

Professional Development for Empower™ Reading: Grades 6-8, Decoding & Spelling

Required for program implementation, this professional development (PD) provides teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to confidently and effectively teach the Empower™ Reading: Grades 6-8, Decoding and Spelling program. The PD has been carefully developed over our many years of research, and incorporates components that have been shown to be important and effective. The PD also helps to ensure program and fidelity in order to achieve the ultimate goal of improving students' decoding and spelling skills.

Professional Development: Workshops

- All workshops are conducted by experienced and highly-skilled Empower™ Reading Trainers.
- Four full-day mandatory professional development workshops are provided during the first year of program implementation. The first two workshop days, offered before teaching begins, provide:
 - Current research on reading disabilities and evidence-based literacy training.
 - An overview of Empower™ Reading.
 - Interactive training using modelling, with opportunities for practice and feedback, that focuses on metacognition and the content and skills necessary for instructing the first two program strategies.
- The remaining two workshop days, offered during the school year, are conducted in an interactive setting and focus on:
 - Introducing the remaining strategies, content, and skills.
 - Modelling of lessons and practice opportunities for teachers.
- Annual half-day refresher workshops are provided as long as the teacher continues to teach Empower™ Reading. *Attendance is mandatory.*

Professional Development: Mentoring/Coaching and In-Class Visits

- Each Empower™ Reading teacher receives individualized mentoring and coaching by an experienced Empower™ Reading Mentor/Coach.
- The role of the mentor/coach is to do all he/she can to support implementation of the program and to make it a positive and successful experience for both the teacher and his/her students.
- Mentors/coaches visit the teachers in their Empower Reading classroom three to five times during the first year of program implementation and one to two times during subsequent years of program delivery.
- During each visit, the mentor/coach:
 - Observes the teacher delivering the program to students.
 - May model all or part of a lesson with the students.
 - Provides feedback regarding program delivery such as pacing and teacher-student interactions.
 - Addresses teacher concerns and questions.
 - Reviews previously taught content and skills and highlight upcoming content and skills.
 - Monitors how students are progressing in the program.
- In addition to classroom visits, support is provided via email communications, website support, and virtual visits.