

EARLY READING FIRST - LITERACY COACH

Position Description

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Good Schools for All, a component program of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, is the lead agency, in partnership with Bethel Head Start, the Buffalo Public Schools and the Child Care Resource Network to transform five Head Start Centers into Early Reading First (ERF) Preschool Centers of Educational Excellence. Funded by a \$ 4.1 million three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Buffalo Preschool CARE (Community Action for Reading Equity) project will be used to integrate high quality literacy instruction and resources, progress monitoring of children and staff, and rigorous professional development into five Bethel Head Start programs in the “Read to Succeed Buffalo” designated literacy zone in Buffalo's northeast section. The overarching goal of the CARE Project is to dramatically increase the language and literacy skills of the children served to ensure they are all ready to start Kindergarten successfully. Over the three years, the CARE project expects to serve more than 600 three- and four- year old children, almost all of whom live in families below the poverty line. The grant was one of only two awarded in New York State and one of 32 appropriated nationwide in 2007.

EARLY READING FIRST LITERACY COACH

Good Schools for All is seeking to hire five (5) Literacy Coaches who will each be assigned to provide day-to-day professional development and support for the teachers and teaching assistants in five Bethel Head Start Centers in northeast Buffalo. These full-year, full-time positions will be an integral part of the educational team at each site, working collaboratively with the Bethel Head Start Education Supervisor and instructional staff under the direction of the CARE Project Coordinator.

The salary range for these positions is competitive and negotiable commensurate with a candidate’s educational background and experience. The Community Foundation offers an excellent fringe benefit package.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Collaborate with Early Reading First preschool teachers in their classrooms to integrate SBRR instructional strategies materials that are explicit and systematic, and emphasize the five dimensions of emergent early literacy – alphabet knowledge, language development, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, concepts of print and reading appreciation.
- Guide and assist preschool teachers in the full and ongoing implementation of an integrated curriculum emphasizing scientifically-based reading research through modeling of lessons, guided practice, and observation and feedback.

- Guide and assist preschool teachers in the administration of valid and reliable screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring instructional assessment tools; and the use of performance data in planning ongoing classroom instruction and management.
- Guide and assist teachers in adapting instructional strategies and materials for students who demonstrate risk of reading difficulty and who require more intentional instructional interventions.
- Review and analyze student diagnostic screening, progress monitoring and outcome assessment data on a regular basis with teachers and the educational team in the center to continually refine the instructional program based on children's needs and determine ongoing professional development for the team.
- Meet with the Center's educational team on a weekly basis; attend bi-monthly meetings with the Project Coordinator and meet with other Head Start Center staff, such as the Family Partner, as necessary, to coordinate and plan effective implementation of the ERF project. Participate in other management and evaluation activities as requested by the Project Coordinator.

Candidate Profile

Education

Candidates must hold a Master's degree in Reading or Literacy. Familiarity with Houghton–Mifflin–PreK and/or Creative Curriculum is a plus. Additional courses and experience in the areas of early childhood, reading, research-based instruction strategies, assessment, and knowledge of the New York State Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines will be considered in evaluating each candidate's qualifications. Candidates who may have completed substantial higher education coursework or in-service in early literacy, but not hold a degree as a Literacy or Reading Specialist must provide detailed explanation of the courses, preferably the course syllabi.

Experience

Candidates must have completed a minimum of three years of teaching SBRR literacy in an early childhood or early elementary setting. Direct experience as a literacy coach is a plus. Proven experience in collaborating with or teaching adults is essential.

Experience leading, or working as part of, a multidisciplinary team and communicating effectively with persons and communities from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds is mandatory.

Skills

- A strong belief in the ability of all children to learn regardless of identified risk factors.
- A passionate commitment to working collaboratively with Buffalo Preschool CARE partners to achieve project goals.

- Ability to relate to, and engender trust with people of different ages, races, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.
- Strong analytical skills and the ability to draw conclusions and make recommendations based on observations and data.
- Ability to convene and facilitate meetings.
- Strong planning and organizational skills.
- Effective written and oral communication skills and proficiency in computer and web-based information technologies.
- Creative, high-energy, persistent, quick study.

APPOINTMENT

A conditional offer of employment will be made by Good Schools for All upon the recommendation of the interview team following assessment of the candidates' education, experience and skills; a personal interview(s), and reference and background checks. The Early Reading First Office of the U.S Department of Education will grant final approval of the candidate's credentials.