

Decision Item #10: REDUCE DISTRICT FUNDING OF READING RECOVERY (cont.)

Option A: Reduce the program by 50%

Option B: Eliminate the program

Background:

Reading Recovery is an intervention program designed to assist the lowest achieving first grade students improve their reading and language arts skills. The program was initiated in the District in 1989. Specifically the program is a proactive program designed to ensure early identification and assessment of students at risk of not achieving the recommended levels of proficiency in reading and language arts.

Participation in the program is governed by the Reading Recovery Council of North America. This requires implementation of its defined model and adherence to guidelines related to site operation, teacher selection and training, student selection, assessment and monitor, and specific program parameters (i.e. length, frequency of sessions, number of students per teacher).

The reading recovery program provides the base philosophy from which many of the other literacy programs at MMSD are developed. The program provides the highest level of one-on-one student service for all literacy programs within the District. Reading recovery teachers serve a minimum of 8 students per year, with no more than 4 students being served at any time. The students are involved in the program until they reach the outlined achievement criterion or 20 weeks, whichever comes first.

Expenditures:

\$1,316,133 salary expenditures
\$940,100 in District general funds support this program.

Cost per student = \$4,049

- *assumes 325 students/year and includes Title I funding*

Revenues:

District costs for this program are currently offset through \$376,000 of Title I funding.

FTE:

A total of 21 FTE are dedicated to this program – 19 teacher FTE and 2 teacher leader allocations. (6 FTE are funded through Title I)

Anticipated Savings:

	Salary Savings	FTE Savings
Option A	\$658,000	10.5 District funded FTE
Option B	\$1,316,100	21 total FTE (District and Title I funded)

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Option A: Reduce resources for Reading Recovery by 50%

Although the program has a positive impact on reading proficiency within the District, it is the highest cost literacy program. A 50% reduction of the program would equate to **\$658,000** in cost savings.

Option B: Eliminate the Reading Recovery program.

Totally eliminating the program would result in a net cost savings of **\$1,316,100**. This action would release \$376,000 of Title I funding for other purposes and would eliminate \$940,100 from the District budget.

Student Impact: Designed to serve the lowest 20% of 1st grade student in terms of reading achievement, this program serves approximately 325 students per year. This program also indirectly impacts the literacy achievement of students taught by those instructors involved in the program as they integrate the programs learning techniques into the general classroom in while working in other District literacy programs.

If Option A is implemented, the District may find itself allocating the majority of funding for the Reading Recovery program to the same schools which receive Title I funding. This could create a situation whereby "high needs" students in non-Title I schools may no longer have access to this program.

Strategic Priorities: Directly tied to the strategic priorities of Staff Effectiveness and Curriculum and Instruction. (3)

Board Priorities: Directly linked to the goal of all students being able to read at the 3rd grade level or beyond.

Effectiveness: During the years 1995 through 2000, 85% of students involved in the program have obtained an average reading level.

The argument can also be made that this program has had an indirect impact on other students. Specifically, training received by teachers and teacher leaders who participate in this program impacts these students as techniques learned through this program are integrated into the regular classroom. The level of indirect impact through integration of these techniques can not be directly quantified. However, overall improvement has been exhibited during the last five year in reading proficiency results within those schools having been involved in this and other District literacy improvement programs. Specifically, performance on the 3rd grade reading comprehension test has shown an overall decline in below standard performance among ethnic groups during the past ten years. (with the exception of Southeast Asian which has shown a slight increase during the past year.) In addition, comparison between proficient and advanced reading student %'s show a marked increase in level between the first and second grade years. The percentage of students proficient or advanced is up district-wide from 76% to 86% between these two grades.

In terms of highest priority, elementary principals ranked reading recovery allocations as an average of 5 out of 20 when ranking allocations.

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**Redundancies or
Availability of the**

Service Elsewhere: The program serves similar students to those served by Title I, however, services are not duplicated as students do not receive services from both Reading Recovery and Title I at the same time. The combination of these two programs allows a continuous level of intervention for the lowest achieving students.

Service Delivery: The program provides the highest quality of direct-to-the-student intervention related to reading proficiency within the District. Also, it furthers the District's goals of staff development relating to student literacy proficiency. However, the level of resources required is higher than all other literacy programs.