

Friday, February 20, 2009

OU to host statewide symposium on reading education

By **Dave Groves**, news editor

More than 280 school administrators and educators from across Michigan will converge on the campus of Oakland University to learn more about great strides being made to help children who have extreme difficulties with learning to read.

The Reading Recovery Center of Michigan at Oakland University, one of only 22 university-based teacher training centers across the nation and the only one in Michigan, will host the 2009 Response to Intervention Symposium on Feb. 26 and 27.

"As a catalyst for systemic change, Response to Intervention (RtI) puts educators and administrators on the cutting edge of education reform," said Mary Lose, an Oakland University associate professor of reading and language arts and director of the Reading Recovery Center of Michigan.

She added that the conference comes at an exciting time for reading educators. "Combined with new resources in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Michigan has the potential to experience historic progress for all our children," Lose said.

Referenced in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, RtI encourages early identification of students with reading difficulties, implementation of research-based methods of instruction and evaluation of how well students respond to the instruction. The goal of the approach is to quickly bring young learners – generally at the first-grade level – up to speed, as well as to prevent unnecessary labeling of these students as learning disabled.

Among a number of distinguished RtI experts giving presentations at the symposium are keynote speakers Richard Allington, a University of Tennessee professor of education and former president of the International Reading Association, and Peter Johnston, a professor in the Reading Department at University at Albany, State University of New York and recipient of the Alert J. Harris Award for his contribution to the understanding of reading disability.

These and other presenters will discuss practical aspects of RtI – from implementation of intervention programs at the district, school and classroom level to specific instruction methods.

Lose said the symposium also will serve as an ideal opportunity to highlight the Reading Recovery intervention model, which is the only one to be recognized by the United States Department of Education as having a positive impact on students in all four domains of reading assessment – alphabetic, fluency, comprehension and general reading achievement.

"When the No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001, key policy makers recognized Reading Recovery as an important component of a comprehensive literacy program," Lose explained. "In Reading Recovery, teachers work individually with young children who are struggling with their reading. Reading Recovery has been shown to be highly effective in providing multiple benefits by developing skilled educators who impact children, teachers and schools."

Since its establishment in 1991, the Reading Recovery Center of Michigan at Oakland University has provided professional development to more than 1,050 Reading Recovery teachers and reached nearly 87,500 students. By addressing learning difficulties early, the reading intervention approach is credited with saving considerable expense on retentions in grade, and referrals and placements in special education programs.

For more information on the Reading Recovery Center of Michigan at Oakland University, call (248) 370-3057.

SUMMARY

More than 280 educators will gather to learn more about great strides being made to help children who have extreme difficulties with learning to read.

Created by David Groves (groves@oakland.edu) on Friday, February 20, 2009
Modified by David Groves (groves@oakland.edu) on Friday, February 20, 2009
Article Start Date: Friday, February 20, 2009