

The Reading Success Network



Planning for RSN at Your School: The First Year

Start with one RSN pilot team your first year.

Start small. Start out with one pilot RSN peer study team. Depending on how reading instruction is organized at your school, this team may be composed of reading teachers from one grade level, or of teachers from several grade levels who work together on reading instruction. Team members should share common ground concerning reading instruction. The study team, at a minimum, includes the reading specialist and 2 or 3 volunteer teachers at the designated grade level(s).

Assign roles to each team member.

Decide on each team member's role. Some examples include:

1. **Leader** (leads the team in discussion and keeps members on track)
2. **Resource person** (makes sure that needed resources, such as new assessments the team may be investigating, articles, etc. are available to each team member)
3. **Reading specialist** (has strong background in reading instruction and assessment and is available to provide insight and/or training in diagnosing reading difficulties, administering new assessments, etc.)
4. **Liasion with administration and other teachers** (communicates with the school's principal and/or district level administrators concerning team needs; advocates for the team with other teachers and administration)

These are just a few examples of roles team members can play; others more germane to your school or district may also be used.

Decide on a regular, mutually agreeable time and place to meet.

Decide when, where, and how often the RSN team(s) will meet. Regularity (first and third Tuesdays from 3:00 to 5:00 every month, for example) is critical. Meetings that are scheduled at varying times tend not to happen. If your principal is not already involved in RSN (he/she should be), try to get his/her buy in as soon as possible and solicit help with finding a good meeting time and place.

Examine your school's literacy goals.

At your first or, at the latest, your second meeting, your RSN team should have a serious discussion of your school and district's literacy goals and objectives and the ways in which RSN will help you address these goals/objectives. Describe orally, and eventually in writing, how the strategies of RSN (i.e., data collection, analysis, study team work, keeping a journal) will contribute to meeting the school's literacy goal(s).

Set specific and realizable goals for your RSN team and for your team members' students.

State the specific goals for your RSN team for the current school year. These goals should specify how you will use ongoing assessment and data from those assessments to modify instruction to help students meet grade level expectations. Describe how you will measure progress toward meeting your RSN team goals. You may want to outline the activities, discussions, and topics your RSN team will focus on over the course of the school year.

Focus on your students.

Focus on your students, where they are right now and where you want them to be at the end of the school year.