

## Literacy Advisory Council Meeting Notes

April 1, 2021

### Meeting Summary

The following summarizes the Literacy Advisory Council's initial (LAC) meeting, held virtually on April 1, 2021 from 9 am to 12 pm.

#### **Welcome and Introductions** – *Jennifer Ottley, UC SDI Center*

Dr. Ottley introduced herself and welcomed the group. She thanked participants for joining the Advisory Council, noting the importance of literacy efforts to make a difference for Ohio students. She addressed the three-part role of Advisory Council members:

- Review products and tools developed (primarily in Council Meetings);
- Advise on drafts to increase quality, relevance, and usefulness; and
- Communicate the work and tools developed with your networks.

Next, members briefly introduced themselves to the group.

#### **Overview of Ohio Virtual Literacy Improvements for Teachers and Students (OH V-LIFTS) and Academic and Social-Emotional Learning for Adolescents (AC-SEL)** – *J.C. Barnes and Mindy Schweitzer Smith, School of Criminal Justice, CECH, University of Cincinnati; Jennifer Ottley and Deb Telfer; SDI Center, CECH, University of Cincinnati; Aimee Howley, WordFarmers Associates*

The presenters provided an overview of the two programs, their relationship to broader statewide efforts, and the evaluation component of this work. Dr. Ottley began by sharing that both projects align with Ohio's core principles – equity, partnerships, and quality schools. She also clarified that she would be using the term "educator" broadly to include all those working for students' education. She then described the goals and core components of both programs (see PowerPoint for specific details). Dr. Ottley invited project partners from the University of Cincinnati's School of Criminal Justice (CJ) to speak regarding their involvement in the AC-SEL project. Dr. JC Barnes described CJ's work in studying the developmental life course of individuals likely to enter the criminal justice system, and their commitment to partner in supporting behavioral change and improvement in practitioners' capacity to address the whole child. Dr. Myrinda (Mindy) Schweitzer Smith shared information about the framework developed by the UC Corrections Institute (UCCI), explaining that research shows that the risk factors, challenges, and barriers facing students likely to be involved with the criminal justice system are also risk factors facing students who will have challenges with literacy. UCCI's work promotes the full understanding of each child and his/her unique needs, but it also relies on the use of a core set of evidence-based practices – dubbed core correctional practices derived from social learning theories. She remarked that these practices (e.g., developing strong relationships, teaching children how to problem-solve, etc.) can be used by any educator or

agent of change in addressing social-emotional learning and will be a prominent part of the PD that CJ will build for this project.

Dr. Telfer addressed how the two programs are aligned with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* and the state's commitment to supporting social-emotional learning. She also outlined the connection with Ohio's improvement framework (i.e., the Ohio Improvement Process or OIP and the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council's (OLAC) Ohio's Leadership Development Framework) and the statewide system of support. She shared the background on these state systems, which are intended to support educators in having meaningful conversations and access to resources to further their work in supporting each child. She added that both projects are designed with statewide scalability in mind. Next, Dr. Howley outlined the comprehensive design-based research and evaluation plan. This effort will guide the development and revision of the products and services offered through each project. It will also provide formative and summative feedback. She noted that the evaluators would work with the core team in the coming year to conduct a needs assessment and develop prototypes. She noted the LAC's role in the process for vetting tools. She explained that the team would also collect feedback from participants to assess the work's impact.

**National Strategic Partners** – *Mary Dahlgren, Tools 4 Reading; Sharon Vaughn, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, The University of Texas at Austin; Rachel Quenemoen, National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota; Jose Blackorby, CAST; Kristien Zenkov, George Mason University*

Each national partner introduced him or herself and noted the specific experiences and perspectives he or she contributes, given the two projects' focus areas and the LAC's broader work. Collectively these experiences and perspectives encompassed LETRS and literacy training, literacy for adolescents in the criminal justice system, strategies for effectively bridging research and practice, meaningful and effective inter-agency and cross-disciplinary collaboration, universal design for learning (UDL) and (student and adult) learner variability, and the importance and value of including young people's perspectives and voices.

**State and Local Partners** – *Michelle Elia, Carolyn Turner, & Roger Howard, State Literacy Leads, Ohio Department of Education; Ron Iarussi, Superintendent, Marion City Schools; Jennifer Walker, Curriculum Director, Youngstown City School District*

The state literacy leads talked about their work of planning and delivering professional development that aligns to *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*. They emphasized their focus on making research applicable to building leaders and classroom practitioners and designing PD with educators in mind. Next, two district representatives discussed the relevance of this work, the specific challenges their districts face, and how they are implementing literacy strategies using resources available through state support structures, including the guidance of the State Literacy Leads.

### **Ohio's Literacy Repository – Andy Wahlenmaier, PPA**

Mr. Wahlenmaier shared a mock-up for the project website his team is developing for the OH V-LIFTS and AC-SEL projects. He noted that the website is not currently live and that some components are still under development, one of which is a repository. He highlighted the Repository's home page and the "Educator Resources" page, which features an interactive library. The group then shared feedback on the mock-up in the chat box. The chat will be saved so the comments can be incorporated into revisions.

### **Context Setting: Alignment with Ohio's Statewide Plans – Melissa Weber-Mayrer, ODE Office of Approaches to Teaching & Professional Learning; Jo Hannah Ward, ODE Office for Exceptional Children**

Dr. Weber-Mayrer discussed how ODE's offices have worked to align literacy efforts in Ohio so as to present a coherent message statewide. She then outlined how several of Ohio's priority strategies aligned with the work discussed today. For example, the two programs will include a whole-child approach; build capacity for early literacy instruction; share evidence-based practices; and create or leverage partnerships between families, communities, and the education system. She also discussed the alignment with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, which ensures that all learners become proficient readers.

Jo Hannah Ward introduced *Each Child Means Each Child* and explained that it represents a targeted effort to actualize Ohio's vision – as outlined in the state's strategic plan, *Each Child Our Future* – that each student is supported individually. She noted that it addresses the state's goals for developing a solid foundation for supporting students through strong Tier 1 instruction and raising the percentage of high school graduates. She also noted the philosophical changes required for this work, explaining that it involves a sense of collective responsibility and a commitment to continuous improvement. Two key documents related to the work were shared:

Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education:

[http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/About/Ohios-Strategic-Plan-for-Education/StratPlan\\_Infographic\\_web.jpg.aspx?lang=en-US](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/About/Ohios-Strategic-Plan-for-Education/StratPlan_Infographic_web.jpg.aspx?lang=en-US)

*Each Child Means Each Child*: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Improving-Educational-Experiences-and-Outcomes>

### **Work Group Breakout Session and Discussion – Alex Pavlik, SDI Center, CECH, University of Cincinnati**

Alex Pavlik outlined the ground rules for discussion and introduced the breakout session conversation topics:

- What do you consider the most critical needs that the team should consider in the creation of the PD?

- What are some of the strengths and opportunities that would address the needs identified in response to the first question?

After 25 minutes, participants returned to the main meeting and reported on their discussions. Notetakers also captured key points from the small-group discussions. They shared the feedback with the core team so the team could incorporate the feedback as part of program development. Dr. Pavlik noted the importance of aligning these tools and demonstrating that they are designed to help educators meet their existing responsibilities (rather than imposing additional requirements). She also stated the importance of differentiating the tools, noting that educators are at different levels in their understanding of the science of reading. She also highlighted that family and other stakeholder engagement will be essential, and she thanked the group for their feedback.

### **Next Steps: Where We Go from Here**

The second meeting will be held on June 30, 2021 from 9 am – 12 pm. Dr. Ottley said she would welcome any feedback from LAC members following the meeting. She addressed details related to payments and contracts and asked members to complete the evaluation form. She emphasized the importance of input from all members and thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting adjourned at 11:52 am.

### **Participants in Attendance**

Fifty-three participants attended the meeting and are listed below in alphabetical order. Attendance was taken via the meeting chat, where participants were asked to sign-in, and through an attendance log for the breakout rooms, provided by the meeting facilitator.

Aaron Bouie, III	Principal, William Holmes McGuffey Elementary School, Youngstown City Schools
Aimee Howley	President, WordFarmers Associates
Alexandra Pavlik	Research Associate, UC SDI Center
Andy Wahlenmaier	Web Designer, PPA Agency
Barbara Boone	Program Director, Ohio State University (Family/Community Partnerships)
Beth Hess	Assistant Director for Literacy, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning, Ohio Department of Education (ODE)
Beth Rice	Regional Early Literacy Specialist (RELS), SST 15
Bryan Drost	Director, Rocky River City Schools
Carolyn Turner	Ohio Literacy Lead, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning
Chris Rauscher	Region 8 Comprehensive Center
Chris Saiben	Principal, Grant Middle School, Marion City Schools
Dan Reynolds	John Carrol University
Daria DeNoia	Education Policy and Practice Consultant, Ohio Education Association

David Brobeck	Graduate Program Director, Walsh University
Deb Telfer	Director, UC SDI Center
Debbie Hartwig	SPDG Literacy Lead, State Support Team 9
Holly Maczka	English Teacher, Scott High School, Toledo Public Schools, OFT
J.C. Barnes	Professor and Interim Director, School of Criminal Justice, CECH, UC
Jason Tackett	Principal, Williamsburg Middle & High School, Williamsburg Local Schools; Board of Directors, Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA)
Jennifer Griffing	Regional Early Literacy Specialist, Family Engagement & Continuous Improvement, State Support Team 9
Jennifer Ottley	Director of Research, UC SDI Center
Jennifer Pealer	Contractor, UC Corrections Institute
Jennifer Walker	Curriculum Director, Youngstown City Schools
Jillian Ahrens	Vice President, K-8, Cleveland Teachers Union, Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)
Jim Gay	Co-director, Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC)
Jo Hannah Ward	Director, Office for Exceptional Children (OEC), ODE
Jose Blackorby	Senior Director of Research and Development, CAST
Judith Monseur	Special Projects Coordinator, SDI Center
Julia Flint	Research Associate, WordFarmers Associates, Meeting Notetaker
Julie Davis	Executive Director, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA)
Kelly Weeks	Principal, Volney Rogers Elementary, Youngstown City Schools
Kristien Zenkov	Professor of Education & Academic Program Coordinator, Secondary Education Program, George Mason University
Laura Saylor	Dean, Mount Saint Joseph University
Lisa Harrison	Associate Professor, Middle Childhood Education, Ohio University
Lisa Hickman	Executive Director, Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD)
Marie Ward	Superintendent, Fairfield County ESC, Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA)
Mark Seals	Vice Chair, Ohio Deans Compact
Mary Dahlgren	President, Tools 4 Reading, LLC
Melissa Weber-Mayrer	Director, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning, ODE
Michele Moore	Director, State Support Team 5
Michelle Elia	Ohio Literacy Lead, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning
Mindy Schweitzer Smith	Deputy Director and Senior Research Associate, UC Corrections Institute
Niko Demetriou	Office of Integrated Student Supports
Nicole Kahler	Office of Integrated Student Supports
Rachel Quenemoen	Senior Research Associate, Retired, University of Minnesota

Roger Howard	Adolescent Literacy Specialist, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning
Ron Iarussi	Superintendent, Marion City Schools
Sharon Vaughn	Professor & Executive Director, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, University of Texas at Austin
Sheila Smith	Senior Director – Research, Quality Assurance, and Program Impact, Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)
Stanley Dudek	WordFarmers Associates, Virtual Meeting Facilitator
Terri Purcell	Associate Professor, Literacy Education, Cleveland State University
Tom Perkins	Superintendent, Northern Local School District, Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA)
Vineela Kunapareddi	Research Associate, ITSC, CECH, UC
Yahya Gilany	Research Associate, ITSC, CECH, UC