



# Literacy Collaborative® Standards

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# Introduction

Literacy Collaborative® is a comprehensive model designed to provide a school-wide approach for improving the reading and writing achievement of children. Literacy Collaborative includes 10 essential design elements:

1. a school leadership team;
2. a school-based literacy coordinator;
3. initial and ongoing professional development for teachers and literacy coordinators;
4. in-classroom coaching for classroom teachers;
5. research-based classroom instructional practices;
6. classroom assessment that informs instruction;
7. materials to support the implementation;
8. Reading Recovery® as a safety net;
9. a home/school partnership program; and,
10. research on results in terms of student achievement.

Schools that implement the model according to the standards described in this document are registered as Literacy Collaborative schools and affiliated with an approved Literacy Collaborative university training center.

Adherence to the following standards is essential to maintaining a high-quality implementation that results in improved student outcomes in literacy achievement.

# Definitions

The Literacy Collaborative Standards are intended to inform and support personnel who are responsible for the implementation and maintenance of all Literacy Collaborative® schools and classrooms.

**Standards** as outlined in this document are requirements that must be met in order to maintain use of the Literacy Collaborative trademark. Standards are based on research of effective practice and are essential for assuring quality implementation of the Literacy Collaborative. Sites that meet the standards are members of the Literacy Collaborative network.

The **Literacy Collaborative Trademark Committee** is composed of model developers from Lesley University and The Ohio State University. This committee is charged with maintaining the integrity of the model as outlined in these standards, as well as with protecting the investment of educators in implementing Literacy Collaborative.

The trademark for Literacy Collaborative at the primary (K-grade 2) and/or intermediate (grades 3-5/6) is granted by Lesley University and The Ohio State University to schools, district training sites, and university training sites on a royalty-free basis subject to meeting the standards as described in this document. Use of the trademark is subject to annual renewal.

No set of standards can provide for the unique settings of all schools or districts. A procedure for requesting temporary departures from these standards is available at the end of this document.

**Year 1- Literacy Coordinator training year**

**Year 2- Field year (Literacy Coordinator teaches initial 40-hour course)**

# I. Standards for Literacy Collaborative® Schools

**1.1 The school will employ a full-time literacy coordinator(s) in the school (see Standards for Literacy Coordinators).**

Rationale: The key delivery system for Literacy Collaborative is a professional development program led by a literacy coordinator. With a trained literacy coordinator on site, the school builds capacity for continuous improvement.

**1.2 Teachers in the school will successfully complete a minimum of 60 hours of professional development provided by their school-based literacy coordinator over a two-year period (e.g., 40 hours during Year 1 and 20 hours in Year 2) as defined by the course syllabus. This training is recursive until all faculty responsible for teaching literacy (K-2 or 3-5/6) have completed training.**

**1.3 Teachers in the school will participate in ongoing professional development sessions taught by their school-based literacy coordinator following the initial two-year training. This ongoing training consists of a minimum of 10 hours yearly and is spaced across the school year.**

Rationale: Teachers need time for professional development that supports them in taking on new understandings, linking theory to practice, and planning for instruction around student needs, with increased student achievement as a goal. A large body of research has revealed that ongoing teacher training is the critical factor in making a difference in students' learning.

**1.4 Teachers in the school will engage with their literacy coordinator in ongoing, regularly scheduled coaching sessions an average of twice every month.**

Rationale: Reflection strengthens instruction. Through coaching with a literacy coordinator, teachers learn to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching. Coaching supports classroom teachers as they apply knowledge, develop skills, polish techniques, and deepen their understandings.

**1.5 Teachers in the school will collect, analyze, and use classroom assessment data to inform teaching decisions on a regular basis.**

Rationale: Teachers assess students to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching and the implementation of the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework. This informs the teachers' instruction, helps them to provide interventions, and equips them with strategies for school improvement.

**1.6 The school will ensure that the literacy coordinator, school leadership team, and classroom teachers collaborate to collect classroom assessment data and assessments required by their district/state. Schools will use this information for school-level program evaluation and to design ongoing professional development. Leadership teams will review school data each year and submit an annual school report to their university training center by the established due date.**

Rationale: An essential part of membership in a research-based project is data collection, analysis, and use. Teachers collect and use data in order to monitor the effectiveness of the Literacy Collaborative implementation.

**1.7 Teachers in the school will implement the language and literacy framework for at least 150 minutes of daily instructional time. For schools with half-day kindergarten programs, the standard is 90 minutes.**

Rationale: Literacy achievement is linked to the instructional time children spend reading and writing. Two-and-one-half hours of daily instruction in reading and writing through various contexts supports children as readers and writers. In addition, teachers need to apply what they are learning during professional development to achieve deeper understandings and link theory to practice.

**1.8 The school will provide Reading Recovery® services and develop a plan to move toward full implementation of the program.**

Rationale: Reading Recovery provides a safety net through one-on-one tutoring for first-grade children who are having extreme difficulty in learning to read. Research indicates that Reading Recovery works powerfully in connection with high-quality classroom teaching.

**1.9 The school will establish and support an active school leadership team that meets monthly to guide and monitor the implementation of Literacy Collaborative. Team members must include the principal/assistant principal and the literacy coordinator. Additional members may include the reading specialist, a Reading Recovery teacher (primary team), and one teacher per grade level.**

Rationale: Educational improvement requires teamwork, a common vision, systemic change, and ongoing professional development.

**1.10 The school will inform and educate parents/guardians about the Literacy Collaborative program and create a home/school partnership to support children's literacy development.**

Rationale: Research indicates the importance of home support for literacy learning. Children benefit when parents/guardians read aloud to them and support their reading, writing, and word study. Researchers have found an important relationship between home reading and scores on standardized tests.

**1.11 The school will acquire an adequate and varied selection of books and materials to implement all elements of the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework. In addition, the school will provide the professional books and materials needed for initial training and ongoing professional development.**

Rationale: Oral language development, reading, writing, and word study are the foundations of the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework. By engaging children with a variety of well-chosen texts, they will not only learn to love stories and reading, but they will also learn about written language. Reading and writing are interrelated; what is learned in one area makes it easier to learn in the other. Additionally, word study provides the important interplay between writing and reading. The professional books and materials are used extensively by teachers during training sessions to learn about the framework; these materials also serve as a resource for further study.

# II. Standards for Literacy Coordinators

## 2.1 Qualifications

- 2.1.A The Literacy Coordinator's role is a full-time position in the school.**
- 2.1.B The Literacy Coordinator candidate provides evidence of successful teaching appropriate for his/her assignment.**
- 2.1.C The Literacy Coordinator candidate will have a master's degree or equivalent experience.**
- 2.1.D The Literacy Coordinator candidate will be interviewed and accepted by a university or district training site.**

Rationale: Literacy Collaborative training is rigorous and equivalent to a demanding graduate-level program. As such, it requires a literacy coordinator candidate who has successful experience with this level of work and a willingness to take on new learning. Further, the literacy coordinator will serve as a classroom teacher as well as a teacher educator, providing course work and in-class coaching for teachers for which graduate credit may be awarded. These responsibilities comprise a full-time position.

## 2.2 Training

The goal of the training of a literacy coordinator is to develop a site-based leader who is instrumental in bringing about systemic change in a school's literacy program. The opportunities and experiences as outlined by these standards create a unique context for constructing new knowledge and extending understandings.

**The in-training literacy coordinator will:**

- 2.2.A Successfully complete the literacy coordinator training program at a Literacy Collaborative university or district training site. During this training, the literacy coordinator will:**

- 2.2.A.1 Teach children in the same classroom for the school year using the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework for a minimum of 150 minutes each day at an appropriate grade level (K-2 or 3-6).**

Rationale: The demands of the in-training literacy coordinator role are such that a person needs to be able to provide good models of instruction as well as prepare to coach and train teachers following their training year. Literacy coordinators-in-training need consistent and sustained time to link theory to their practice in the classroom and to reflect on those connections, so that paradigm shifts can occur in their understanding.

- 2.2.A.2 Complete required graduate level course work (specific to each university) successfully as defined by these standards. The minimum is 230 contact hours. Guided meetings and site visits are in addition to the minimum.**

Rationale: Through the rigor of graduate-level course work, the literacy coordinator acquires deep conceptual understandings about the reading and writing processes, about how students and adults learn, and about how to create opportunities for students and adults to learn effectively.

- 2.2.A.3 Participate in a minimum of two site visits with a Literacy Collaborative university or district trainer.**

Rationale: Conceptual knowledge is developed and deepened through conversation about a shared experience. The school visit serves a dual purpose—it provides the shared experience around which coaching, reflection, problem solving, and refinement of classroom practice occur, and it provides the opportunity to support effective school-wide implementation.

- 2.2.A.4 Work with the school leadership team that meets monthly to guide and monitor the implementation of Literacy Collaborative.**

Rationale: Educational improvement requires teamwork, a common vision, systemic change, and ongoing professional development.

## **2.2.B The trained literacy coordinator will:**

**2.2.B.1 Provide school-based initial training for no more than 10 teachers with a minimum of 60 contact hours within a two-year period (e.g., 40 hours during the field year, 20 hours the following year) and provide regularly scheduled in-class coaching sessions for teachers an average of twice every month.**

Rationale: Taking on new learning of the elements of the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework is a complex process requiring time for instruction, practice, and reflection. Teachers need support as they engage in this new learning; a maximum of 10 teachers in a class ensures sufficient time for the literacy coordinator to coach and support each teacher.

**2.2.B.2 Follow the 60 hours of school-based initial training over the first two years with school-based professional development sessions (10 hours spaced across the school year in approximately 2-hour intervals) and provide regularly scheduled coaching sessions for teachers an average of once every month. Cluster coaching in addition to one-on-one coaching may be used beginning in Year 3.**

Rationale: A research-based model includes ongoing inquiry that informs designs for instruction. Over time, classroom practices will be refined, thus requiring teachers to receive ongoing professional development so that they can continually update their knowledge and skills. Coaching supports teachers' understandings and their application of new learning.

**2.2.B.3 Years 1 and 2: Literacy Coordinators teach children in the same classroom daily for the school year using the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework for no less than 150 minutes at the appropriate grade level (K-2 or 3-5/6) to continue to develop literacy coordinators' skills as teachers of children.**

**Year 3: The teaching done by literacy coordinators may be completed in 90 minutes each day, with the classroom assignment changing during the second semester of the school year.**

**Years 4 and beyond: Teaching can vary to include small group reading and writing instruction for 60 minutes each day.**

**Teaching plans for Years 3 and beyond are designed in collaboration with the university liaison.**

Rationale: Literacy coordinators need consistent and sustained classroom teaching time to link theory to their practice and to develop the expertise they need to teach others. It is highly recommended that literacy coordinators gain a range of experience across the grade levels (primary or intermediate), which may require teaching several different grade levels over time.

**2.2.B.4 Plan for and participate in a minimum of two site visits by a district or university Literacy Collaborative trainer during the field year. Site visits are also recommended beyond the field year to support a high quality implementation.**

Rationale: Conceptual knowledge is developed through conversation about a shared experience. The school visit serves a dual purpose—it provides the shared experience around which coaching, reflection, problem solving, and refinement of classroom practice occur, and it provides the opportunity to support effective school-wide implementation.

**2.2.B.5 Participate in ongoing professional development by attending sessions required by their training site.**

Rationale: A research-based model includes ongoing inquiry that informs designs for instruction. Over time, classroom practices will be refined, thus requiring literacy coordinators to receive ongoing professional development so that they can continually update teachers' knowledge and skills. This professional development deepens literacy coordinators' understandings of all aspects of their role and provides them with current information on research and the national initiative.

**2.2.B.6 Provide training for the teachers in the school on the administration, scoring, and analysis of the required and recommended classroom assessments to inform instruction.**

Rationale: Because the Literacy Collaborative is a research-based project, it is essential that classroom data be collected on every child. To provide reliable information on student progress, the faculty must be trained in systematic assessment procedures. These data are analyzed at the school level by the literacy coordinator and school staff. The school leadership team uses the results to monitor student progress, to improve instruction, to create an annual school report, and to reach goals for student achievement in literacy.

**2.2.B.7 Work monthly with the school leadership team to guide and monitor the implementation of Literacy Collaborative.**

Rationale: Educational improvement requires teamwork, a common vision, systemic change, and ongoing professional development.

# Policy for Requesting a One-Year Exemption from Standards

These standards are to be used as the basis for planning decisions and for monitoring the status of implementation of Literacy Collaborative. No set of standards can provide for the unique settings of all schools or districts. Therefore, it is possible to apply for a one-year exemption from certain standards when unusual conditions prevail, although an exemption may or may not be granted. In any case, the university training center will work with the local administration to achieve the best implementation possible.

The procedure for requesting exemptions is as follows:

1. Any issues of compliance with standards should first be discussed by the literacy coordinator and the school-based literacy team.
2. If a decision is made to request an exemption from a standard, a written request should be addressed to the affiliated university training site. The request must include a plan for compliance within one year. Literacy coordinators trained by district trainers must discuss the waiver request with the district trainer, who will then submit the request, including a statement of rationale and support from the district trainer, to the affiliated university training site.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved through negotiation between the training site and key persons at the school, the exemption request will be forwarded to the chair of the Literacy Collaborative Trademark Committee accompanied by a letter from the university training site.
4. Final granting or denial of a one-year exemption will be made by the Literacy Collaborative Trademark Committee. This decision will be communicated to all parties by the Trademark Committee.