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READ 680  
Dr. Parlier

**Reading Specialist Interview**  
**Wednesday, February 17, 2021**  
**Who: 2nd grade reading specialist**

**1. How are you reaching students through virtual and hybrid learning?**

- We offer after school tutoring for **anybody** who would like to come here (virtual) or stay after
- In second grade, there are 23 students who are below grade level and 12 students are coming to tutoring
- In tutoring, they are getting instruction in sight words, word study, and getting a reading group
  - Reading groups are levels: F, H, and I
- There are 2 student teachers that also help with tutoring and they work with the outliers
  - One Longwood student works with a student who is lower than the other students
  - One Longwood student works with a student who just wants extra help
- She also meets with 1 virtual student every Wednesday

**2. How do you build relationships and trust with students in a typical year?**

- In a normal year, students are met with 2 times a day either with me or an aide. For the really low students, I try to make sure at least one of those times are with me
  - They are pulled for a small reading group and then a 1 on 1 tutoring session
- I check in frequently with their teacher and see how they're doing
- I see them quite often, so I get to know them pretty well and build trust that way

**3. What is your biggest challenge when working with struggling readers?**

- It really depends on the kid
- Lack of parent involvement is usually an issue
- There may be a learning disability that has not been discovered yet, you have to have a gap

- **What is the gap?**
  - To qualify for SPED services, there has to be a gap, for example, if they are on or above grade level for math, but are way below grade level in reading, there is that big gap that could tell us that they are able to learn math, why not reading?
- If they were dismissed from SPED, then there is a catch up game that you have to play

**4. How do you handle collaborating with a teacher who don't want to collaborate with you?**

- The grade level is great
- I work around their schedule, which is difficult with 8-9 teachers on the grade level
  - I usually (normal year), get their schedule to make sure I'm not pulling them from their teacher time
    - They get 2 reading groups a day (1 with their teacher, 1 with me)
  - I make sure that they are ready to be pulled for tutoring and try to pull during resource as long as students don't mind. I try to pull them from resource if they tend to not like it
    - **Do they get pulled everyday?**
      - Yes
  - For tutoring, they get a new book everyday if they are ready to move on. I try to do a running record everyday from the book that they were supposed to have read the night before, but that doesn't always happen.
    - In the bag: a book, sight words, easy activities for parents to do
- The main thing is to stay on time!!!

**5. What type of support do you provide teachers?**

- In the past, I did workshops on word study and sight words
- I like to have materials ready for teachers
  - In the book room, I have copies of sight words and supplemental material ready for teachers to grab and use
- I organize the book room and I order new materials so that it stays current

**6. How often do you meet with different grades to plan instruction?**

- In a normal year, we meet as a grade level at least 1 time a week
- **Do you meet with the other reading specialists?**
  - Yes, we meet at least 1 time a week as well
- **Do you plan materials together? (there is a reading specialist for each grade)**
  - We cover the same things, but at different levels
  - We use the same materials that are appropriate for the students

**7. What connections have you made to extend your reach within the community to promote literacy development?**

- I know everyone at the local library
- I am the director of a non-profit: Appomattox Literacy Intervention Project
  - There are 2 buses that are a mobile library
  - They go out every Monday-Thursday for 6 weeks at a time
    - Goes to daycares, preschools, private schools, homeschool, around neighborhoods
    - Bus drivers are paid
      - **Is this their only job?**
        - They are the school bus drivers
        - Need to build trust with them and contacts at the places the bus stops to ensure that they are doing their job
      - Gas is paid for by a local bank
  - There are also 4 "Little Free Libraries" around town at the churches the school put hot spots at
  - Books are donated from community members or purchased through money from grants
    - I spend a lot of time writing grants and letters
  - Kids get to keep the books
    - It used to be a library with an on your honor thing
      - Not a big deal because the book was in the hands of a child
- **Who serves on the board with you?**
  - Teachers, another reading specialist, community members (some that work at banks, which helps!)

## Reflection

I thoroughly enjoyed getting to interview one of the reading specialists at my school. With this year being crazy, the 3 reading specialists are serving as teachers in the nontraditional space. At my school, teachers have 2 sets of students a day and when they are not with their teacher, they are in a nontraditional space so 2 of the the reading specialists are with 1st grade with 4 classes in the gym and 4 classes in the cafeteria, and the reading specialist I interviewed with works with 4 second grade classes in the library. Since they are not serving in their typical capacity, it was nice to hear about what it is typically like, since I don't really get to see that. It was great to hear about how she serves the students, other teachers, and the school as a whole.

We already know that like teachers, reading specialists have so many roles, and she handles her position carefully and with grace. She strives to serve students, even in the crazy year, by providing tutoring in person as well as virtual, showing how dedicated to success she is. She also serves the teachers on her team by preparing materials for them. As the school as a whole, she is making a good image for them out in the community through her non-profit and how if there are changes she feels need to be made, that the principal is receptive.

It was very inspiring and I sat there in awe as she described her non-profit because I think that it is wonderful and shows how passionate about community involvement and outreach in terms of literacy. With all of the roles in school and having a family, it is amazing how she makes time to also make the project a priority, because

of how important and needed it is in the community. Overall, it was nice to see how she is a resource to all and how she fulfills the roles of a reading specialist that we have been reading and talking about in class.