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Early Reading Innovative School Change Program

Goal: Every child will have basic or better early reading readiness skills by the time they enter kindergarten.

Implementation: Establish relationships with parents and preschool age children and early reading community resources.

Principal becomes the pivotal leader in the effort supported by professionals. Retired principals and teachers would be employed as mentors to support the principal in this new activity for the 4 years of school change.

A position of Early Reading Collaborator (ERC) is established (one for every two schools-200 children entering kindergarten) to assist the principal and serve as the community/parent/child liaison for the program components.

The basic program “Put a face on Civility,” and a supplemental program “Early Reading Kit” are the major components.

Program Components:

Put a Face On

- Targeted for 3 to 5 year olds
- Four sticker activity sets with messages and story references focused on:
 - honesty
 - friendship
 - respect
 - work
- Parents sign up at the local community school to obtain first promotional package (as early as age 3). Community promotion directs them to sign up for the rewards.
- The ERC is their contact person.
- Parent use the materials with child for six months with a focus on the need to read to the child, and returns in six months for the next set.
- Each packet includes a coupon incentive, which can be used at a local community retailer as a significant discount to a purchase of staple goods. The packet has added cash value to the child when entering kindergarten.
- Process continues for four values or until the start of kindergarten.

Reading Kit

- ERC will determine when the supplemental resources are needed for the child (lack of parental support or other issues).
- Put a face on program (p1) continues for 100% of children at this time.
- The kit is a Montessori based set of activities covering oral and written vocabulary development (literacy) at the readiness level.
- The kit is supported by written and video instructions to the adult who delivers the instruction to the child and records it in the workbook.
- The kit will direct 100 hours of adult contact for each of two years (total 200 hours) before kindergarten. At the rate of two hour in weekly sessions. Timing is to be adjusted to one-size-fits-one.
- Another part of the program is the LeapFrog® module for English language vocabulary (listening).
- The ERC identifies preschool, daycare, or adult volunteer resources (faith based or other organizations) from the community to work with all children who are not adequately adult supported to become ready to read.

Other Aspects of the Program

- The principal and the ERC will have the opportunity to build positive public relations in the local community for the school around literacy and character.
- The part-time public relations resources must be used to make sure the program promotion is continuous and properly communicated.
- The school will strengthen linkages with the early reading community including day-care facilities. This will improve articulation of the curriculum and the requirements.
- Opportunity for recognition of local heroes will be built in, using cash awards.
- Projected cost for a two-year program assuming 100 children per year entering kindergarten for materials, ERC, mentors, specialists, would be \$75,000 per year. Source of funds is school change federal grant money, plus community grant money.
- This program suggests the use of the Character Development Program in K-6th grade. This cost is estimated at \$15,000 per year for a school of 700 children.