



Leading for Literacy: Supporting Struggling Readers in Non-Public Schools

[Slide 1- Leading for Literacy: Supporting Struggling Readers in Non-Public Schools] Tessie Bailey:

Welcome to today's webinar on leading for literacy, supporting struggling readers in non-public schools. The PROGRESS Center is a U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education-funded center focused on promoting progress for students with disabilities. I'm really pleased to host today's webinar.

[Slide 2- The PROGRESS Center] My name is Dr. Tessie Bailey and I'm the director of the center. The center provides information, resources, tools, and technical assistance to support local educators as they develop and implement programming for students with and not yet identified with disabilities and public and non-public schools. The PROGRESS center works to support educators, we have a line of work to support educators in non-public schools, and it's led it by Dr. Shedeh Hajghassemali and includes national webinars like this one, and a national private school forum in the fall. We have free training events, feedback opportunities and a new virtual open door. You're going to hear a lot about those at the end of today's session. We also host two educators in residence who are from non-public schools to help ensure that our work is relevant to local educators.

[Slide 3- Why We Do What We Do] The center was developed in response to the Endrew F. Supreme Court decision in 2017. And that decision stated that an individualized education program which we refer to as the IEP, and sometimes you might see those in your schools or have heard of a service plan, but that plan must be reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances. Now, under IDEA, which is the funding act supporting students with disabilities, the IEP, or that local service plan, really serves as the foundation for how we promote progress for students with or not yet identified with a be disability.

[Slide 4- Promoting Progress for Students With Disabilities] Our work supports both the development and implementation of high-quality educational programming, and we see those two are really critical in order to support students in achieving outcomes that are desirable for them in their local context. We think about that educational programming as not just the plan itself but the overall core and specialized instruction that we might be providing. So, we're really excited to partner with the Lead for Literacy Center today, and they're going to share a little bit about how to design and implement literacy programming to improve those literacy outcomes for the students that you're working with.

[Slide 5- Welcome from the U.S. Department of Education!] Now, before our friends from Lead for Literacy center begin, I'd like to introduce our friends from the U.S. Department of Education, Dr. David Emenheiser is the officer at the Office of Special Education programs, and we also have with us Pamela

Allen, an education program specialist at the Office of Nonpublic Education. They're going to help us kick off our session today. So Pamela, I'll pass it over to you.

Pamela Allen: Thank you so much, Tessie. It's such a pleasure to be here with everyone today. And we're grateful at the Office of Nonpublic Education for our partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs, OSEP, and the PROGRESS Center.

We're delighted to be here sharing with you this information about helping struggling readers in non-public schools. If you don't know about our office, our mission is to ensure the maximum participation of private school students and teachers in federal education programs and initiatives. And this is just one way we do that, we hope you find today's session helpful and informative.

If you'd like to get in touch with us after this session I'll pop into the chat, our contact information at ONPE, feel free to reach out at any time. As Tessie mentioned, we're very excited to be hosting this session as well as future sessions and open doors and forums for non-public school teachers and administrators to support the children and students in your schools more fully.

On that note, I'm going to pass the torch to my colleague David at the Office of Special Education Programs. David?

David Emenheiser: Thank you, Pamela. Hello, and welcome wherever and whenever you're attending this. I'm David Emenheiser and as mentioned, I work at the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs or OSEP. And this office administers the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.

Many of you may be familiar with parts B and C of the IDEA. Those are the parts that fund formula calculated grants to states, districts, and schools to serve the children with disabilities. My work, however, implements part D of idea, and we fund competitive discretionary grants that build capacity to serve those children and their families.

And as the project officer, I get to work with grantees to develop and manage these investments and ensure that the funds are serving the purposes of idea. Two of the projects in my portfolio are technical assistance and dissemination centers. And these centers make the research and evidence-based better practices, they turn those better practices into resources for practitioners. One is the PROGRESS Center, and another is the Lead for Literacy or L4L Center. In other words, both centers that are collaborating today to bring you this information are in my portfolio, so I am very excited about this opportunity today.

Because their work is supported through federal taxpayer dollars their resources are available free to everyone without strings or commitments for payback. Each center will share their websites and ways that you can find their resources as well as additional and ongoing ways that the centers plan to support your excellent work. I'm going to ask a favor that you share that news with everybody. Your colleagues, school leaders, other practitioners, the parents of your students, your public school friends and neighbors, literal everyone who is part of the education of our nation's children can find information that will help them take their part in that work.

And so, any way that you can get that message out that these are free resources, available to everyone, I really would appreciate that.

So let me end my remarks this morning with some gratitude. I want to thank PROGRESS and Lead for Literacy for hosting today and sharing their resources in this way. But mostly I'm grateful for all of you, the private school organizations and personnel who have joined us today.

It is you, the teachers, leaders, and practitioners, who implement the science of reading so that all of our students can get proper instruction and a strong foundation of literacy.

So next, I'm just going to turn it back to our PROGRESS project director, Tessie Bailey.

[Slide 6- Lead for Literacy Center Introductions] Tessie Bailey: Thank you, Dr. Emenheiser and Ms. Allen. It is such an honor to have representatives from the U.S. Department of Education joining us today. So, I get the pleasure of introducing our primary presenters today, Abigail Foley is the Lead for Literacy deputy director and Cory Stai is a literacy coach for the center. So, thank you, and welcome, Abby.

[Slide 7- Session Learning Outcomes] Abby Foley: Thank you so much, Tessie, and just to echo what everybody has said, we are so excited to be here with you today to be joined by Pamela, David, Tessie and others at the PROGRESS Center. We're going to jump into the presentation and hopefully you'll learn new information and walk away with a lot of new resources you can apply right away in your classroom or building.

So, in today's session, we are going to share a lot of literacy related information and resources offered through our center, as well as through other centers who are similarly devoted to supporting and disseminating meaningful education research. And so to do that, today we're going to define some elements of high-quality literacy-focused educational programming with you. We're going to describe and share some effective strategies for teaching and assessing students who may be struggling in reading in your school or classroom, and we are going to give you access to tools and resources that support continuous improvement of instruction within a comprehensive school wide reading system.

[Slide 8- The Lead for Literacy Center (L4L)] Just a little bit about our center, as you heard, we are funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, and we are a partnership of literacy experts, education researchers and technical assistance providers from Boston University, from the American Institutes for Research, and the Center on Teaching and Learning at the University of Oregon. So, it's definitely a partnership and a lot of people that go into making this project work.

Our mission is to build the capacity of elementary school and district leaders to recognize evidence-based literacy practices and to facilitate their implementation through identifying and supporting instruction and intervention program and professional learning. We are focused on evidence-based literacy skills and concepts as well as the leadership skills that are needed to sustain those practices within a comprehensive system. Before we dive into some specific practices, we want to zoom out and look at the building reading system as a whole.

Literacy instruction does not happen in isolation or in a vacuum. We know there are so many factors that go into thoughtfully teaching a child how to learn to read. Both in and outside of school and from one classroom or grade level to the next. If the system is not designed in a way that identifies and supports the teaching and learning needs of all educators and students, it's very likely that some students will struggle to learn the skills they need to be successful readers.

[Slide 9- Essential Characteristics of High-Quality Literacy Focused Educational Programming] So this is where our framework comes in. The Lead for Literacy Center created a framework that defines the elements that are considered to be essential for high-quality, literacy-focused educational programming. The elements include aligned standards priorities and goals, which provide a clear focus for a school wide reading model, administration organization and communication which efficiently drive the implementation of an effective and robust instruction, intervention and assessment system. And finally, professional development and job embedded learning, which provides sustained supports to educators as they teach and assess students and literacy each day.

So, our website and training model is centered around this framework. We'll share a link in the chat that will take you to the website and point you towards things throughout the session so you can learn more about the framework and access many of the tools and resources that we'll introduce today.

[Slide 10- Aligning the System to Promote Effective Literacy Instruction and Intervention] While there are many ingredients to this effective school wide system, our primary focus today will be on instruction and intervention. Quality reading instruction and intervention most strongly determines if students will learn to read successfully. There's no other consideration under a school's control that comes even close. So thankfully, the research is clear and strong with regards to how students learn to read and what high-quality instruction and intervention look like. What often becomes challenging is the actual implementation of this practice. And this is where alignment is critical with instruction being the nucleus of the system. All decisions related to assessment and professional development and communication family engagement, school priorities and goals, everything, must be aligned and supportive of promote being the best possible reading instruction for all students.

So finally, before I turn it to Cory, I want to say our work is grounded in the research and the science of reading that student reading trajectories are established early in their academic career, and they are stable across time. Without early intervention, struggling readers do not catch up to their average performing peers. In actuality, a gap between strong and struggling readers widens over time without that intervention.

[Slide 11- Features of High-Quality Literacy Instruction and Intervention] I'm going to turn it to my colleague Cory to talk you through some features of high-quality literacy instruction and intervention.

[Slide 12- Instructional Perspective on Teaching and Learning] Cory Stai: Thank you, Abby. Good morning to everyone joining us today. Great to be here. So, as we lean into the features of high-quality literacy for instruction and intervention of students, and begin looking at system wide approaches, there are two important questions that any system needs to ask about any student who is struggling to read.

The first question is: What is it about this student that makes learning difficult for the student? So, we know every child is different and there are lots of different factors that play into a student's learning from prior background knowledge, motivation, perhaps living through trauma, learning disability, lacking adequate vocabulary of. Systems want to ensure that we understand our learners and what's contributing to any challenges in learning they may have.

A second question that systems need to ask on a regular basis is: what is it about this instruction that makes learning difficult for this student? And the second question is going to be the focus of our examination today, really looking at what research tells us about features of effective instruction to ensure that students are learning and progressing in their learning journey and as Abby said, their trajectory for learning has them on a path being proficient and reach their unknown and unknowable potentials.

[Slide 13- Features of Effective Early Literacy Instruction and Intervention] As we look at this question, we're going to look at two aspects of instruction. The what, which is: what are the skills and knowledge that students need to learn to know and be able to do? As well as the how of effective instruction: What are the specific moves that teachers need to make, decisions to be made, and approaches that can be taken that research shows are most effective for most students? And if students are in fact falling behind and continuing to struggle, what do we know about what to do in order to help students catch up by providing additional supports for those students?

[Slide 14- The Simple View of Reading as a Formula for Developing Reading Comprehension Skills] Let's begin on the what side of our exploration today. So, in the mid-80s, a couple of psychologists, Philip Goth and William Turner, developed a framework to describe early reading and what it takes to be a proficient early reader. This is known as the simple view of reading. They expressed this framework as a formula that decoding times language comprehension leads to, equals, reading comprehension.

Now, it's a fairly simple, straightforward articulation of reading, and perhaps the most important item within this framework is that multiplication sign. Rather than a sum that decoding plus language comprehension contribute towards reading, we know from our early mathematics that anything multiplied by a zero equals zero. And so, one of the points being made by Turner and Goth is, if and student is lacking the decoding to be able to read the words on a page or is lacking the language comprehension to make meaning and apply understanding of vocabulary and critical thinking, then all those other items that contribute to effective comprehension, students are going to struggle.

So, looking at these components, decoding is the ability to transform print into spoken language and the end goal of decoding or word recognition instruction is that students are able to do this accurately and fluently. Language comprehension is the ability to then understand the text and spoken language. And reading comprehension is the combination of all these skills and this knowledge coming together in order to allow students to achieve the ultimate goal of reading, which is to make meaning from print.

One of the reasons they developed that particular item is to highlight the importance of decoding as necessary for instruction.

[Slide 15- Essential Components of Reading Instruction] So let's look a little more closely at what's included in these two aspects of the simple view of reading. On this graphic of beginning reading, we will walk through the rainbow across the spectrum starting in red, and the top half identifies three essential components of reading that contribute to effective word recognition, beginning with awareness, the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds and spoken words and understand that words are made of speech sounds. This is a pre-alphabetic skill that contributes to reading and a good indicator in our earliest readers of potential difficulty right off the bat, so it's important to ensure that students can hear and manipulate the sounds of language.

Then as we move into the alphabetic principle, students learn to connect letters to their sounds. Any alphabetic language like English utilizes letters in order to represent those sounds and so this is where the magic of reading begins. The ultimate goal of this development of word recognition is that students can decode or read from sight all words on the page accurately and with fluency, including being able to understand phrasing, how to read with expression, and to make meaning from that text. By effortless word reading to allow as much mental energy as possible to be working on understanding and processing the information in the text.

As we move on to the fourth and fifth components of reading instruction, those are vocabulary and comprehension, two important collections of skills and strategies that students apply on the language comprehension side in order to interact with and make meaning from text applying all of their knowledge to the act of reading.

As we move forward, we see that -- there are two components that we need to ensure that our school system, that our classroom, are building in all students. Word recognition skills and language comprehension skills. So, take a moment to reflect on your system. Does reading instruction and intervention in your classroom or your school building sufficiently address both word recognition and language comprehension skills? The table on the right there are some lists of what kinds of skills and components those two items contain.

[Slide 16- In the Chat: Reflect and Consider] Take a moment to think through that and go ahead and drop into the chat your response and reflection on that. You can include some detail to that about things that are strong or may be missing. So, take a moment to let you reflect on that and share with us.

As you reflect a couple of additional items to think about, what are some things that enable this to happen? What are some barriers that may prevent learners or educators from leaning into these areas? How might this look across different grade levels? All right. Let's take a look at what are some of those items that will allow these to happen.

Okay. I'm seeing some responses in chat here. People are being supported through the acquisition of resources, as well as time to work through, whereas others are reflecting that perhaps we don't have sufficiently in place both these components and there's opportunities after our session today to think about and to apply some of our discussion of the how do we make those things happen within our system.

[Slide 17- Resource: NCIL Literacy Skill Checklist] So let's take a look at that how a little bit. If you are in a system in which you don't have resources for these two areas, we wanted to share a resource that's available to you from the National Center for Improving Literacy. And NCIL has a skill checklist that either as a caregiver, parent or grandparents or an educator working within school systems, you can go into this skills checklist, you can select a specific grade level and answer a series of questions about whether or not specific student has demonstrated proficiency of specific skills expected for knows students at that grade level across those areas that we looked at, those essential components of reading.

And the great thing about this checklist is the end of that survey of responses to the specific skills, expected for a child at a specific grade level, any area that that student continues to need to work on, the site will provide resources that you can use with that child in order to work on developing those skills that are still needed moving forward. So, one resource for you to explore and utilize as you consider how to build these skills in all students.

[Slide 18- How Reading Instruction is Delivered is just as Important as What is Delivered] How reading instruction is delivered is just as important as what is being delivered. Research has indicated to us important ways that we need to structure our instruction to students to ensure that they are developing the skills necessary.

[Slide 19- Features of Effective Instructional Delivery] This graph lists several of those features of effective instruction. Let's begin by taking a look at what it means for instruction to be explicit. Reading is an invisible act. If I sit and watch somebody read unless they are reading out loud, I have no idea what's going on in their minds as they read, what strategies they employ, and what they are doing in order to read words and make sense of the text.

So it's critically important that educators are being explicit by stating the knowledge and skills that are being applied in any given reading act and then to model that for students through think aloud and demonstration of their critical skills of reading so they can see, hear, experience and understand and then to provide lots of opportunities for them to respond and to work with you in a gradual release of the scaffolds until they can do so independently.

Instruction, we know, needs to be systematic. We need to not presume any of the knowledge going in but ensure that students have the prerequisites and skills to provide instruction and manageable pieces, so students are making a progression in developing their knowledge and skills in a way that allows them to take steps towards proficiency and to practice skills in a manageable fashion to success and proficiency before moving on to the next stair step of complexity in a given area.

Of course, students need lots of opportunities to respond and receive feedback and to practice these new skills and practice reading, especially up front, and especially for any students that may have deficits or perhaps be at risk or identified with reading disabilities, many, many opportunities to practice, to receive feedback, until proficiency is secured is critical for all students, but especially students that may have underlying disabilities.

In addition to understanding what instruction we need to provide to all students and some of the effective ways to do so, it's important to ensure that there's enough time to do this important work, to instruct explicitly, to take the time to model, provide multiple opportunities to practice with feedback, and to do putting it all together, lots of opportunities to read authentic text and work in the language comprehension component as well.

[Slide 20- A Differentiated 90-Minute Reading Block] In order to do that, research has shown that an in-person teaching, there's a strong recommendation of a 90-minute uninterrupted reading block and the uninterrupted part is important.

Oftentimes we put time down on the schedule, but the instruction that students experience is interrupted by anything, from taking lunch orders to announcements on the intercom to holiday celebrations and observances to being pulled out for other services. So, it's important to think through your school system and the way in which you are providing reading instruction and asking are we providing an uninterrupted block of time which provides educators the opportunity to do two important things.

We see here in the left boxes that during that time, educators are providing whole group instruction to all students, but also building that block of time so that students have opportunities both to practice independently as well as to work in teacher led skill groups or small groups on skills in areas of development, they may need additional support in or just to provide those feedback opportunities and a small group setting.

Within a system, we've taken a look at both the essential components that all students need to learn as well as some effective strategies for providing those to all students. But we know that effective initial instruction is not always sufficient for all students. Sometimes students who fall behind or struggle or need additional supports need some intervention as well.

[Slide 21- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): A Structure of Support for ALL Students] So this triangle is a common identifier for something known as a multi-tiered system of supports. This is an organization wide effort to ensure that all students are receiving the supports they need and to leverage all the resources in a school for the benefit of each student.

So, in the green at the bottom representing tier 1 or universal or sometimes called core instruction, this is the instruction that all students receive. And as educators and educational leaders work on their school system, on their curriculum and instruction, ideally that initial core instruction should be working without any additional supports for 80% or more of our students.

If we're having less than 80% proficiency within our classrooms, we want to take a look at that universal core instruction and look for opportunities to perhaps embed or improve some of those features and ensure that we're providing the essential components that each student needs.

For those students who may be falling behind or continuing to struggle, tiers 2 and 3 provide additional intensified supports to meet those students' individualized needs. So, in tier 2 provided at times to 15% of students, there's an additional second dose of instruction. This intervention intensifies

instruction in various ways and for a handful of students a small percentage they may need yet even more instruction that's more of one-on-one or one to three as opposed to one to a small group of students that gets even more tailored.

[Slide 22- Increasing the Intensity of Reading Instruction] Let's look on our next slide at what this might look like within a classroom setting. So, we see here on the left in tier 1 that we have a classroom with a teacher identified by a t, and 26 students, reflect by all the numbers that are there. And we see that in this classroom, there are many students in gray for whom instruction is yielding the results we want, and they are showing progress. However, there are students identified in the blue that are showing deficits within their reading or falling behind and needing additional support. All nice students receive instruction within the classroom within tier 1 but as we move into the yellow, we see that a handful of student's teacher is pulling aid side in a small group to provide additional support and instruction. They may be below benchmark on a particular screening and at risk for not being on grade level at the end of a year.

And so, we're going to be even more explicit and systematic, we may provide diagnostic assessment to determine what is it about the students that they are needing additional supports in terms of skill deficits or knowledge deficits, and to intensify instruction.

And then over here in the red we see in tier 3 that there's a handful of students that need even more one-on-one instruction or one-on-a-few instruction that gets even more intensive providing additional opportunities, additional supports, perhaps scaffolds in order to ensure those students are succeeding.

[Slide 23- More Intensity Means...] In terms of what does it mean to intensify instruction, as we move to lean in and provide additional supports or intervention for a student, we need to make sure that we're not just doing the same thing but that we're doing differently. Increasing intensity of instruction may including being more explicit or direct in the instruction, including additional modelling, breaking things down into smaller steps for students or providing additional scaffolds.

It would include more modelling, many, many more opportunities to see it being done, to do it together with the teacher, to do it together with peers, leading eventually to weaning off those supports towards independence. Lots of practice.

Monitoring and feedback. The feedback is critically important we know that as students are practicing, we want them to be practicing skills correctly and the smaller setting allows teachers to provide additional feedback and monitor students to ensure they are getting the most out of their practice time. Time itself is an intensifier to work and work at a pace that's appropriate for them. And we're going to gather additional data to monitor their response to instruction and intervention and to adjust as needed to ensure that students are making progress towards proficiency and their end goals.

[Slide 24- Data-Informed Instruction] So where does that data come from? There are different kinds of assessments that are used for different purposes. One kind of assessment we're all familiar with is lesson or unit mastery. These assessments are designed to ensure students have learned the content in a daily lesson or unit.

These may be formalized assessments like quizzes and tests, but they can also be performance that's monitored to ensure students can demonstrate the skills that have been taught. And we could do this on a regular basis to see if students master the skills and content and if not, to go back and reteach or to provide additional opportunities and supports.

Another purpose for assessments is what's known as screening. Screening assessments are generally pretty short snapshots and so this is, again, to sort of checking your weight and temperature when you go to the doctor's office, we know those two things change in weight, gaining weight, losing weight, a temperature are indicators that something's wrong, but it doesn't tell the doctor what. So, a screening is just doing those temperature checks to see if students are on track or perhaps behind in indicating for us we need to do some additional work to understand what students need.

That comes through diagnostic assessment of our struggling readers to inform that intensified instruction and then while students are receiving additional doses of intervention, we're progress monitoring for gathering data more often to ensure that the things that students are doing in an instruction and intervention are in fact yielding the results we want for that particular instruction. So at this point I'm going to hand it back over to Abby to guide us through some available resources that you can utilize in order to do a deep dive and explore and implement things we just looked at. Abby?

[Slide 25- Lead for Literacy Center Instruction/Intervention Resources] Abby Foley: Thank you, Cory. So, I'm excited to share some really great resources with you all that can help you take the information that you're learning today and apply it immediately in your school or classroom.

I saw a comment earlier in the chat as we were reflecting on our own instruction and intervention and whether we're sufficiently covering that simple view of reading formula. I saw a few reflections saying, well, teachers don't feel like they have the skills in all of that. And it doesn't feel like it's the shared responsibility to support students in all those areas. And is it maybe that some people think it could be a special education responsibility. When in reality we know that it's not.

Going back to the framework, we know we need to be supporting all students as they are accessing the general education curriculum and that means they really need to have all of these reading skills to become successful readers. So, on the slide here, I'm showing a few resources that were developed by the Institute of Education Sciences. And they are the What Works Clearinghouse practice guides. So, on the far left of the screen you can see one practice guide, the foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through third grade practice guide.

The What Works Clearinghouse has other practice guides that cover different topics. There's another guide that covers developing comprehension skills in kindergarten through third grade. There are guides that focus on developing writing skills or math skills. A range of topics. So, we'll share links that you can check out the guides and see whether they are other ones you might want to use. There's a brand new one that just came out, focusing on providing reading intervention to students in grade school through great nine. It was great to see that.

I'm going to walk you through this particular foundational skills guide in a minute, but I want to mention, too, what's really exciting about this practice guide is that it has so many accompanying resources that can actually help with building teacher knowledge and application of these skills. For those of you who may not know what a PLC is, it's a professional learning community, which is basically a group of teachers who are dedicated to enhancing their practice and learning new skills, practicing the new skills, looking at the data to see whether it's working with their students and coming back together and talking about it.

It's really that collaboration that is really important to making sure that teachers are getting job-embedded supports as they are developing student reading skills on a day to day, week to week, month to month basis. So, there's a PLC facilitators guide, which is already developed, you just need to pull a group together and you can just walk through the guide and it has preset agendas and activities that you can engage in.

That participant activities book that I'm showing on the far right of the screen has sample lessons and viewing guides because there are actually videos that will show you what instruction looks like in some of these foundational skill areas, which is really exciting, and it's something that we strongly encourage you all to review and look at. These are not designed to replace a curriculum, but they're really designed to be used to think about certain areas where your curriculum may not be addressing to sufficiently build students' foundational skills and you can enhance them in your small groups and intervention with some of these important skills. I'm going to show you an example.

[Slide 26- Example: Practice Guide Recommendation 2] Each practice guide includes recommendations based on research. These are critical things we need to do to develop student foundational reading skills. In the foundational reading skills practice guide, there are four recommendations. Recommendation one is to develop awareness of the segments of sounds in speech and how they link to letters, really going back to that phonological awareness phonics of the simple view formula, how we want to hone in on developing this awareness in students because it's a critical prereading skill. There are action steps that teachers can take in the form of lessons to develop this awareness of sound segments. So, action step one, for example, is to teach students to recognize and manipulate segments of sound in speech. We can take an even closer look at what that looks like in the practice guide.

[Slide 27- Lesson Example: Practice Guide Recommendation 2] For recommendation two action step one, we want to teach students how to recognize that words are made up of individual sound units which is the phonological awareness. We begin by introducing students to large segments of sounds in words and gradually draw their attention to smaller and smaller sound segments.

So, in the practice guide, they talk about how this starts with syllables. We know for reading instruction to be systematic we can't put a book in front of a child and expect them to figure out on their own how to learn how to read it. There's a scope and sequence that goes into making sure students understand these sound segments.

So, for example, they can start by hearing sounds as syllables in large words, getting them to count in a word like softer, they can hear two sounds, or piano, they can hear three sounds. Once they start

hearing sounds in words, we can move a little bit smaller within words to those smaller and smaller sound segments. One way that students can do that is practicing isolating sounds in words using Elkonin sound boxes and sort pictures and listen to words being said and listen for more smaller segments.

For example, when we hear the word dog we listen, and we know that dog starts with duh-ag. Or sheep. Sheep starts with shhhh-eep. Moving from large sound segments so smaller ones they understand that each individual letter is made up of its unique sound. As I mentioned, the practice guide has videos that show some of those action steps in the form of small lessons.

[Slide 28- Example: Practice Guide Recommendation 2] So I'm going to play a short video clip now and I would encourage you to share in the chat or reflect on your own is the teacher deliver instruction focused on one or more foundational reading skills. Is it explicit, systematic and does she provide multiple opportunities for students to respond and receive feedback? I'm going to play a quick clip for you now. Give me a moment to set it up.

Video Narrator: An effective small group activity for building phonemic awareness is the use of Elkonin sound boxes.

Teacher: We've been working on breaking apart and putting together phonemes, or the individual sounds that we hear in each word. So first we're going to say the word, next we're going to hold up one finger for each sound that we hear in the word, then we're to touch and move the chips for each sound we hear in the word. We're going to touch each chip and say the sounds that we hear, then we're going to read the whole word while tracking with our finger.

I'm going to do an example first. So, the word is "saw." Say the word "saw." I'm going to hold up a finger for each sound I hear. Suh-aw. I'm going to touch and move the chips for each sounds I hear. S-aw. Touch the chip as I say the sounds in saw. Suh-aw. Then I use my finger to track and read the word "saw." Can you try that with me? Your first word is "tea." Say "tea."

Students: Tea.

Teacher: Hold up one finger for each sound you hear in tea.

Students: Tah-eee.

Teacher: Touch your chips and move them each time you hear a sound in tea.

Students: Tah-eee.

Teacher: Touch each chip and say the sounds in the word.

Students: Tah-eee.

Teacher: Use your finger to track and read the word.

Students: Tea.

Abby Foley: I'm going to stop that there, but hopefully you saw a quick glimpse of what this type of reading instruction could look like with a group of students. Check out the chat too. And Cory shared a lot of the resources, hopefully you have them.

[Slide 29- Next Steps for Enhancing Your Schoolwide Reading System] So I know we're kind of nearing the end, and just wanted to bring it back and close out with some next steps for enhancing your school wide reading system and for applying some of the information that you learned today.

[Slide 30- Engage in Continuous Improvement] This slide here is just recommending continuous improvement is a great -- a launching point, a great place to start for basically moving the needle with your instruction and intervention in your school.

The continuous improvement process is a four-step process: evaluate, prioritize, plan and implement. That can be applied at a school level, a grade level, classroom level, or an individual student level, and the key is really to just use data to understand what is happening and what a student's or classroom's or school's needs are. Use the data to prioritize understand where you might want to focus your energy and efforts and resources. Create a strong action plan around that focus area. Implement it, and then get so the data to see if what you did worked. And this process can be used with each of our framework elements, can be used with your instruction and intervention, and it's an effective model for taking any innovation and moving the needle to improve outcomes.

I also wanted to mention we have a tool on our website called the framework navigator, which can be used by school teams to do that evaluation step and see how your school might be doing with providing a range of supports to students in reading. So, we'll put that link in the chat for you too and you just think through each framework element and write your implementation whether it's not yet evident or in development or whether it's strongly established. This can give you really great evaluation data that will help you prioritize and create a plan for where you might want to start with supporting struggling readers in your school.

[Slide 31- Key Takeaways] We covered a lot in our presentation, and I just really want to emphasize the importance of high-quality reading instruction, intervention, and assessment and that how reading instruction is taught and assessed is just as important as what is being taught and assessed. As well as that continuous improvement process that can be used to enhance each element of that system.

[Slide 32- Follow Along With Us!] We would love for you to follow along with us, we are on Twitter and LinkedIn, always sharing resources and opportunities and events that are aligned to the information that you heard today and that are dedicated to providing meaningful supports to school leaders and the staff they support in order to improve reading outcomes for all students, including those who might be struggling or who have a disability. We also have a newsletter, and you can sign up for that on our website.

[Slide 33- Thank You] So I'm going to turn it back over to Tessie. I have my contact and Cory's contact on the slide here. We'll also add it to the chat and you're welcome to email us at any time with any questions.

[Slide 34- Questions] Tessie Bailey: Great. And we have had several questions, some we've been able to answer as we've been moving forward, but I see that we have a specific question that just came in: do you have recommendations for the types of assessments folks should use whether they're informal or formal? Where should folks go?

Cory Stai: Happy to take this one. So many schools have a comprehensive assessment system which includes many of the subtests that teachers, educators might want to employ in order to diagnose potential reading difficulties for students. If you are wondering what the specific assessments and subtests are available within that, there's a resource that you can go to and if you don't have these, you can go here as well to explore what's available and what the options are.

The National Center for Intensive Intervention, and I'm going to put the link here in the chat, I think it was available earlier, has developed an academic screening tools chart and this tools chart has consumer reports style graphics that let you know both that it is a valid and reliable assessment but it also has a column that indicates for you what each of the assessments, what features of reading each of the assessments evaluate. Some are comprehensive and others are specific including specific assessments for phonics or other specific sub skills.

So, it's a great resource to go and explore to see what's available out there to meet specific needs you may have for your assessments or to take a look if you have an assessment suite, what are all of the subtests that are available. Some of which you may or may not be aware that your school may have available to you already or to explore if you don't have some.

Tessie Bailey: And I would just confirm generally the national centers that are funded by the U.S. Department of Education don't recommend specific tools, and instead provide resources like those that were shared in the chat box that really help folks evaluate existing tools and select those that are most appropriate for their context.

I want to ask one more question before close, what curriculum are available when schools don't have any? What if we don't have this core programming or a core assessment? Are there ways that educators can continue to support students?

Abby Foley: So there's a lot of resources out there. I think it gets back to what Tessie said about using a good tool to evaluate. Before with you throw any curriculum program away up the to have a tool that can help you understand the program you're using and where there are gaps and maybe you'll work with a team and see that we really aren't providing sufficient coverage of foundational skills or it's only in kindergarten and just disappears by first or second grade.

I think my first suggestion and there are plenty of tools out there, Ed Reports and Reading League has a really good curriculum review tool but just use something like that to understand where you are and then I think the University of Florida virtual hub has a new free curriculum rather than recommend a

specific curriculum just inform yourself on those essential components of reading and what all the information that we shared, what you should really be looking for in a curriculum program to then make a really informed decision about what the program might be what program might be best for your students and understanding the population of students you serve and their needs and going back to the data to really inform that decision.

Tessie Bailey: Well, Cory and Abby, thank you so much for participating. I know there were some questions around the ed reports, I know we have the What Works Clearinghouse, and the practice guides outline some of the critical features, offer some sample lesson plans that you can access. We also mentioned the University of Florida's reading virtual hub, and we will try to put that on there. And then I do know that there are programs that are available but what we recommend is understanding what are the essential features of those, and evaluating those programs against those features to make better selections.

I'm going to pass this over to Shede. Shede is the PROGRESS Center's private school lead, and she'll be offering a couple of options to continue these conversations.

So, I want to thank you Cory and Abby for sharing all of this information. We'll put the link in the chat box so you can find more resources. But if you're interested in continuing to chat with us, stay tuned for what's available.

[Slide 35- Upcoming Non-Public School Opportunities] Shede Hajghassemali: My name is Dr. Shede Hajghassemali and I'm the private school liaison or lead for the PROGRESS Center.

We're excited to announce that there are four great opportunities for non-public school, private school leaders, administrators, and educators. Currently we are recruiting for two events. The first is the private school educator focus group. This will be held June 1st from 4:30 to 5:45 eastern. You'll share successes, challenges, and needs for supporting students with disabilities in private schools with a small group, about six to eight people.

Our next opportunity is private school educator interviews, looking for again, six to eight participants for about a thirty-minute, a one-to-one interview, we'll be flexible and set up a time and date that's convenient for you. And we'll be asking participants to also share their experiences in supporting struggling students in their schools.

Our third event is the private school open door to progress. The PROGRESS Center is going to be hosting an opportunity for participants to come together to share ideas, tools, and to share resources that will support students who may be struggling or have a disability through collaboration, dialogue and collective sharing and learning. This will be held on May 25th at 1:00 p.m., and all participants today will be receiving a separate email from me which will include all the necessary information you'll need to be able to log on and join us.

Finally, I am happy to announce that this year's progress center private school forum will be on September 27th year, so please put that in your calendar and save the date.

[Slide 36- Private School Educator Focus Groups and Interviews] And I know that everyone is asking, how can we sign up for the focus group and one to one interview? So, in the next slide you're going to see there's a QR code and thank you for adding the link as well. You can choose either or to be able to sign up for both of these opportunities. We are offering a \$50 gift card for your time.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out, but I will be sending out a follow-up email later this week to sum up this information that I've just thrown out to you. I look forward to seeing you all at these events. Tessie, back to you.

[Slide 37- Staying Connected with the PROGRESS Center] Tessie Bailey: All right. Thanks, Shedeh, we're very excited. And just like Lead for Literacy, we have a Facebook and Twitter. If you sign up for the newsletter on our primary page, you will also see these events showing up in the newsletter so make sure you get your name in there at the bottom and then you'll get the direct links. As Shedeh mentioned, you'll get follow-up conversations or emails and we appreciate your feedback to help us make sure what we're providing meets your needs at this time. Have a wonderful day, everyone, and thank you for joining us today.