
Preface

The K–12 Literacy Leadership Fieldbook has been created in response to requests made by principals, teacher leaders, and school district leaders to have a step-by-step approach to developing a fail-safe literacy system. As my friends and colleagues reflect with me on both leadership and literacy texts, they comment that all are helpful in creating a mental model of leadership, literacy, and improving student achievement. These leaders want to know exactly what to do to get there. The *Fieldbook* is intended to create a mental model of what research-based literacy learning looks like in classrooms and schools and at the same time provide leadership with steps to take to get there. The end result is not purchases and accountability plans (which end up dust covered, on shelves), but a living synergistic system in which all the components work seamlessly together. Fail-safe literacy systems can be observed at work every day in classrooms and schools, bringing joy to students, teachers, administrators, and parents alike as they observe literacy learning taking place.

Coincidentally, during the final writing of this manuscript, Dale Moxley, Director of 6-12 Curriculum and Instruction in Lake County, Florida, forwarded an e-mail to me and said, “I had to share this with you. I think this is what we are all about.” See what you think:

I have been meeting with small groups of teachers (8–10) after school. I gave a 2-hour workshop on vocabulary, and we have read *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas* and *I Read It, But I Don't Get It*. During the discussion on Wednesday teachers were so excited about reading in their classrooms, and what they were doing to teach vocabulary better and the effect it had on comprehension. The conversation was so amazing I just sat back and listened. They were making reference to *Just Read, Lake!* [the district's fail-safe literacy system] and how the students were responding better when being taught these strategies.

Wow! Something is happening here! I love my faculty at Oak Park; they are so receptive to me and what I am doing. I have tried for a year to be friend, resource, and a teacher of reading for them. Many times you have to wait for the payoff and that time has come. I have at least one teacher a day come to my office and share something they have tried with students and how the students responded. I have always thought they were at least trying to accept this “reading stuff,” but Wednesday made me realize many are doing it. I can’t wait to see what will happen next year!

—Linda Bradley
Literacy Coach, Oak Park Middle School

There are many literacy coaches, principals, superintendents, and others who are positively changing the lives of students through fail-safe literacy leadership. We invite you to join us on this journey, developing a fail-safe literacy system that will result in joyful, independent readers, writers, and content learners.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging all of those who have contributed to fail-safe literacy learning—superintendents, principals, teachers, and literacy coaches—would be impossible, but there are heroes and heroines whose commitment to all students being joyful, independent readers, writers, and content learners is deserving of special recognition. To those friends and colleagues: We offer you our utmost respect, recognition, and support. Without you, *The K–12 Literacy Leadership Fieldbook* would not reflect the real practice in schools and districts that is resulting in measurable improvements in learning.

Carmine Arnold
Director of Elementary Education
Lake County Schools, Florida

Brennan Asplen
Principal
Millennium Middle School
Seminole County Schools, Florida