sign language; direct selection or eye gaze on words, letters or images; gestures; facial expressions; or augmented voice.

Quite simply, children, specifically our brains,
need to see, hear, and use words
to be able to read, write and spell words!



What is language nutrition?

The use of language that is sufficiently rich in engagement, quality, quantity and context

and

nourishes a child neurologically, socially and linguistically.

Talk With Me Baby, Georgia





We believe that the trajectory of children's lives can be changed when families, caregivers and educators understand the significance of language nutrition and how to provide an environment rich with responsive interactions.



Table Chat

Considering how the brain learns to read and these critical foundational skills as a strong predictor of future success, does this challenge your current views and approaches to how you might partner with families and your community as collaborative brain builders?

If...

“Conversation drives literacy skills and cognitive development across all socioeconomic levels, regardless parents' income or education. It's a powerful, actionable, and simple tool for all parents to use.”

[The Brain-Changing Power of Conversation](#), Harvard University Graduate School of Education

and...

Talking with their children, **early and often**, is one of the most important things families and caregivers can do to build a **strong foundation** for their children's education, providing them not only the best opportunity to grow **healthy brains**, but **healthy bonds** that will last a **lifetime**.



then...

How might we leverage this to
strengthen our family, school
and community partnerships?



Redesign for Family Engagement

Family engagement is not one-size-fits-all. Rather, with more choices, supports and flexibility, more families will be able to support their school-age child's learning at home.

Here are the **BIG universal design ideas** to consider:

1. Highlight the relevance for families. How will this be enjoyable? Interesting? Important for the child or family?
2. Present information and opportunities to families in different ways that address challenges.
3. Provide multiple ways that families can choose to be engaged in a way that fits their family.

Choose a current school strategy/activity for engaging families. Describe it.

Name of the activity: _____

When:
Where:
How:
Who:
What:

Questions:

1. What is the ideal goal of the activity for the student?
2. What is the ideal goal of the activity for the family?
3. Who would not have access to the current activity? What barriers exist?

Redesign It!

Thinking creatively, how can we revise this activity for engaging the families of all students?

1. What different options do we have to eliminate the barriers for families?
2. What are some other opportunities we can provide to get to the same goal? What are other ways we can communicate about the goal with families?
3. Why should this matter to families? How can we communicate the relevance with them?
4. How many different ways are there for families to respond in support of this goal?

Contact OhioSEEC@osu.edu or visit <https://OhioFamiliesEngage.osu.edu> for more training tips/tools to support family engagement in your community!

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March Days: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) [12](#) [13](#) [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) [17](#) [18](#) [19](#) [20](#) [21](#) [22](#) [23](#) [24](#) [25](#) [26](#) [27](#) [28](#) [29](#) [30](#) [31](#)

March 1

Sing a Song

January Brings the Snow

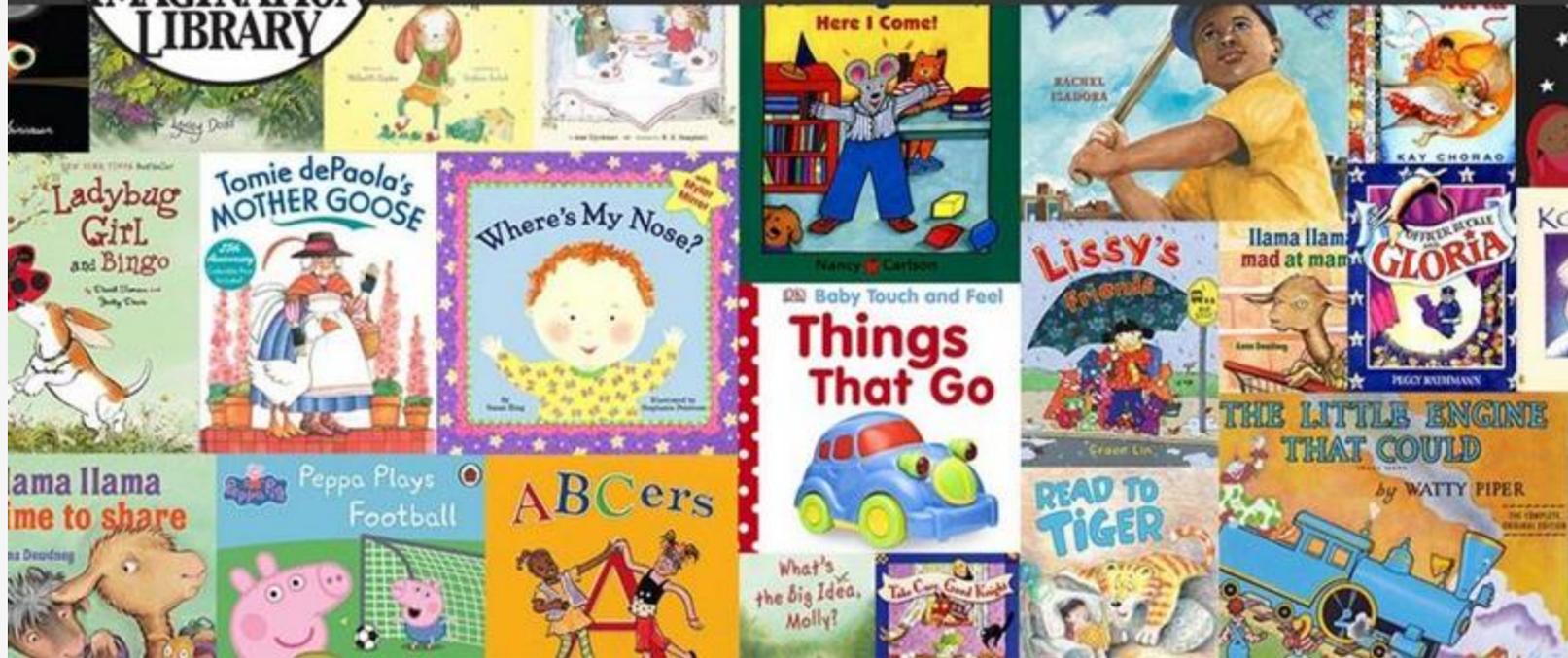
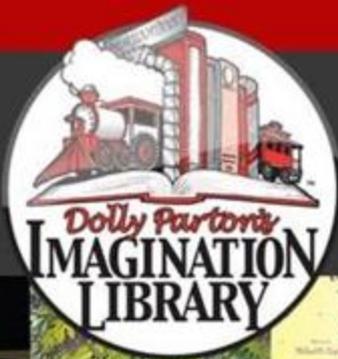
January brings the snow,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.
June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.
Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gillyflowers.
August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.
Warm September blows soft
Till the fruit is in the loft.
Brown October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.
Dull November brings the blast,

h.org

Watch

Harry Kindergarten 4 Seasons in a Year







Launching Your Middle Schooler to Success

I have confidence in you.



Support your middle schooler's growing independence.

- Let your middle schooler have a say in family decisions.
- Middle schoolers have opinions! Be open to listening to them.
- Middle schoolers need rules, but they also have enough experience to help set them.

You stuck with it and your improvement shows.



Encourage a growth mindset.

- Has your middle schooler worked hard on a school assignment? Value effort over results.
- Treat mistakes as an opportunity for learning. If everything is easy, there is no growth.
- Encourage your middle schooler to solve problems on their own.

Let's make a plan for how to get this done.



Teach your middle schooler how to be a strong student.

- Education is real world. Connect schoolwork to current events and future goals.
- Talk about learning/study strategies like breaking up tasks and time management.
- What about the Backpack Black Hole? Check in with your middle schooler on missing work.
- Everyone needs help sometimes. Tell your middle schooler it's okay to speak up.

I'm on your team!



Stay positive during homework time.

- Homework can be tough on everyone after a long day. Keep the mood fun and loving.
- Show that you care. Listen for the root of the problem and help them focus on solutions.
- Don't wait until frustration is at a 10! Talk about how to calm down when things get tough.

What was the best part of your day?



Be aware without being too nosy.

- Ask for information about activities and unstructured time.
- Show your middle schooler that they can trust you. You'll be more likely to be kept in the loop.
- Bad news? When your middle schooler opens up to you, try not to react negatively.

What's a fair amount of time to be on your phone?



Build structure together.

- Rules...middle schoolers still need them. The best rules are easy to understand and consistent.
- Rules will sometimes be broken. Work together to create consequences that make sense.
- What's the point? Talk about why the rules are important for your middle schooler.

I'm here for you anytime you need me.



Provide emotional support.

- Be available in times of distress to give security and comfort.
- Be a cheerleader. Tell your middle schooler how great they are!
- It's okay to be a little nosy. (Middle schoolers secretly like it.)
- Your middle schooler is growing up fast! Notice and celebrate all the changes.



Learn more at ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu



Partnering with Families for the Middle School Transition

Research-based Strategies for Middle-Level Educators

Developed by the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center
Hadley F. Bachman, Eric M. Anderman, Brett Zyromski, and Barbara J. Boone



Aligning Resources



Early Literacy

Introduction to Dyslexia, K-3 and Partnering with Families to Support Early Literacy



Adolescent Literacy

Introduction to Dyslexia, 4-12 and *Foundations of Family Engagement for Adolescent Literacy (*in process)

PARTNERSHIPS FOR LITERACY TRAINING

for Ohio School District Leaders

 **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**
COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

Partnerships for Literacy

Partnerships for Literacy is a program developed by The Ohio State University to provide schools with a systematic approach to family and community engagement supporting students' early literacy skills.

OUR TEAM

Our Partnerships for Literacy Team(s) over three years our teams have included:
19 Families | 6 Classroom Teachers | 5 Reading Specialists | 2 Literacy Coaches | 5 Principals |
5 Community Members | 1 Limited English Proficiency Family Liaison | 2 School Community Workers |
1 Family Liaison

OUR PRIORITY AREAS

1. Communication
2. Learning at Home
3. Community Partnerships

OUR ACTION STEPS

In alignment with our priorities in the area of language and literacy, as determined by our Family and Community Engagement for Early Literacy Inventory data, which identified needs of families, our Curriculum Based Measure data from Acadience, which identified needs of students, and the Reading-Tiered Fidelity Inventory data, which identified needs of each building, our team designed the following action steps:

1. **Communication:** Families were embedded in the communication process about their child's literacy skill development by way of a letter explaining the Multi-Tiered System of Supports, as well as an Acadience communication document to share progress and continued areas of focus for their child.
2. **Learning at Home:** Literacy Kits for families were created based on priority language and literacy skills. Teachers recorded videos to review the items chosen which were shared via QR codes attached to each kit. The contents were also explained through a virtual family literacy night.
3. **Community Partnerships:** Foster Grandparents and local university preservice teachers were trained to support student goals in the classroom with a focus on phonics. Print awareness at home was supported in preschool through a partnership with an organization that provided students their own copies of the STAR books that were being utilized and enjoyed in the classroom.

2020-21 IMPACT SUMMARY

Schreiber (Pre K-Grade 2),
Gibbs (Grade 3);
Canton City School District

OUR IMPACT

32 TEACHERS 
more intentionally and meaningfully engaged with families and caregivers based on data and family voice.

85 FAMILIES 
were equipped and empowered in their role as a partner in their child's literacy development.

335 STUDENTS 
were supported by caring adults working together to invest in their literacy skills.

4 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS 
collaborated with schools to contribute time and resources to students and their families.

"Schreiber and Gibbs have grown through a process of developing and establishing strong partnerships within the community that are ongoing and lasting. By continually building relationships that support our school wide literacy plan, we are seeing students who are more confident and excelling in literacy." -Jacinta Decker, Literacy Coach



OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
Family Engagement Center
at The Ohio State University

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Systems of Support



National Center
on Improving
Literacy

Florida Center
for Reading
Research

Ohio
Department
of
Education

Ohio Statewide
Family
Engagement
Center

State Support
Teams

Educational
Service
Centers



Thank you!

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