

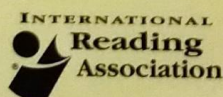
Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy

ACTION STEPS FOR SCHOOLWIDE SUCCESS

Judith Irvin
Julie Meltzer
Nancy Dean
Martha Jan Mickler

Foreword by
ANDRÉS HENRÍQUEZ

A Joint Publication



FOR GRADES 4–12

Praise for Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy

"The Literacy Project is a systemic process that guarantees all students access to superior instructional strategies."

—Kathleen P. Norton, Principal
Arvada High School
Jefferson County, CO

"Following the process outlined in this book allowed our literacy team to personalize the project to our school and needs. Our team presented our project to our staff in August and our teachers have implemented it faithfully. Our students know the slogan and are excited about the project. The literacy team has kept the excitement high for the year."

This literacy project changed the culture and focus of our school in less than a year."

—Trip Sargent, Principal
North Arvada Middle School
Jefferson County, CO

"I have seen numerous educational initiatives come and go in my forty some years working with schools, but nothing has been as important, relevant, or long lasting as adolescent literacy. Schools, with principals and teachers who have stayed the course with embedded literacy strategies across the curriculum, with a focus on literacy rich culture and structures in their buildings, with students using literacy strategies on their own, and with staff and students reading and sharing, are the schools that have made significant gains in their educational achievement."

—Betty A. Jordan, Director
Washington County Consortium
Machias, ME

"Judith Irvin and her team have created a valuable resource and guidebook for school districts serious about improving the literacy achievement of their students. This volume expands and deepens the other contributions they have provided, especially Taking Action on Literacy Leadership. As a professional literacy educator actively involved in partnerships with schools and districts working to improve literacy, I read each chapter from a very concrete perspective: how did these suggestions and the lists of concerns and issues reflect my experiences and were the suggestions and model for change ones I could embrace? In each chapter I found honest descriptions of the tough issues faced by schools trying to focus on literacy across the content areas. More important, the chapters are full of guidelines and practical suggestions for dealing with the challenges. The implementation maps and the rubrics that help school literacy teams diagnose, establish goals, monitor implementation, and sustain the changes they want are particularly valuable resources. This team knows that change requires a systems approach with all levels of school and community involved over an extended time frame. I heartily recommend this as a very useful tool for schools wanting to implement a schoolwide commitment to literacy."

—Donna Ogle, National-Louis University
Chicago, IL

"Wow! This book gives school and district leaders and teams the what, why, and how to do the rocket science work of getting every student to read and write at grade level or above. Principals and literacy teams no longer need to be stuck in the 'We don't know what to do next' world of frustration."

—Bess Scott, Director of Elementary Education
Lincoln Public Schools, NE

"The connections regarding best practice research from multiple fields—differentiation, professional development, curriculum mapping, 21st-century literacy, assessment, and instructional strategies—are critical and very well done. These connections are made in a professional,

understandable way with theories and classroom applications articulated across grade levels and in many formats: scoring guides, prose, questions, vignettes, case studies, and graphics."

—Darlene Castelli, Literacy Coach/Reading Specialist
Clayton High School, MO

"The most beneficial aspect of the literacy action planning process was providing training and asking for input from teachers from the very beginning. Literacy Support Team Members were able to reflect on the unique and specific strengths and needs of their buildings and utilize this information to develop a practical implementation plan. The time spent working together on the Literacy Action Plan helped to build community and foster a sense of ownership in the change process. Rather than being "acted upon" with a top-down initiative, staff members were an integral part of enacting change within their own learning environments and for their own students. This was very powerful and a primary reason that all four secondary schools were able to launch the initiative so successfully."

—Lisa White, District ELA Coordinator
Plymouth Public Schools
Plymouth, MA

"This rich resource walks middle and high school literacy leaders through a comprehensive process for conceptualizing, initiating, and, most important, sustaining a schoolwide literacy learning program. The authors clearly know teachers and schools, and their reality-tested tools will prove invaluable in guiding and supporting middle and high school literacy leaders."

—Doug Buehl, Author, *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*

"Most school administrators know in concept that they need to have a Literacy Leadership Team, but what exactly would such a team do? Plan a book fair or a parent spaghetti night? Organize a contest for the most books read? Publish a 'word of the day?' These may all be worthy activities, but are these things that will help our students become stronger in their ability to access content knowledge through text? As educators living in this world of high-stakes accountability, we need a way to focus our activities to be sure that our hard work is well spent. The literacy action planning process developed by Dr. Judith Irvin and her colleagues has helped several schools in our district realistically assess their strengths and opportunities for improvement and develop concrete action plans for schoolwide literacy improvement."

—Connie Kolosey, Supervisor of Secondary Reading
Pinellas County, FL

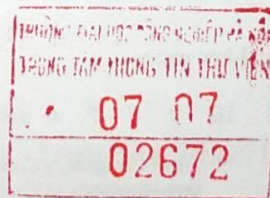
"The Five-Stage Literacy Leadership Process in the book provided my principals and teachers with an easy-to-follow, research-based guide to develop a successful Literacy Program within their school."

—Jerryleyn L. Jones, Chief Area Officer, Area 24
Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, IL

FOR GRADES 4–12

Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy

**ACTION STEPS FOR
SCHOOLWIDE SUCCESS**

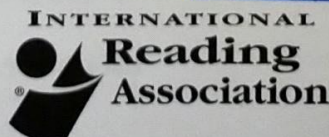


Judith Irvin
Julie Meltzer
Nancy Dean

Martha Jan Mickler

Foreword by
ANDRÉS HENRÍQUEZ

A Joint Publication



GIFT OF THE ASIA FOUNDATION
NOT FOR RE-SALE

QUÀ TẶNG CỦA QUỸ CHÂU Á
KHÔNG ĐƯỢC BÁN LẠI

Copyright © 2010 by Judith L. Irvin

All rights reserved. When forms and sample documents are included, their use is authorized only by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book. Except for that usage, no part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

For information:



Corwin
A SAGE Company
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
(800) 233-9936
Fax: (800) 417-2466
www.corwin.com

SAGE India Pvt. Ltd.
B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative
Industrial Area
Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044
India

SAGE Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

SAGE Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd.
33 Pekin Street #02-01
Far East Square
Singapore 048763

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Taking the lead on adolescent literacy : action steps for schoolwide success/Judith L. Irvin
[et al.]; foreword by Andrés Henríquez.

"A joint publication with the International Reading Association"
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4129-7980-1 (pbk.)

1. Language arts (Secondary) 2. Literacy programs. 3. School improvement programs.
I. Irvin, Judith L., 1947- II. Title.

LB1631.T239 2010

428.4071'2—dc22

2009051374

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

10 11 12 13 14 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

<i>Acquisitions Editor:</i>	Carol Chambers Collins
<i>Associate Editor:</i>	Megan Bedell
<i>Editorial Assistants:</i>	Sarah Bartlett, Allison Scott
<i>Production Editor:</i>	Libby Larson
<i>Copy Editor:</i>	Jeannette K. McCoy
<i>Typesetter:</i>	C&M Digitals (P) Ltd.
<i>Proofreader:</i>	Charlotte J. Waisner
<i>Indexer:</i>	Ellen Slavitz
<i>Cover and Graphic Designer:</i>	Michael Dubowe

Contents

Foreword	vii
<i>Andrés Henríquez</i>	
Acknowledgments	ix
About the Authors	x
 PART I: THE MODEL, PROCESS, AND RUBRICS	 1
Rationale for a Schoolwide Focus on Literacy	2
Why Focus on Literacy?	2
How the Literacy Leadership Process Was Developed	7
The Five-Stage Literacy Leadership Process	8
How to Use the Literacy Leadership Process	10
Introduction to the Literacy Action Rubrics	11
Description of the Rubrics	12
Using the Literacy Action Rubrics	18
The Literacy Action Rubrics	20
 PART II: SCHOOLWIDE CHANGE IN FIVE STAGES	 37
Chapter 1—Stage 1: Get Ready	38
Step 1: Build an Effective Literacy Leadership Team	39
Step 2: Create a Vision of a Literacy-Rich School	43
Step 3: Use Data to Establish the Need for Literacy Improvement	47
Next Steps	51
Chapter 2—Stage 2: Assess	52
Step 1: Identify School Strengths	53
Step 2: Summarize Key Messages From Your School Data	55
Step 3: Assess Current School Implementation	
Using the Literacy Action Rubrics	56
Step 4: Draft Literacy Action Goals	63
Next Steps	66
Chapter 3—Stage 3: Plan	68
Step 1: Develop an Implementation Map	
for Each Literacy Action Goal	69
Step 2: Solicit Feedback From the School Community	74
Step 3: Revise Literacy Action Goal Statements	
and Implementation Maps	76
Step 4: Publish the Formal Literacy Action Plan	78
Next Steps	78

Chapter 4—Stage 4: Implement	79
Step 1: Organize for Action	80
Step 2: Monitor and Troubleshoot Implementation	87
Step 3: Monitor Progress Toward Goals	95
Step 4: Sustain Momentum and Celebrate Accomplishments	101
Next Steps	102
Chapter 5—Stage 5: Sustain	104
Step 1: Summarize Progress Toward Goals	105
Step 2: Revise Implementation Maps	110
Step 3: Analyze Success as a Literacy Leadership Team	112
Step 4: Plan How to Sustain Momentum	114
Next Steps	118
PART III: SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS AS LITERACY LEADERS	119
Chapter 6—The Principal's Role	120
Support Literacy Leaders	121
Use the Five Action Points of the <i>Taking Action Literacy Leadership Model</i>	123
Chapter 7—District Support	142
Communicate That Improving Literacy Is a Priority	143
Provide Professional Development	144
Provide Specific Types of Fiscal Support	146
Establish Uniform Policies and Procedures Across the District	148
Use Data to Improve Instruction and Monitor Program Effectiveness	149
Develop and Implement a District Literacy Action Plan	151
Develop District Literacy Action Goals	152
Use the Five Action Points of the <i>Taking Action Literacy Leadership Model</i>	155
Review the District Plan to Ensure Alignment With State Planning and Advocacy	157
Resources	
Resource A: School Vignettes	163
Resource B: Tools to Use When Implementing the Five-Stage Process	169
Resource C: Examples of Each Rubric Component in Action	189
Resource D: Riverton High School Case Study	210
Resource E: Matrix of Resources Available in <i>Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy and Meeting the Challenge of Adolescent Literacy</i>	216
Resource F: Glossary of Terms	221
References	227
Index	228

Foreword

The publication of *Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy* marks an exciting moment for schools, students, and educational leaders across the country. It reflects a change in our understanding of literacy, and makes available the results of years of work to understand and bring attention to the needs of upper elementary, middle, and high school students. These adolescent learners have been overlooked far too long in the necessary, yet incomplete, efforts to improve schools and student learning.

When Carnegie Corporation's Advancing Literacy initiative was launched in 2003 the educational community and the country at large had awakened anew to the underlying crisis of literacy achievement in our schools. In 2001, The National Academy of Science release, *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, along with the *Report of the National Reading Panel*, shaped the design of early-elementary literacy initiatives made possible by Title I funds, especially Reading First and Early Reading First. Additional funds provided much-needed resources for research in the area of early reading. While there were certainly controversies about the implementation of the government programs, the investment in reading was welcomed by many.

At the same time, educators' interest in the less-explored issue of adolescent literacy was on the rise. Two important publications helped catalyze this attention. The International Reading Association's excellent paper, *Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement*, raised awareness and provided a primer for understanding adolescents' struggle with reading. The RAND Reading Study Group's report, *Reading for Understanding*, underscored the literacy skills needed for comprehension of complex text. These reports were released just as philanthropic dollars were being heavily invested in high school reform and at the same time that the Foundations realized that incoming ninth graders—as many as 70 percent according to the Nation's Report Card—were significantly behind in reading skills.

Carnegie Corporation of New York seized the moment, building upon its legacy of improving and expanding educational attainment with the launch of the Advancing Literacy Initiative. The goal was to ensure that middle and high school students received the attention they deserved and to address what the Corporation's president, Vartan Gregorian, had identified as a:

challenging disconnect in our educational system, namely, that what is expected in academic achievement for middle and high school students has significantly increased, [yet] the way in which students are taught to read, comprehend, and write about subject matter has not kept pace with the demands of schooling (Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy, 2010, p viii.)

As the program officer leading this work, it became clear to me that not only was it essential to develop knowledge and practices around adolescent literacy, it was also essential to address the twin needs of developing public support and finding ways to engage schools so that adolescent literacy would be a priority. We saw early on that leadership would be a key component in bringing critical mass and sustainability to adolescent literacy improvements over time. In fact, in the first report of the Advancing Literacy Program, *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy* (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004) "leadership" was one of the 15 critical elements included.

To bring the work of adolescent literacy to scale, to make strides in increased academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and college attainment, we need to engage school leaders—especially principals—in this Herculean effort. But how? How do school leaders strategically plan for schoolwide change? How do school literacy leaders create a vision for literacy-rich schools? How can the use of data establish a foundation for focusing on literacy?

Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy: Action Steps for Schoolwide Success effectively tackles and answers these compelling questions. This thorough and practical guide is designed to help school and district leaders create and execute a successful plan for adolescent literacy. Judith Irvin and her colleagues present the knowledge, expertise, and mix of strategies needed for school and district leaders to develop a comprehensive plan, support teachers to improve instruction, use data, build leadership capacity, and allocate resources. These basic principles will put schools on track to an improved, sustained culture of literacy and student performance.

Now is exactly the right time for *Taking the Lead on Adolescent Literacy*: the data are available, the need is understood, and effective practices have been identified. The wealth of knowledge in this book paves the way for educational leaders to transform the educational outcomes and lives of their adolescent students.

This book will give you confidence, direction, and the necessary tools to enhance your own leadership, decision-making, and vision for your school. Good luck!

—Andrés Henríquez
Program Officer, National Program
Carnegie Corporation of New York

Acknowledgments

Corwin gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following reviewers:

Molly Burger, Principal
Middleton Middle School
Middleton, ID

Darlene Castelli, Literacy Coach/Reading Specialist
Clayton High School
Clayton, MO

Joan Eggert, Reading Specialist, Grades 5–8
Indian Mound Middle School
McFarland, WI

Bess Scott, Director of Elementary Education
Lincoln Public Schools
Lincoln, NE

Bill Sommers, High School Principal
Chaska Public School
Austin, TX

About the Authors



Judith Irvin, PhD, is a professor at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, and the executive director of the National Literacy Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving middle and high school literacy. Her repertoire includes chairing the research committee for the National Middle School Association for six years and serving on the Commission on Adolescent Literacy of the International Reading Association. She has written and edited numerous books, chapters, and articles on adolescent literacy—most notably *Reading and the High School Student: Strategies to Enhance Literacy* (with Douglas Buehl and Ronald Klemm, 2007), *Strategies for Enhancing Literacy and Learning in Middle School Content Area Classrooms* (with Douglas Buehl and Barbara Radcliffe, 2007) and *Teaching Middle School Reading* (with James Rycik, 2005).

Judith recently completed two books as a result of a project funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York: *Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy: An Implementation Guide for School Leaders* (with Julie Meltzer and Melinda Dukes, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2007) and *Meeting the Challenge of Adolescent Literacy: Practical Ideas for Literacy Leaders* (with Julie Meltzer, Martha Jan Mickler, Melvina Phillips, and Nancy Dean, 2009). She is a speaker and consultant to school systems and professional organizations throughout the nation. Judith spent eight years as a middle and high school social studies and reading teacher.



Julie Meltzer, PhD, is Senior Advisor for Research, Strategy, and Design at Public Consulting Group's Center for Resource Management (PCG-CRM) in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She is responsible for the design of consulting services related to 21st Century Teaching and Learning, Response to Intervention (RtI), and Literacy and Learning. As director of the Adolescent Literacy Project at the LAB at Brown University, she developed the Adolescent Literacy Support Framework showcased on the Knowledge Loom Web site and was on the development team for the Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) *Adolescent Literacy Toolkit*. A sought-after keynote speaker, author, reviewer, conference presenter, and workshop leader, she seeks to empower educators to apply promising research-based practices to support the literacy development and learning needs of students. Julie is a coauthor of *Meeting the Challenge of Adolescent Literacy: Practical Ideas for Literacy Leaders* (with Judith Irvin, Martha Jan Mickler, Melvina Phillips, and Nancy Dean, 2009), and *Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy: An Implementation Guide for School Leaders* (with Judith Irvin and Melinda Dukes, 2007). She is also the author of *Adolescent Literacy Resources: Linking Research and Practice* (2002), and articles that have appeared in *Educational Leadership*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Principal Leadership*, *In Perspective*, and other educational publications. She brings substantive experience

as a teacher, teacher educator, and leadership coach to her work in the areas of systemic school improvement, capacity building, and design of professional development services and materials. Julie and her colleagues work with schools and districts throughout the country.



Nancy Dean, EdS, is Professor Emerita at the P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. During her 39 years in education, she has taught middle and high school English, special education, reading, debate, social studies, English for speakers of other languages, and Advanced Placement English. She is also an experienced literacy coach and curriculum specialist.

Committed to school literacy reform and meaningful professional development, she has worked extensively with teachers and school leaders in urban and rural schools throughout the United States. She is an associate director of the National Literacy Project and a lead presenter for that organization. In addition, she is a national consultant in secondary literacy and literacy leadership and director of *Leadership Through Reading*, a cross-age tutoring program.

Nancy is the author of *Voice Lessons: Classroom Activities to Teach Diction, Detail, Imagery, Syntax, and Tone* (2000); *Discovering Voice: Voice Lessons for Middle and High School* (2006); and the *Writing Intervention Kit for High School* (2008). She is also coauthor (with Candace Harper) of *Succeeding in Reading: A Complete Cross-Age Tutoring Program* (2006), and *Meeting the Challenge in Adolescent Literacy: Practical Ideas for Literacy Leaders* (with Judith Irvin, Julie Meltzer, Martha Jan Mickler, and Melvina Phillips, 2009).



Martha Jan Mickler, PhD, is currently a private consultant specializing in adolescent literacy. She works with administrators and teachers in classroom and seminar settings with the focus on developing literacy leadership and helping teachers integrate literacy within academic and fine arts content areas. She has held a variety of leadership positions in education, including Supervisor of Secondary Reading (Pinellas County, Florida); Principal, Fairyland Elementary School (Walker County, Georgia); Supervisor of English and World Languages and Director of Teaching and Learning (Chattanooga Public Schools, Tennessee); and Director of Music Therapy (New Jersey Neuropsychiatric Institute, Princeton, New Jersey).

She was also a resource teacher at Fairyland School and a piano instructor and performing artist for Cadek Conservatory (Chattanooga, Tennessee).

Martha Jan has been active in many professional organizations, including the National Council of Teachers, serving as President of the Tennessee Council of Teachers from 1997 to 1999. She serves on the Editorial Review Board for the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* and has coauthored a book on literacy leadership: *Meeting the Challenge of Adolescent Literacy: Practical Ideas for School Leaders* (with Judith Irvin, Julie Meltzer, Melvina Phillips, and Nancy Dean, 2009). Her published articles have appeared in many periodicals, including the *Journal of Special Education*, *Classroom Leadership*, *Spelling Progress Quarterly*, and *Computers, Reading, and Language Arts*.