

Leadership Practicum

Supporting Literacy in Kindergarten through Grade 2 Using Science of Reading to Inform Practice

Prepared by Dr. Courtney A. Brewer

*In fulfilment of the required practicum project for the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
Principal Qualification Program Part 1*

Submitted May, 2023 to the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
% Cassandra Tenbergen (PQP 1 Instructor)

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that this work was completed on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral People who have cared for this land throughout history. I am grateful for their stewardship and am committed to continuing my own learning journey of stewardship as a settler in this space.

Expression of Gratitude

I am grateful to Cassandra Tenbergen for her ongoing support in fostering ethical leadership in education across Ontario. Her devotion to placing relationship-building at the heart of all leadership is inspiring.

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Form 1 - Leadership Practicum Observation Proposal

This form identifies the proposed location and dates that the candidate will be engaged in observation activities selected to meet the observation requirements outlined as part of the Principal's Qualification Program, Leadership Practicum.

It is to be completed by the candidate and submitted to the Leadership Practicum Advisor (PQP Part 1 Instructor) for approval before the first observation sessions begin. Leadership Practicum Advisors are required to sign this form when candidates have completed the observation requirement.

Please read and check mark the following statement:

☒ I acknowledge that, due to COVID-19, conditions in school boards are variable and fluid. With this in mind, I acknowledge that my Leadership Practicum will need to be flexible and successfully adaptable as changing conditions require, which may include transitioning to a virtual environment.

Section A: Candidate Personal Information

Candidate's Name:	Courtney A. Brewer	OCT #: 594157
Address:	206 Weber St. E Kitchener, ON N2H 1E6	
Cell phone:	519-404-2362	Work Phone: NA
Email:	Courtnev.Iden@gmail.com OR courtnev.brewer@wcdsb.ca	

Section B: Proposed Observation Site / Observation Dates

Name of Site:	St. Agnes CES (WCDSB)	
Address:	254 Neilson Ave, Waterloo, ON N2J 2M3	
Site Phone:	(519) 885-3180	Supervisor Name: Gilda Johnstone
Name of Administrator to be observed:		
Email:	Gilda.Johnstone@wcdsb.ca	

Planning Table for Proposed Observations

Date of Observation	Site	Duration of Observation	Purpose of the Observation
March 1, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Building maintenance basics (running the bell, etc)
March 8, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Admin planning: timetables and schedules
March 22, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Community connections: schools as public spaces after school hours
April 5, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Admin planning: SIP, BIP
April 12, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Budgeting and resources
April 19, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Conflict resolution and fostering positive relationships
April 26, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Supporting students
May 3, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Q&A

Observation Proposal submitted by:

Catherine Brewer

Candidate's Signature

02/09/23

Date

Mentor Agreement:

I, hereby confirm that

Has completed this observation requirement and has not exceeded the 20-hour maximum time allotted to this component.

Mentor's Signature

Date

Observation Proposal Approved by:

PQP P1 Instructor's Signature

Date

Form 2 Proposal Contract – PQP Leadership Practicum

This form functions as a contractual agreement between the candidate, the Mentor and the PQP P1 Course Instructor (Practicum Advisor). It is to be used by the candidate to identify and propose the Leadership Practicum required in the Principal's Qualification Program Part 1 (PQP P1). This form is to be completed by the candidate and submitted to the PQP P1 Course Instructor (Practicum Advisor) for approval **BEFORE** undertaking the project.

Please read and check mark the following statement: ☒ I acknowledge that, due to COVID-19, conditions in school boards are

variable and fluid. With this in mind, I acknowledge that my Leadership Practicum will need to be flexible and successfully adaptable as changing conditions require, which may include transitioning to a virtual environment.

Section A: Candidate and Leadership Project Supervisory Information

Candidate's Name: Courtney A. Brewer OCT #: 594157

Address: 206 Weber St. E
Kitchener, ON
N2H 1E6

Cell phone: 519-404-2362 Work Phone:

Email: Courtnev.iden@gmail.com OR courtnev.brewer@wcdsb.ca

Practicum Mentor's Name:

Mentor: Gilda Johnstone

Cell phone: 519-504-6293 Work Phone: (519) 885-3180

Email: ailda.iohnstone@gmail.com

PQP P1 Course Instructor Name:

PQP P1 Instructor Name: Cassandra Tenberaen

Cell phone: 705-674-4231 Work Phone: 705-674-4231

Email: cassandra.tenbergen@sudburycatholicschools.ca

Form 2 Proposal Contract – PQP Leadership Practicum

Overview Choice of Practicum Option (Check One)

- ☐ Option 1 - 60-hour Leadership Practicum
- ☒ Option 2 - 40-hour Leadership Practicum + 20-Hour Observation Component

Title and brief description of the leadership practicum:

Supporting the Right to Read in the Early Years - Grade 2
This practicum will synthesize current research aligned with the 'Right to Read' Ministry of Education initiative which is replacing 3-cueing approaches with "science of reading" approaches. This practicum will offer teachers tangible activities and resources to support literacy instruction that can be carried through to grade 2.

Objectives and relationship of the proposed Leadership Practicum to the Principal's Qualification Program learning expectations and the Ontario Leadership Framework: A School and System Leader's Guide to Putting Ontario's Leadership Framework into Action:

This practicum will use the 5 core leadership capacities (p. 8), and will move through the School Level Leadership process (beginning with setting directions and moving towards accountability). This project will provide pathways to engage with parents and the wider community and links will be made to extend this work to the system level.

Anticipated benefits of this project (professional and school system):

The benefit of this project is that it will help teachers in the Early Years and Primary division gain an understanding of the research and best practices supported by the Ministry of Education's new direction for literacy instruction. It will provide meaningful activities that can be entered into at any stage in a student's development and at any time in the school year. It will provide cohesive strategies that can be used division-wide for consistency and engagement in professional learning communities.

Description of the criteria to be used in the assessment of the Leadership Practicum:

This project will use an iterative feedback loop whereby I will propose an initial iteration of the program, present it to my supervisor, collect feedback using the SWOT framework, and tweak the project accordingly. This will continue three times. After the final iteration, the supervisor will provide an overall SWOT analysis for the project and a rating of "exceptional", "satisfactory" or "needs improvement".

Proposal submitted by:

Courtney Brewer

Candidate's Signature

~~02/09/23~~ 02/09/23

Date

Mentor Agreement:

I,

Gilda Johnstone

agree to mentor the above-named candidate and have read the CPCO Practicum Mentor Letter.

G Johnstone

Mentor's Signature

02/10/23

Date

Proposal Approved by:

PQP P1 Instructor's Signature

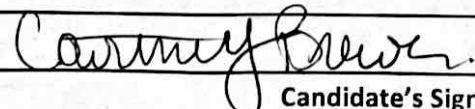
Date

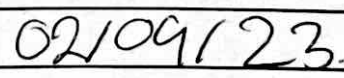
Section C: Practicum Proposal - Detailed

1. The purpose of this form is to record the specific details of the candidate's proposed Leadership Practicum.
2. Candidates must submit this detailed plan to the PQP P1 Instructor **BEFORE** undertaking the proposed project.
3. Any and all modification(s) to this proposed plan must be identified on the form and initialed by the PQP P1 Instructor.

Leadership Practicum Objectives	Explanation of Activities
Develop framework	Use the Leadership Framework and other CPCO resources to map out the scope and objectives of this project in relation to the Waterloo Catholic District School Board and St. Agnes school initiatives.
Gather research	Read, annotate, and synthesize current best practices and approaches to literacy, specifically focusing on reading. A minimum of 8 peer-reviewed sources will be consulted.
Gather learning activities	Review personal previous practice records and current practice elsewhere (published programs, best practices offered by the LNS, suggested activities described in the research) as they align with current research regarding effective literacy instruction.
Gather counter examples	Review previous practice, current program activities, educational blogs and websites to gather examples of practices that may be popular but do not reflect the research regarding effective literacy instruction.
Develop a Kindergarten program	Map out when, where, and how to implement effective literacy instruction over the course of a two year early learning program, taking assessment into account.
Extend program into grade 1 & 2	Build upon the Kindergarten portion of the program to meet the curriculum expectations and developmental needs of students in grade 1 and 2. Account for having only one teacher in the classroom.
Package information as a mini-course for teachers	Include video and interactive elements of the course align with photos and exemplars to make the content engaging and accessible for all. Follow AODA standards for font size and readability.
Create engagement videos and a brief monograph for parents	Engage parents by bringing them into the changes taking place in a short video explaining how they can support their children at home. Create an email for teachers to send out that lists the research used to inform all decisions being carried out.
Create a capacity building roadmap for the school board	Write a research monograph explaining how this program aligns with the BIP and how it can be expanded upon to meet the unique needs of each school.

Proposal submitted by:


Candidate's Signature


Date

Form 3 - Leadership Practicum Evaluation

This form is to be used to evaluate the candidate's Leadership Practicum. Please comment on the extent to which the candidate has achieved the objectives of the Leadership Practicum. Indicate the strengths and areas for improvement with respect to the Leadership Practicum Log, the Reflective Journal and Final Report.

Candidate's Name:

Courtney Brewer.

Candidate's Comments:

I found this practicum to be very helpful in my understanding of the trajectory of policy to practice. As well, I have learned about how leadership unfolds in many areas of the school board (beyond school administrators).

Courtney Brewer.

05/12/23.

Candidate's Signature

Date

Mentor's Comments:

Courtney's practicum demonstrates great instructional leadership ability and will be instrumental as we put the Right to Read strategy in place. She will be a leader that can see the whole school community and will work to build relationship and the efficacy of her staff.

Johnstone

Mentor's Signature

05/16/23

Date

Leadership Practicum Log

Please see the following practicum project which details everything needed for my log including video media, critical summaries, professional learning, and the research I used to ground this assignment.

Supporting Literacy in Kindergarten through Grade 2 Using Science of Reading to Inform Practice

Prepared by Dr. Courtney A. Brewer

*In fulfillment of the required practicum project for the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
Principal Qualification Program Part 1*

Presented May 10, 2023 to the WCDSB
% Gilda Johnstone, MEd (Supervisory Principal)

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that this work was completed on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral People who have cared for this land throughout history. I am grateful for their stewardship and am committed to continuing my own learning journey of stewardship as a settler in this space.

Expression of Gratitude

I am grateful to Gilda Johnstone for her dedication to supporting my learning journey as a leader in education. Her advice and discernment throughout this project have been invaluable.

Rationale

This project is intended to bring research and practice together in a model that supports teachers as they begin to move away from “balanced literacy” and towards “science of reading” as indicated by the Right to Read initiative in Ontario and the new literacy curriculum set to be released. The information in this project is intended to reflect a current moment in time and so it is expected that more information will be added and nuance will become apparent over time as the breadth of research informing this project gets expanded.

This project will highlight the research about reading, beginning in Kindergarten and moving to Grade 2. Aspects of literacy such as writing, spelling, and oral language will be touched on only as they relate to reading. More specific information about spelling, writing, and oral language can be found in the “Additional Resources” section.

In this document, you will find,

- Research summaries for each grade (K–2)
- Long range plans for each grade (Items with coloured text have been elaborated on in the “Activities and Resources Noted in Long Range Plans” section)
- Activities and Resources Noted in Long Range Plans
- Additional Resources
 - Research summary videos for teachers
 - Home reading tips video for families
 - List of 100 most common sight words
 - Letters for family engagement (**permission to copy and alter is granted without acknowledgement of author)
- References

Kindergarten Research Summary

[Click here to access the full video research summary](#)

- Reading instruction should begin with **oral language** development AND the **alphabetic principle** (understanding that letters and letter pairings—phonemes—produce sounds in a reliable way)
- Children need explicit (direct) instruction to learn what the letters are and the sounds they make
- It will be helpful in future grades if students can start to print letters accurately (some students may need fine motor activities to build up the strength needed to hold a pencil)
- Kinesthetic learning at this age and for this purpose should focus on forming sounds properly with the mouth and forming letters properly with a pencil
- Reading instruction should use decodable books (aim to be at set 6 by the end of the two year Kindergarten program)

Long Range Plan: Kindergarten <i>Reading Goal: Be at Set 6 of SPELDSA decodable books (or board approved equivalent) by the end of the two year Kindergarten Program</i>
Kindergarten: September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Build relationships during free play -Assess alphabet knowledge (letters and sounds) -Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters -Follow Haggerty lessons -Co-create a class alphabet (can be made with items from nature, art supplies, etc). -Begin pre-writing activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracing various lines • Tracing some letters • Guided line drawing -Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read. -Engage in 1-1 / small group oral communication throughout the day in play and transitions -Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage alphabet practice at home -Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage reading aloud to children at home -Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage oral language practice
Kindergarten: October
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters -Follow Haggerty lessons -Introduce a new letter every two days (based on the order your decodable books introduces them) <p>Day 1:</p>

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Have students build the letter with loose parts
- Briefly teach how to print the letter and have students practice a few times on paper or whiteboards using short and thin pencils / markers
- Trace letter with fingers around the room

Day 2:

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Co-create a list of words that features the letter being introduced. Ask for words where the sound is in the beginning, middle, and end of the words

-Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

-Engage in 1-1 / small group oral communication throughout the day in play and transitions

-Share literacy activities and class progress in monthly documentation to families

Kindergarten: November

-Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters

-Teach vowel song and explain that vowels have at least two sounds (long and short)

-Introduce a new letter every two days (based on the order your decodable books introduces them)

Day 1:

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Have students build the letter with loose parts
- Briefly teach how to print the letter and have students practice a few times on paper or whiteboards using short and thin pencils / markers
- Trace letter with fingers around the room

Day 2:

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Co-create a list of words that features the letter being introduced. Ask for words where the sound is in the beginning, middle, and end of the words **Year 2 students who are familiar with this activity can write their own words on a white board during this lesson

-Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

-Engage in 1-1 / small group oral communication throughout the day in play and transitions

-Encourage writing sounds in play

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage alphabet practice at home

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage reading aloud to children at home

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage oral language practice

Kindergarten: December

-Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters

-Follow Haggerty lessons

-Teach vowel song and explain that vowels have at least two sounds (long and short)

-Introduce a new letter every two days (based on the order your decodable books introduces them)

Day 1:

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Have students build the letter with loose parts
- Briefly teach how to print the letter and have students practice a few times on paper or whiteboards using short and thin pencils / markers
- Trace letter with fingers around the room

Day 2:

- Explicitly state the letter & have students repeat
- Explicitly state the sound & have students repeat
- Co-create a list of words that features the letter being introduced. Ask for words where the sound is in the beginning, middle, and end of the words **Year 2 students who are familiar with this activity can write their own words on a white board during this lesson

-Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

-Engage in 1-1 / small group oral communication throughout the day in play and transitions

-Encourage writing sounds in play

-Share literacy activities and class progress in monthly documentation to families

Kindergarten: January

-Assess alphabet knowledge (letters and sounds)

-Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters

-Follow Haggerty lessons

-Set up decodable book reading schedule (use data from letters and sounds to determine student groupings if you plan on grouping)

-Send home **alphabet practice booklet** for students who are not familiar with all of their letters or sounds (you can modify this book to differentiate it as needed). Explain to families that the expectation is for all students to be fluent in their letter sounds and names and explain what their child needs to specifically focus on.

-Begin small group or individual reading instruction using **decodable books**. Reading strategies to focus on: say the sounds the letters are making and blend them together. (When students finish a page or a book, the teacher can re-read the page or book fluently so the students can hear what they were trying to read).

- For students that do not understand the alphabetic principle yet, use small group/ individual time to focus on letters and sounds and practice short decodable words using these sounds
 - begin to have conversations with the special education teachers and principal about students who you suspect may be having difficulty
- Track student reading with a **book tracker**

-Model writing (finger spaces, sounding out words)

-Give students blank notebooks for journal time and circulate the class to assist with sounding out and printing during this time. Offer a choice where they can write about a topic that you have predetermined or they can come up with their own topic.

-Play '**switch it**' during transitions.

-Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage alphabet practice at home

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage reading aloud to children at home

-Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage oral language practice

Kindergarten: February

- Sing alphabet song each day while pointing to upper and lower case letters
- Follow Haggerty lessons
- Adjust reading groups as necessary if you are grouping students
- Send home alphabet practice booklet for students who are not familiar with all of their letters or sounds (you can modify this book to differentiate it as needed). Explain to families that the expectation is for all students to be fluent in their letter sounds and names and explain what their child needs to specifically focus on.
- Begin small group or individual reading instruction using decodable books. Reading strategies to focus on: say the sounds the letters are making and blend them together. (When students finish a page or a book, the teacher can re-read the page or book fluently so the students can hear what they were trying to read).
 - For students that do not understand the alphabetic principle yet, use small group/ individual time to focus on letters and sounds and practice short decodable words using these sounds.
 - continue to have conversations with the special education teachers and principal about students who you suspect may be having difficulty
 - Track student reading with a book tracker
- Model writing (finger spaces, sounding out words, capitals, and periods)
- Give students blank notebooks for journal time and circulate the class to assist with sounding out and printing during this time. Offer a choice where they can write about a topic that you have predetermined or they can come up with their own topic.
- Play 'switch it' during transitions.
- Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage alphabet practice at home
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage reading aloud to children at home
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage oral language practice

Kindergarten: March

- Assess student reading / letters & sounds (if not yet mastered)
- Have students arrange **letter tiles** in alphabetized order
- Move singing the alphabet song to small group / individual instruction where students who do not have a full grasp of the alphabetic principle will have more opportunity to point and trace each letter that they sing
- Follow Haggerty lessons
- Continue small group / individual decodable book reading
- Begin to teach some high frequency words that are not easy to sound out as sight/heart words ("said", "the")
- Begin **home reading program** using books that students have already read
- Place books that students have already read in the reading centre so they can begin to read independently
- Continue daily writing with support by circulating the class OR small group
- Begin correcting spelling for words that can be decoded / follow a typical spelling pattern
- Begin orthographic mapping spelling activities with students who have started to write full words / sentences
- Play 'switch it' during transitions.

-Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

Kindergarten: April

- Have students arrange letter tiles in alphabetized order
- Sing the alphabet song in small group / individual instruction where students who do not have a full grasp of the alphabetic principle will have more opportunity to point and trace each letter that they sing
- Follow Haggerty lessons
- Continue small group / individual decodable book reading
- Continue to teach some high frequency words that are not easy to sound out as sight/heart words ("what", "where")
- Continue home reading program using books that students have already read
- Place books that students have already read in the reading centre so they can begin to read independently
- Continue daily writing with support by circulating the class OR small group
- Continue correcting spelling for words that can be decoded / follow a typical spelling pattern
- Have students read words and nonwords to assess spelling-to-sound knowledge
- Continue orthographic mapping spelling activities with students who have started to write full words / sentences
- Play 'switch it' during transitions.
- Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage alphabet practice at home
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage reading aloud to children at home
- Reach out to families to share literacy goals and encourage oral language practice

Kindergarten: May

- Have students arrange letter tiles in alphabetized order
- Sing the alphabet song in small group / individual instruction where students who do not have a full grasp of the alphabetic principle will have more opportunity to point and trace each letter that they sing
- Follow Haggerty lessons
- Continue small group / individual decodable book reading
- Continue to teach some high frequency words that are not easy to sound out as sight/heart words ("what", "where")
- Have students read words and nonwords to assess spelling-to-sound knowledge
- Continue home reading program using books that students have already read
- Place books that students have already read in the reading centre so they can begin to read independently
- Continue daily writing with support by circulating the class OR small group
- Continue correcting spelling for words that can be decoded / follow a typical spelling pattern
- Continue orthographic mapping spelling activities with students who have started to write full words / sentences
- Play 'switch it' during transitions.
- Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read.

<p align="center">Kindergarten: June</p>

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have students arrange letter tiles in alphabetized order -Sing the alphabet song in small group / individual instruction where students who do not have a full grasp of the alphabetic principle will have more opportunity to point and trace each letter that they sing -Follow Haggerty lessons -Continue small group / individual decodable book reading -Continue to teach some high frequency words that are not easy to sound out as sight/heart words ("what", "where") -Continue home reading program using books that students have already read -Place books that students have already read in the reading centre so they can begin to read independently -Continue daily writing with support by circulating the class OR small group -Continue correcting spelling for words that can be decoded / follow a typical spelling pattern -Continue orthographic mapping spelling activities with students who have started to write full words / sentences -Play 'switch it' during transitions. -Engage in rich read-alouds and explain vocabulary as you read. -Reach out to families to encourage daily reading over the summer |
|---|

Grade 1 Research Summary

[Click here to access the full video research summary](#)

- The goal in grade 1 should be to develop **skilled word readers**
- Reading instruction should use decodable books (aim to be at set 10 by the end of the grade 1 program)
- Reading should take place daily and involve some directed reading and some independent reading
- Focus on reading for meaning during read-alouds (you can focus on inferencing, predicting, and summarizing, but be sure to devote the majority of your attention to vocabulary)
- Writing/ spelling should involve orthographic mapping to build connections between print and reading ability
- Offer many varied opportunities to write. This reinforces reading skills and helps to grow vocabulary.

Long Range Plan: Grade 1
<i>Reading Goal: Students can read words fluently without needing to sound out familiar words. Students utilize sounding out strategies to decode unfamiliar words.</i>
Grade 1: September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop relationships -Conduct reading assessment with decodable passages -Follow Haggerty lessons -Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing) -Allow students time to read with the teacher and independently (use decodable books from the end of Kindergarten for familiarity—sets 4-6 if using SPELDSA) -Review printing and writing skills from Kindergarten and allow ample opportunities to practice writing -Connect with families about supporting reading at home
Grade 1: October
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Follow Haggerty lessons -Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing) -Begin small group / one on one reading instruction using decodable books based on where students left off in Kindergarten -Co-create a classroom library based on student interest -Engage in orthographic mapping activities as you introduce new vocabulary -Integrate reading and writing into other subject areas to increase practice opportunities -Connect with families about supporting reading at home

Grade 1: November-June

- Follow **Haggerty lessons**
- Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing)
- Continue small group / one on one reading instruction using decodable readers ****as soon as students get to set 10, they can begin reading 'regular books' independently and small group instruction can shift to checking in on reading fluency and checking for understanding**
- Co-create a classroom library based on student interest
- Engage in **orthographic mapping** activities as you introduce new vocabulary
- Begin using a **spelling program** that focuses on effective strategies and grouped spelling pattern lists (aim for 60 minutes per week in small bursts)
- Integrate reading and writing into other subject areas to increase practice opportunities and diversify vocabulary
- Begin morphological lessons using direct instruction (stems, prefixes, suffixes)
- Build understanding of anaphors (she, her, him, they, we) through discussions in read alouds
- Build an understanding of connectors (so, because, but)
- Continue to assess reading progress at the word level every term
- Connect with special education teacher regarding students who are showing signs of difficulty in approaching fluent word reading
- Continue to connect with families about reading goals and progress

Grade 2 Research Summary

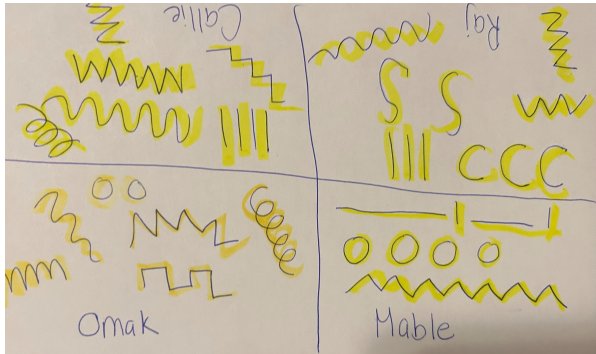
[Click here to access the full video research summary](#)

- The goal in grade 2 should be to **comprehend text**
- Reading should take place daily and involve some directed reading and some independent reading
- In structured reading (which can be cross-curricular), focus on building rich background knowledge to support comprehension
- Teach content-specific vocabulary before students are expected to read and use the vocabulary (less than a minute per word is sufficient)
- Teach vocabulary related to the structure of text and language (anaphors, connectors, transition words)
- Briefly highlight text features when reading

Long Range Plan: Grade 2	
<i>Reading Goal: Students can read fluently and independently. Students are beginning to develop strategies for reading comprehension that they can apply across a variety of texts.</i>	
Grade 2: September	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop relationships -Conduct a reading assessment using a decodable passage from set 8, 9, or 10 depending on where students left off in grade 1. -Follow Haggerty lessons -Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing) -Co-create a classroom library based on student interest -Provide ample opportunities to write across the curriculum -Connect with families about reading goals 	
Grade 2: October	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Follow Haggerty lessons -Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing) -Implement small group instruction to focus on comprehension (students who are ready for comprehension instruction in small groups should already be skilled word readers) **If students are not skilled word readers, see Grade 1 long range plan for deeper word-reading instruction and practice. -Co-create a classroom library based on student interest **provide decodable books for students who are still working towards being fluent word readers -Provide ample opportunities to write across the curriculum -Connect with families about supporting reading at home 	

Grade 2: November-June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Follow Haggerty lessons -Read aloud daily, focusing on various meaning-making skills (inferencing, vocabulary building, predicting, summarizing) -Implement small group instruction to focus on comprehension (students who are ready for comprehension instruction in small groups should already be skilled word readers) -Co-create a classroom library based on student interest **provide decodable books for students who are still working towards being fluent word readers **If students are not skilled word readers, see Grade 1 long range plan for deeper word-reading instruction and practice. -Provide ample opportunities to write across the curriculum -Begin using a spelling program that focuses on effective strategies and grouped spelling pattern lists (aim for 60 minutes per week in small bursts) -Begin morphological lessons using direct instruction (stems, prefixes, suffixes) -Build understanding of anaphors (she, her, him, they, we) through discussions in read alouds -Engage in orthographic mapping (direct instruction and as part of differentiated spelling / reading) -Continue to assess reading progress at the comprehension level every term -Connect with special education teacher regarding students who are showing signs of difficulty in comprehension (intervention can start with a focus on oral language) -Continue to connect with families about supporting reading at home

Activities and Resources Noted in Long Range Plans

Activity	Explanation, Skills Targeted, and Extensions	Examples and Sources
Assess alphabet knowledge (letters and sounds)	Use the assessment from the BLAM. A digital recording form has been created for your convenience.	To access a digital copy of this form, please email courtney.brewer@wcdsb.ca
Prewriting tracing	<p>Divide up a chart paper into sections where each student can stand around the chart paper. Write one student's name in each section so each student knows where to sit/stand. Draw various line segments in yellow marker (curved lines, zigzag lines, dashed lines, etc.). Have students trace lines in pencil or using a thin marker.</p> <p>Skills targeted: fine motor skills related to holding a pencil and developing the kinetic motions to begin to write letters.</p> <p>Extensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have students who are able to write letters, write letters in the blank space. -Have students who are struggling, use Q-tips and paint to trace lines instead 	
Guided line drawing	-Tell very short stories involving mountains, the ocean, birds, a snowperson, a house, the sun, etc. Model how to draw these objects using various lines (curved, vertical, horizontal, zigzag, circle, etc.). Practice making the pictures large, and then smaller and smaller as you go.	

	<p>Skills targeted: fine motor skills related to holding a pencil and developing the kinetic motions to begin to write letters.</p> <p>Extensions: -If students are able to write letters, have them write the alphabet after they finish or while they wait for the next Have students trace pictures</p>	
Heggerty Lessons	<p>This is a daily program used to build phonemic awareness. The lessons are very short and after you teach the students how to do them, you can incorporate it into your transitions so it doesn't take up extra time in the class.</p>	Click here to learn more about the Haggerty program
Vowel song	<p>First verse (long vowels)</p> <p><i>AEIOU, AEIOU, we have five vowels in our alphabet, they're AEIOU...and sometimes Y</i></p> <p>Second verse (short vowels and for y, make the y sound)</p> <p><i>Aeiou, aeiou, we have five vowels in our alphabet, they're aeiou....and sometimes y!</i></p>	

Co-create a list of words	It is important for students to understand that letters represent sounds within a whole word, not just at the beginning. Help students develop this skill by asking for words that have the feature letter at the beginning, middle, and end of words.	<p style="text-align: center;">A a</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Beginning</th><th>Middle</th><th>End</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>apple</td><td>can</td><td>banana</td></tr> <tr> <td>alligator</td><td>sat</td><td>Elsa</td></tr> <tr> <td>angel</td><td>hat</td><td>Anna</td></tr> <tr> <td>Alex</td><td>happy</td><td>umbrella</td></tr> <tr> <td>April</td><td>magical</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>animal</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Beginning	Middle	End	apple	can	banana	alligator	sat	Elsa	angel	hat	Anna	Alex	happy	umbrella	April	magical		animal		
Beginning	Middle	End																					
apple	can	banana																					
alligator	sat	Elsa																					
angel	hat	Anna																					
Alex	happy	umbrella																					
April	magical																						
animal																							
Alphabet practice booklet	A very simple alphabet practice book has been provided for your convenience. Simply print, cut, and staple in any order. This can be done by older students. Books that feature the individual letters of the alphabet in large print could also be used.	Get the book here																					
Decodable books	If your school has not provided decodable books yet, you can access many online for free. Volunteers can be enlisted to help print and staple books. A sample resource has been provided along with a tracking form that lists each title.	SPELDSA Decodable Books SPELDSA Decodable Book Tracking Form found here																					
Decodable Book Tracking and Literacy Documentation Class at a Glance	This template was designed for the SPELDSA Program but can be altered to suit other reading programs as well.	Click here to access a decodable book tracking and literacy documentation Class at a Glance template																					
Switch-it	The full version of switch-it has been provided however, a simplified version accomplishes the same skills:	Get access to the free full version of Switch-It here																					

	<p>Write a simple word on the board such as “sit”. Tell students that this word says “sit” and sound it out together. Tell the students that you no longer want this word to say “sit”, you want it to say “hit”. Ask them what they need to switch in order for the word to say “hit”. Continue switching one letter at a time to make new words and keep a running list of the words you have made. Read all the words at the end of the game. This game is excellent for when students are finishing snack, waiting for planning time, or any other transitional time in the day.</p>	
Letter tiles	<p>Write out the alphabet letters on individual tiles / cardboard squares / bread tags to help students build on their understanding of letter recognition.</p>	
Home Reading Program	<p>There are many home reading program options to choose from. Some programs use online books like Spark Reading. You can also send home decodable books that are at a level that you have already read with students.</p> <p>Placing rewards or punishment on home reading programs is not supported by research and may be counterproductive to encouraging students to read.</p> <p>See included video link to encourage parents to implement home reading.</p>	<p>Get access to the full playlist of videos to encourage home reading</p>
Orthographic Mapping	<p>“Orthographic mapping (OM) involves the formation of</p>	<p>For a video summary of this research, click here</p>

	<p>letter-sound connections to bond the spellings, pronunciations, and meanings of specific words in memory. It explains how children learn to read words by sight, to spell words from memory, and to acquire vocabulary words from print.” (Ehri, 2014)</p>	
Spelling Program	<p>Effective spelling programs should...</p> <p>Focus students on an orthographic principle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Word sorts (Bear et al., 2008)</i> • <i>MyEsorts computer program (Zucker, 2008)</i> • <i>Word mapping (Murray & Steinen, 2011)</i> <p>Incorporate both explicit instruction as well as authentic reading and writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Word sorts (Bear et al., 2008)</i> • <i>Explicit instruction and modeling of study skills and strategies (Wallace, 2006; Westwood, 2014)</i> • <i>Making and writing words (Raisinski, 2008)</i> 	

	<p>Actively involve students in their learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Word sorts (Bear et al., 2008)</i> • <i>Word mapping (Murray & Steinen, 2011)</i> • <i>Cover-copy-compare (Powell et al, 2008)</i> • <i>Spelling in parts (SIP), (Powel et all, 2008)</i> • <i>Making words (Raisinski, 2008)</i> • <i>Self-corrected tests</i> • <i>Word logs or journals</i> • <i>Personal word walls</i> <p>(Quoted directly from Berger, 2016)</p>	
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Additional Resources

Additional resources include research summary videos, a video series to encourage parents to implement home reading for their families, a list of the most common sight words, and letter templates that can be copied and altered to inform parents about alphabet practice and home reading programs.

Video Resources

Research Summary Video Part 1: Phonics Instruction	https://youtu.be/Tsl-YC42UYg
Research Summary Video Part 2: Word Reading	https://youtu.be/6Lr4Ewh74EA
Research Summary Video Part 3: Comprehension	https://youtu.be/15zMypSwX0Y
Home reading video series for parents	<p>Video 1: https://youtu.be/SCP-0LWat6c Video 2: https://youtu.be/C6LhwJaO2kE Video 3: https://youtu.be/9yx1Z-ezmro Video 4: https://youtu.be/1BObvFfu9zQ</p> <p>Full Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvZTadxWrGDf-4mxAnJsEpMkMLM8bGGWj</p>

100 Most Common Sight Words

Words marked with an asterix have been classified as polysyllabic. Words followed by a tick can be decoded with the GPCs listed in Table 5.

a		come		into *		once		they	
about *		could		is		one		this	
after *		did	✓	it	✓	other *		three	✓
all		do		last	✓	our *	✓	time	✓
am	✓	down		like	✓	out	✓	to	
an	✓	for	✓	little *		over *		today *	
and	✓	from	✓	live		put		too	✓
are		get	✓	look		said		two	
as		go		made	✓	saw	✓	up	✓
at	✓	got	✓	make	✓	see	✓	us	
away *		had	✓	me		she		very *	
back	✓	has		my		so		was	
be		have		new		some		we	
because *		he		next	✓	take	✓	went	✓
big	✓	her	✓	not	✓	that		were	
but	✓	here		now		the		what	
by		him	✓	of		their		when	✓
call		his		off	✓	them		will	✓
came	✓	I		old		then		with	
can	✓	in	✓	on	✓	there		you	

(Taken from Solity & Vousden, 2009, p. 510 (Appendix 2).

Letters For Family Engagement

These letters can be copied and altered to suit your unique classroom situation.

**Permission to copy and alter this section is granted without acknowledgement of the author.

Alphabet Practice

Dear Room [] Families,

Thank you for being an important part of your child's education! As part of our literacy program, our class has been spending a lot of time learning our alphabet letters and sounds. In order to help your child grow in their understanding of letters and sounds, we have sent home an alphabet booklet for extra practice. Please take a few minutes each day to help your child learn 5 new letters each day. Begin by having your child trace the letter with their finger (no pencils required!), then say the name of the letter, and then the letter sound. It may be helpful for you to do it first and have your child copy you. We are beginning to focus on reading in our classroom and having a good understanding of letters and sounds will help your child as they learn to read. We appreciate all that you do to support your child's learning journey and we are happy to have you as a valuable member of our classroom community. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Teacher name]

Home Reading (Decodable Books)

Dear Room [] Families,

Thank you for being an important part of your child's education! As part of our literacy program, our class has been spending a lot of time learning to read using a phonics-based approach. The books we have been reading are called "decodable books" because most of the words in each book can be sounded out using the letter sounds we have been learning as a class. In order to help your child become a more fluent reader, we are starting a class home reading program. Please take a few minutes each day to read our decodable books with your child. If your child is unsure of a word, please encourage them to sound out each letter in the word and blend the sounds together. After your child has read their book, it may be helpful for you to re-read it to them to help build their understanding and to help them hear fluent reading. The books [are available online at: _____ OR will be sent home with your child each night and should be returned each morning]. We appreciate all that you do to support your child's learning journey and we are happy to have you as a valuable member of our classroom community. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Teacher name]

Home Reading: Comprehension

Dear Room [] Families,

Thank you for being an important part of your child's education! As part of our literacy program, our class has been spending a lot of time reading books and using reading comprehension strategies to better understand what we read. In order to help your child build their reading comprehension, we are starting a class home reading program. Please take a few minutes each day to read with your child or to have your child read independently if they are able to do so. As your child reads, please take a few moments to ask them questions about what they have read. [I will be posting the comprehension strategies we learn on our class online learning space with examples of helpful questions for you to follow along with]. The books for our reading program [are available online at: _____ OR will be sent home with your child each night and should be returned each morning]. We appreciate all that you do to support your child's learning journey and we are happy to have you as a valuable member of our classroom community. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Teacher name]

References

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Leadership Practicum Log – Assessment

Practicum Title: Supporting the Right to Read in the Early Years – Grade 2.

Candidate: Courtney Brewer Date: 02/09/23

Instructor: Cassandra Tenbergen.

Task: Prepare a comprehensive record in the form of a Leadership Practicum Log, that describes and documents the observation component of the Leadership Practicum and includes references to dates, duration of activities, and professional learning (e.g., conferences workshops, job shadowing, research, professional reading) as well as meetings with Mentor, supervisor and PQP Course Instructor.

Required Components	Level 1 Demonstrates few of the required components and in limited ways.	Level 2 Demonstrates some of the required components.	Level 3 Demonstrates most of the required components.	Level 4 Demonstrates all of the required components in complete ways.	Comments
Documentation of dates and duration of activities					
Inclusion of appropriate support documentation (e.g., agendas, minutes, reports, articles, reflection commentary, etc.)					
Documentation of professional learning activities (e.g. conferences, workshops, job shadowing, professional reading, etc)					
Documentation of meetings with Mentor and Advisor					

Leadership Practicum Reflective Journal

As a component of my Principal Qualification Program (Part 1) practicum project, I decided to learn more about the Right to Read literacy initiative and create a resource for K–2 teachers, principals, and board employees that work with literacy. This project is grounded in the Standards for Ethical Practice (Ontario College of Teachers), the Ontario Catholic Leadership Framework (Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario), and the School Effectiveness Framework (Ontario Ministry of Education). I wanted to create something that could be added to as time went on, and that could be accessed by anybody who was interested in learning more about the research behind the Right to Read. I created a long range plan for evidence-based reading instruction in Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 so that as a division, teachers could address reading instruction on a continuum rather than in a siloed fashion. I leveraged what many teachers are already doing in their classes so that changes to practice could be sustainable and judicious. I also created videos that highlight the research so teachers can easily access information about why changes to practise are necessary. I included tools to make instruction and progress reporting easier and these resources are all digital so teachers can access and alter them as needed. Finally, I created a video series for parents to help promote literacy in the home. It is my hope that this series helps bring all stakeholders together in conversation about what is best for students with regard to reading instruction and practice.

As an Ontario teacher, I am dedicated to upholding the standards for ethical practice. This project demonstrates my *commitment to students and student learning* because students in this case are the end user of the project. I am using my own *professional knowledge* as an educator and as a researcher to highlight best practice and share it with my colleagues. My commitment to *professional practice* is evident in how I use my insider knowledge as a teacher to bridge the gap between the research and what is actually able to take place in a classroom. I have demonstrated *leadership in learning communities* by deprivatising my knowledge and sharing it with others in a way that is accessible and honours their roles as professionals in the field of education. Finally, I am committed to *ongoing professional learning* and have made space in this project to account for new information to be presented which would alter this work and the learning activities I have suggested. I clearly state at the beginning of the project document that this information reflects the current research and I have made the original document in a Google Document file so that it can be updated as necessary.

As an aspiring school leader, I have accounted for the Ontario Catholic Leadership Framework in my project. Specifically, my project is focused on *improving the instructional program*. I am providing instructional support to colleagues and stakeholders by showing what the research notes as best practice in the area of reading instruction. This formative instruction is needed so that teachers in later grades are able to benefit from literate students, which can enhance their own instructional program as they can leverage the collective literacy in their students to go deeper with subject content. I have also been very intentional about *building relationships and developing people* through my practicum project. In my long range plans, I explicitly direct teachers to develop relationships with students before beginning full instruction because students need to feel safe and secure before deep learning can begin. As well, I have put all long range plans in one file so that teachers can connect with one another to plan on a continuum that best supports their students. Finally, I have created a video series for families so

that teachers and families can work together to support children on their journeys to becoming proficient readers.

As an educational leader serving in Ontario, I also looked to the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF K-12) to guide my work. This framework document states that the core priorities of the Ontario Ministry of Education are: “high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; and increased public confidence in publicly funded education” (Ontario Ministry of Education). The project I designed is targeted at promoting higher levels of achievement through addressing gaps in achievement. Poor literacy instruction disproportionately affects students who have been marginalised by our school system and wider society. Further, public confidence has been taken into account because the Right to Read has been mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Typically, boards of education have control over how they program and fulfil curriculum requirements, however, because the Right to Read was created in response to a violation of human rights in Ontario, it has been mandated in all school boards.

The School Effectiveness Framework *Indicator 4.1, A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve*, notes that at the school level, there should be “Professional learning, grounded in evidence-based practice and research, focuses on continuous improvement of teaching and learning” (Ontario Ministry of Education). I have taken this into account by using a synthesis research paper that features decades of peer-reviewed information about reading instruction. Further, *Indicator 4.2, A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy* is evident throughout the resource. The school effectiveness framework elaborates on the specifics of literacy instruction in schools through subindicators. These subindicators include: “Data are analysed to identify strengths and gaps in literacy and numeracy achievement and to determine ambitious learning goals for school-wide improvement; A comprehensive literacy and numeracy focus supports student achievement through use of the current Ontario curriculum and associated resource document; and Curriculum expectations are appropriately clustered and considered as a developmental continuum of learning across the grades/courses” (Ontario Ministry of Education). Such an emphasis on literacy (and numeracy, which is beyond the scope of this project) suggests that it is necessary for all areas of education and society and should be the base from which all other instruction stems. Of concern however is the subindicator which states: “Literacy and numeracy instruction is inquiry-based, intellectually challenging and developmentally appropriate for all students” (Ontario Ministry of Education). At the time that the School Effectiveness Framework was published and revised, the Right to Read had not been introduced. Best practice for reading instruction does not support inquiry-based learning in the early and primary years and instead, research notes that explicit direct instruction is more impactful for students learning to read. This is an example of why leaders need to be effective in all areas of leadership and how they need to stay committed to ongoing learning in their practice.

As I worked through this practicum project, I appreciated the opportunity to gain an understanding of how research, policy, and practice work together at the system level, board level, school level, and classroom level. I appreciated the opportunity to bring teachers and families together so that connections between the school and home can be strengthened. I also valued the opportunity to make educational research accessible to the people who can benefit

from it most. My video series for teachers was created to allow teachers to either watch or simply listen to the research summaries while they work in their classrooms. My long range plans were created to leverage what many teachers are already doing and to empower teachers to use research in their own daily planning. My research background, though rooted in education, has focused on equity and policy, and not on curriculum. When I began taking the Principal Qualification Program through CPCO, I realised that curriculum *is* equity. If students are not educated appropriately through the education system, they will not have the skills they need to disrupt inequities in society. I believe that by creating this project, I have taken one tangible step towards creating a more equitable society.

Practicum Mentorship Observation Log

Planned Date	Site	Duration	Purpose of the Observation	Notes, Observations, Reflections
March 1, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Building maintenance basics (running the bell, etc)	**Need to double check bells when going on March Break, Summer vacation, etc.
March 8, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Admin planning: timetables and schedules	Rules governing number of minutes / can be grieved if seen as unfair (you can't give someone all before-school duties)
March 22, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Community connections: schools as public spaces after school hours	Our board gives two evenings a week that permits will not be granted so school can run programming.
April 5, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Admin planning: SIP, BIP	Everything must align with the data!
April 12, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Budgeting and resources	SGF vs. given budget
April 19, 2023	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Conflict resolution and fostering positive relationships	Given book "Courageous conversations" to read as supplementary material -discussed unions and process for terminating a teacher
April 26, 2023	St. Agnes CES	2 hrs	Supporting students	Observed approaches to behaviour management. All interactions must be documented and filed
May 3, 2023 (Date changed to May 11)	St. Agnes CES	3 hrs	Q&A	Talked about important advice going forward. Presented my practicum project

Leadership Practicum Final Report

Supporting Literacy in Kindergarten through Grade 2 Using Science of Reading to Inform Practice

Prepared by Dr. Courtney A. Brewer

In fulfilment of the required practicum project for the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario

Principal Qualification Program Part 1

Submitted May, 2023 to the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
% Cassandra Tenbergen (PQP 1 Instructor)

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that this work was completed on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral People who have cared for this land throughout history. I am grateful for their stewardship and am committed to continuing my own learning journey of stewardship as a settler in this space.

Expression of Gratitude

I am grateful to Cassandra Tenbergen for her ongoing support in fostering ethical leadership in education across Ontario. Her devotion to placing relationship-building at the heart of all leadership is inspiring.

Intent of the Leadership Practicum inquiry proposal

(The following is an excerpt from my project)

This project is intended to bring research and practise together in a model that supports teachers as they begin to move away from “balanced literacy” and towards “science of reading” as indicated by the Right to Read initiative in Ontario and the new literacy curriculum set to be released. The information in this project is intended to reflect a current moment in time and so it is expected that more information will be added and nuance will become apparent over time as the breadth of research informing this project gets expanded.

This project will highlight the research about reading, beginning in Kindergarten and moving to Grade 2. Aspects of literacy such as writing, spelling, and oral language will be touched on only as they relate to reading. More specific information about spelling, writing, and oral language can be found in the “Additional Resources” section.

Relationship between the Leadership Practicum, the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals found in Ontario Leadership Framework: A School and System Leader’s Guide to Putting Ontario’s Leadership Framework into Action

(The following is an excerpt from my final reflection)

As an Ontario teacher, I am committed to upholding the standards for ethical practice. This project demonstrates my Commitment to Students and Student Learning because students in this case are the end user of the project. I am using my own professional knowledge as an educator and as a researcher to highlight best practice and share it with my colleagues. My commitment to professional practice is evident in how I use my insider knowledge as a teacher to bridge the gap between the research and what is actually able to take place in a classroom. I have demonstrated leadership in learning communities by deprivatising my knowledge and sharing it with others in a way that is accessible and honours their roles as professionals in the field of education. Finally, I am committed to ongoing professional learning and have made space in this project to account for new information to be presented which would alter this work and the learning activities I have suggested. I clearly state at the beginning of the project document that this information reflects the current research and I have made the original document in a Google Document file so that it can be updated as necessary.

As an aspiring school leader, I have accounted for the Ontario Catholic Leadership Framework in my project. Specifically, my project is focused on Improving the Instructional Program. I am providing instructional support to colleagues and stakeholders by showing what the research notes as best practice in the area of reading instruction. This formative instruction is needed so that teachers in later grades are able to benefit from literate students, which can enhance their own instructional program as they can leverage the collective literacy in their students to go deeper with subject content. I have also been very intentional about building relationships and developing people through my practicum project. In my long range plans, I explicitly direct teachers to develop relationships with students before beginning full instruction because students need to feel safe and secure before deep learning can begin. As well, I have put all long range plans in one file so that teachers can connect with one another to plan on a continuum that best supports their students. Finally, I have created a video series for parents so that teachers and parents can work together to support children on their journeys to becoming proficient readers.

As an educational leader serving in Ontario, I also looked to the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF K-12) to guide my work. This framework document states that the core priorities of the Ontario Ministry of Education are: “high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement; and increased public confidence in publicly funded education” (Ontario Ministry of Education). The project I designed is targeted at promoting higher levels of achievement through addressing gaps in achievement. Poor literacy instruction disproportionately affects students who have been marginalised. Further, public confidence has been taken into account because the Right to Read has been mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Typically, boards of education have control over how they program and fulfil curriculum requirements, however, because the Right to Read was created in response to a violation of human rights in Ontario, it has been mandated in all school boards.

The School Effectiveness Framework Indicator 4.1 A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve, notes that at the school level, there should be “Professional learning, grounded in evidence-based practice and research, focuses on continuous improvement of teaching and learning” (Ontario Ministry of Education). I have taken this into account by using a synthesis research paper that features decades of peer-reviewed information about reading instruction. Further, Indicator 4.2, A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school elaborates on the specifics of literacy instruction in schools. These subindicators include: “Data are analysed to identify strengths and gaps in literacy and numeracy achievement and to determine ambitious learning goals for school-wide improvement; A comprehensive literacy and

numeracy focus supports student achievement through use of the current Ontario curriculum and associated resource document; and Curriculum expectations are appropriately clustered and considered as a developmental continuum of learning across the grades/courses” (Ontario Ministry of Education). Such an emphasis on literacy (and numeracy, which is beyond the scope of this project) suggests that it is necessary for all areas of education and society and should be the base from which all other instruction stems. Of note however is the subindicator which states: “Literacy and numeracy instruction is inquiry-based, intellectually challenging and developmentally appropriate for all students” (Ontario Ministry of Education). At the time that the School Effectiveness Framework was published and revised, the Right to Read had not been introduced. Best practice for reading instruction does not support inquiry-based learning in the early and primary years and instead, research notes that explicit direct instruction is more impactful for students learning to read. This is an example of why leaders need to be effective in all areas of leadership and how they need to stay committed to ongoing learning in their practice.

Connections to school plan and district school board initiatives

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board has committed to awaiting for more guidance from the Ontario Ministry of Education in response to the Right to Read. Last year, it implemented the Haggerty phonemic awareness program across schools from Kindergarten to Grade 2 but has not gone further in removing practices that are not supported by research. As the board plans their next steps, this project has been created with research in mind that aligns with the Right to Read. All schools across the board have targets to improve literacy or maintain levels of high literacy. This project responds to improved literacy for all, including students who have been marginalised.

Sources and collection of data

The sources of data for this project were:

Berger, B. A. (2016). Using Evidence-based spelling instruction to support elementary students: A self-study. 4186. *School of Education and Leadership Student Capstone Theses and Dissertations*. Available at https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_all/4186

Castles, A., Rastle, K., & Nation, K. (2018). Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 19, 5–51. doi:10.1177/1529100618772271

Chapman, J. W. & Tunmer, W. E. (2018). Reading Recovery's unrecovered learners: Characteristics and issues. *Review of Education*. DOI: 10.1002/rev3.3121

Ehri, L. C. (2014) Orthographic mapping in the acquisition of sight word reading, spelling memory, and vocabulary learning. *Scientific Studies of Reading*. 18(1), 5–21, DOI: 10.1080/10888438.2013.819356

Solity, J., & Vousden, J. (2009). Real books vs reading schemes: A new perspective from instructional psychology. *Educational Psychology*. 29, 469–511. doi: 10.1080/01443410903103657

Demonstration of application of theory to practise

This project includes the following components that bridge theory and practice:

- Research summaries for each grade (K–2)
- Long range plans for each grade (Items with coloured text have been elaborated on in the “Activities and Resources Noted in Long Range Plans” section)
- Activities and Resources Noted in Long Range Plans
- Additional Resources
 - Research summary videos for teachers
 - Home reading tips video for families
 - List of 100 most common sight words
 - Letters for family engagement (**permission to copy and alter is granted without acknowledgement of author)
- References

Connections to learning, teaching and leadership

This project is meant to be shared across the school board so that school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other interested stakeholders can have access to the research and strategies being presented. It was made with accessibility in mind so that teaching and learning can be deprivatised and so that the barriers that exist in finding and understanding research can be removed.

Reference to relevant legislation, district school board policies and literature

This project is targeted at addressing the Right to Read set forth by the Ontario Ministry of Education and adopted by school boards across the province. All school boards are

required to implement evidence-based practice for reading instruction in the early years and primary divisions.

Evidence of growth: benefits to personal professional learning and critical thinking and practices

This project reflects my own personal learning journey and growth as an educator. I began teaching with little understanding about how to teach reading and I felt that I was not understanding what everyone else was doing and how it was helping students. I engaged in a deep exploration of research and committed to growing in my own practice during the 2021–2022 school year. When I started taking the PQP program, I explored further research and learned about the continuum of becoming a proficient reader. This ignited my desire to share my learning with others as I grew in my own practice. I combined my background in making research videos with my experience as a teacher to create this resource for stakeholders.

Critical analysis of how the practicum experience impacts the candidate's beliefs and assumptions

This practicum experience was rooted in my belief that research needs to inform practice. My work in research and as an elementary teacher has revealed to me that there is a major gap between research and practice. I understand why this is, in many ways, but as a teacher, I know that many people I work with, myself included, are doing the best they can and are relying on the system as a whole to be bringing necessary research to the forefront. As I taught in the K–12 system, I encountered people who had research roles not engaging with research literature to inform their practice, people who were supposed to disseminate research not being given adequate background information to disseminate it appropriately or accurately, and people in leadership roles at every level of leadership (including beyond the school board) have little to no experience in accessing, reviewing, and incorporating research into their practice. As a researcher with a background in critical policy, equity, and leadership in education, I know the dangers of misinformation across the school system. Unfortunately, principals and teachers, who have the strongest interactions with students and who generally want to engage in best practice, are kept out of the conversations about research and policy, yet they take the blame when academic scores and achievement targets are not met. We have a system where the responsibility for incorporating research into practice has been passed off so much that inferior literacy instruction has been perpetuated on an intercontinental level. To add, teachers who try to engage in their own professional development are often the targets of social media marketing where people claim to be experts based on their experience as a teacher alone, rather than having any research to inform their messaging. I have seen teachers and educators use their own personal funds to pay for professional development that is lacking in alignment with their school board initiatives and with peer reviewed research.

Even with my own background knowledge in research about reading instruction, my assumptions were continually challenged through the research I relied on for this project. When I initially learned that systematic phonics instruction was necessary for teaching children to read, I took a fairly “hard line” approach. In my own practice, I switched to decodable books and the term “sight word” was synonymous with “bad instruction”. As I read more and more, I learned about the nuance in instruction and found that there is a lot of middle ground between what has been common practice in my school board and what the research notes as crucial for reading instruction. I was reminded that it takes time to become knowledgeable and that learning through research is a life-long endeavour. For this reason, I noted in my project that my work reflects my current understandings and should not be considered a static document.

Critical reflections on the observation experience in relation to the Leadership Practicum, if applicable

For this practicum experience, I paired my research project with an observation experience. This time was incredibly valuable. Not only did I learn about how a school is run, but I was able to see the commitment to service that the principal I was working with had maintained. She eagerly donated hours of her time each week to working directly with me. I am thankful for the opportunity to see how a school functions and to gain insider knowledge about all the moving parts that work together to make a school day possible for a child. Furthermore, I was able to ask candid questions about leadership and learn more about how my mentor approaches different aspects of her role. She balanced offering advice and experience in many forms while still making space for my own leadership style. She shared her own strengths and challenges and showed me how she addresses each in her own practice. Her understanding of equitable practices in the system as a whole let me see where work has been done and where work still needs to be done to best support students and their families. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to be mentored by such a strong leader and for the opportunity to build a more professional relationship with someone who is committed to walking alongside me as I grow in my service.

Benefits to school staff, student, families, and caregivers

I have developed my practicum project with the benefit to schools, staff, students, families, and caregivers in mind. It can be shared with any school that sees value in the work as it is a digital resource. As well, my video series supports teachers in their own learning in an accessible way. Teachers can watch the videos or simply play the audio while they attend to other tasks. Links to further resources are also provided to teachers who want to go deeper with their learning. The benefits to students come in the form of receiving evidence-based instruction with regard to their reading. As the research in my project explains, when students are given appropriate reading instruction, the benefits

serve their other studies and knowledge growth. Students can begin to acquire knowledge independently through reading which opens up opportunities to them as they move through life. Finally, adequate reading instruction serves students who have been systematically marginalised. It provides access to emancipatory literature as well as essential life-skills information that has been historically used to further marginalise people. In terms of benefits to families and caregivers, my project brings families into the conversation about supporting students. I have created a video series specifically for families looking to help their child read at home. This series offers advice for families who have children being taught whole language approaches to reading as well as advice for parents who are finding it difficult to read with their children on a regular basis. My goal in creating this resource was that it would unite all stakeholders together for a common goal, while respecting where everyone is in their teaching and parenting journeys.

Implications for equity and ethical leadership

This resource was created with equity and ethics in mind. Literacy is a right that everyone has. When people are not able to read, they are not able to fully participate in society, including participating in social change aimed at bridging gaps in inclusion. The Right to Read was implemented because concerned citizens recognized that children were being taught substandard ways of learning to read which was widening the gap in literacy, and in turn, widening the gaps in equity and inclusion in society. In creating a resource targeted at reading instruction, I have attempted to reduce these gaps. Ethically, I have worked to create a resource that is user friendly and that brings all stakeholders together. As more research is becoming highlighted in the education world, my duty as an ethical leader will be to add to and alter this resource as necessary.

Next steps toward sustainable impacts and ongoing learning for the candidate

My next steps as a leader to promote sustainability and ongoing learning are to keep this resource open for new information. I have stated in the resource that my work reflects my current understanding of the peer reviewed research related to reading instruction and that new information should inspire new practice. As an educator, my personal ongoing learning will entail exploring more information about what instruction in small groups looks like and how reading can be appropriately assessed.

Leadership Practicum - Overall Evaluation Rubric

Practicum Requirements	Level 1 Demonstrates few of the required components and in limited ways.	Level 2 Demonstrates some of the required components.	Level 3 Demonstrates most of the required components.	Level 4 Demonstrates all the required components in complete ways.
Leadership Practicum Log The candidate will keep a record in the form of a log describing and documenting the implementation of the Leadership Practicum including the dates and duration of all practicum project activities.				
Observation Log As part of the Observation component (not to exceed 20 hours) the candidate will keep a record in the form of a log that will detail Their reflections on the observation activities.				
Leadership Practicum Report The candidate will prepare a written report on the practicum learning experiences.				
Mentee's Annual Growth Plan The candidate will complete the AGP with leadership goals and strategies aligned with the OLF and include <i>Personal Leadership Resources</i> (OLF) to support reaching the goals.				