

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 25, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Angus McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Literacy M.A.P. : Meaningful Applied Phonics

ORIGINATOR: Bob Holt, Executive Director, Instructional and Curricular Support Services

RESOURCE STAFF: Carolyn Hunter, Consulting Services

INFORMATION

REQUEST #216, JANUARY 14, 2003, (TRUSTEE WOODROW): ARRANGE FOR A PRESENTATION WITH RESPECT TO M.A.P.:

History in the District

Literacy M.A.P. employs many of the founding principles and methods presented by Romalda Spalding in her original version of **The Writing Road to Reading** (1957). The Spalding Approach uses teacher-directed, whole group instruction, a multi-sensory approach and sequential development moving from graphemes to spelling to writing and then to reading. In using the original **Writing Road to Reading** material, district teachers had to make necessary and research-based adjustments to the program delivery to accommodate the parameters of the Alberta Program of Studies and the needs of students in district classrooms. In creating **Literacy M.A.P.**, the Spalding program has been adapted for Edmonton Public Schools; it maintains its original philosophy and methods, and incorporates the successful strategies district teachers have used. The **Literacy M.A.P.** resource extends the original Spalding program to include instructional strategies to teach fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

Description of Literacy M.A.P.

Literacy M.A.P. is a district resource designed to provide educators with a sequential systematic approach to teaching literacy in the classroom. The resource is a compilation of the best practices gathered from teachers in our district using an explicit phonics approach, based on curricular objectives from the Alberta Program of Studies, and research summaries from the National Reading Panel's report **Teaching Children to Read**. The goal of this resource is to ensure that teachers and students have the knowledge, skills and background to form the foundation for literacy.

The key features and strengths of this program are the instructional approaches for the teaching of reading and writing. Every component presented to students follows a teacher-directed, explicit, whole group instructional approach with the inclusion of a multi-sensory component. Children benefit two ways:

- First, students become active participants in the learning process through understanding what will be taught, how it will be learned, and why they are learning about this. The teacher directs the learning through carefully sequencing new concepts and providing opportunities to reinforce previously taught material with systematic review.
- Secondly, a multi-sensory approach engages every child in learning through active participation. Information is carried to the brain via the senses. Thus, the more senses stimulated, the greater the retention. Through the use of visual, auditory, and tactile cues, the children assimilate new information with their own background knowledge. Once the information is gathered and stored, similar strategies are utilized to cue the brain to retrieve previously learned material.

Alberta Program of Studies

As with many of literacy approaches **Literacy M.A.P.** addresses the areas of reading and writing. In this approach the components are broken into four areas:

1. Phonics – children are taught 70 graphemes (single letter and multiple letter combinations for the 42 English sounds). These are taught in isolation. However, blending occurs after the first 26, spelling after the first 54.
2. Spelling – Spelling is taught through a direct instruction approach. The resource contains high frequency, subject specific and thematic wordlists. It also teaches common word patterns, suffixes and prefixes, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, compound words, and contractions in grades K-3. From there it moves to teaching subject specific words.
3. Reading – Reading is structured and taught through whole group instruction. Each lesson is designed to include pre-reading, and post reading activities. Fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies are outlined.
4. Writing – Writing consists of a developmental approach; sounds to letters, letters to words (units of meaning), words to sentences (grammar), and connecting sentences (writing on a topic). Students learn to apply their language skills through teacher directed writing activities, then they move to producing independent pieces of writing in the other content areas.

Literacy M.A.P. has a direct impact on General Outcomes 2 & 4

- Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.
- Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication.

Literacy M.A.P. provides the framework for teachers to address learning outcomes of the Alberta Program of Studies in the areas of phonics, word analysis, legibility, attending to conventions and spelling. This portion of the Language Learning curriculum is built around the acquisition and development of the fundamental principles necessary for children to be successful readers and writers. The application of the foundational knowledge base of the English language, as presented in the phonics/spelling components of **Literacy M.A.P.**,

assists teachers in moving students forward with increasing expertise and sophistication in the application of the knowledge and skills outlined in the Alberta Program of Studies.

Literacy M.A.P. indirectly addresses General Outcomes 1, 3 & 5.

- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.
- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to manage ideas and information.
- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to respect, support and collaborate with others.

While **Literacy M.A.P.** provides a basis for learning related to outcomes 1, 3, & 5, it is the classroom teacher that shapes and directs the learning experiences. The inclusion of a good quality reading anthology and take-home reading books will support classroom instruction to provide opportunities for the sharing of ideas, constructing meaning, development of comprehension strategies, and experience with various forms of text. Similarly, **Literacy M.A.P.** provides the foundation to assist students with the creation of original text. It is the role of the classroom teacher to plan and present opportunities to manage ideas and information within the context of subject specific materials.

As with any language learning resource **Literacy M.A.P.** provides the framework, scope, and sequence for aspects of the Language Learning program. The classroom teacher is responsible for the coverage of all Language Learning outcomes outline in the Program of Studies. A document indicating how Literacy M.A.P. links to the Alberta Learning curriculum, related to phonics, reading comprehension, writing and other aspects of Language Arts, is available in the Trustee Reading Room.

Current Status

Literacy M.A.P. can be found in a range of programs including regular, Cogito and Logos alternatives, Aboriginal and in special needs.

- 15 schools (66 teachers) have identified themselves as sites using **Literacy M.A.P.**
- 25 supply teachers have received training.
- Six sites are currently into the second year of a three-year longitudinal study of the effect of Literacy M.A.P. on children's literacy development in grades one through three.
- Erminskin Primary school located in Hobbema is participating in the study
- Interest in **Literacy M.A.P.** has increased outside the district.

Future Direction

Further adjustments for the use of Literacy M.A.P. with at risk students in grades 4-6 and 7-9 are underway. An information session for administrators and teachers who may be considering the implementation of Literacy M.A.P. in their division one classrooms for the 2003-2004 school year will be held in March.

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