

Ingham Impact Episode 24 – Reading and Literacy

Mary Jo Wegenke: Reading and literacy is the gateway to learning; if we cannot unlock text, written material, if we don't have the oral language skills to communicate with one another, or those written language skills, we are really going to be at a deficit to move ourselves forward as learners and be productive members of society, and to contribute to society. Shelly Probstle: Students who are readers at an early age have a much more successful outcome in the long run, so it sort of impacts everything. Everybody should be a literacy teacher; it should be literacy across all the disciplines, and how do we do that, and how do we do that well? What's the latest research out there kind of tell us how to do that? So if you're in a science or social studies class, what can that science or social studies teacher do that will sort of help students read that grade-level content. Providing scaffolding with vocabulary and background knowledge, so that they have a better learning experience in all their subject core classes. Nancy Deal: Because of the third grade reading law, that is part of Ingham ISD's strategic plan; it is to increase reading and work towards that third grade reading law. All components, so, Student Instructional Services, Student Support Services, and Early Childhood have all embraces that, and are doing different things to work toward that goal. Reading seems, in third grade, seems so far away, and really getting parents to understand all of the communication that you do, the amount that your child's actually even talking back to you, the amount that your child is sitting and playing with you back and forth; all of those things do build on reading. I had a kid, even just last year, was diagnosed being on the spectrum, he had autism. We saw him for maybe six months. He transitioned into Lansing's special ed preschool program, and just last week, I went into that-- did a visit with another family, and did not recognize this student. And it's just, the structure and a team working together with the common goal that are really moving these kids together with their families. Mary Jo Wegenke: When students in those Pre-K to first grade, they're really learning the skills on how to access text, and when we hit third grade, we're really looking at skills on how to get information from the text, so we're reading to learn in third grade, and in those earlier grades we're learning to read, and so third grade is kind of that pivotal year that we make that shift in putting all those foundational skills together, to really being able to have tools to access the text for comprehension, which is really the ultimate goal of reading. Shelly Probstle: Everybody in our county is using Illuminate Ed, which pulls screener data; so the students are screened in the fall, winter and spring on their different areas of reading, and if a student is flagged as having any kind of reading difficulty, they are identified as a student who needs an Individual Reading Improvement Plan, and then a team of professionals within their building will sit and look at: What are the difficulties of the student? What would be the intervention? And most importantly, how are we going to progress monitor that to show effectiveness to the parent. So parents are now going to know exactly where their student is, if they're hitting benchmark and what the intervention's going to be, then also giving parents tools or resources to support their student within that area. Nancy Deal: So I think there is so much research out there, and things that back it up, that this early intervention really is the key to helping these kids, and it's crazy; I have, again, never seen a kid that did not, no matter how low or high they were, did not advance or make some progress.

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