GROWING READERS:
A K-3 LITERACY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GRANT

2019-2020 End-of-Year Evaluation Report

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Governor's Office of
Student Achievement

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Executive Summary

Overview

Growing Readers is a K-3 literacy professional learning grant designed and implemented through Georgia's Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) and administered through the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Growing Readers works to provide consistent and high-quality professional learning to teachers on effective reading instruction to help more children read at grade level by the end of third grade. Growing Readers is part of GOSA's goal to invest in universal RESA initiatives that ensure all regions in Georgia are receiving high-quality, replicable professional learning, and this initiative directly impacts student success in reading in grades K-3.

Growing Readers was first implemented during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years and was originally designed as a single-year program. Analysis of feedback and data led to its redesign to a two-year program, and the second model was implemented during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. Recommendations received through the evaluation process were used to make additional changes that are reflected in the current two-year cycle. This iteration of Growing Readers began in the 2019-2020 school year with new schools and teachers and continued the focus on literacy instruction for K-3 students in those schools. The current cycle includes the addition of a State Certification Project, which aims to implement, support, and sustain Growing Readers by certifying district and/or school staff members, known as Candidates, as Statewide Certified Growing Readers Specialists. This addition has the potential to increase the number of administrators, teachers, and students engaged in Growing Readers literacy practices. In order to implement this component and scale Growing Readers, GOSA has partnered with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to create a path for internal sustainability at the school and district level. Each RESA identified one or more Reading Specialists to provide coaching support to Candidates, teachers, and school leaders on reading instruction and tiered interventions for struggling students.[1] During 2019-2020, the first year of the expansion, Reading Specialists and Candidates worked with new schools and teachers. Reading Specialists are educators with a background in literacy instruction who were either already working for or hired by a RESA for this program.

For the third cycle of Growing Readers, RESAs recruited schools using the 2018 College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) Third Grade Lexile Indicator for schools in each RESA.[2] RESAs gave priority to schools with Third Grade Lexile Indicators below the state average, which is 50.65%. Each RESA selected three to five schools to participate.[3] Schools then selected two teachers per grade level from kindergarten to third grade to participate in Growing Readers. Growing Readers now has 38 Reading Specialists working with 90 schools and is being successfully implemented in all 16 RESAs.

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[1] Tiered interventions are part of the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model in which teachers provide individualized supports in addition to regular classroom instruction to students who are performing below grade level according to the student's specific needs.

[2] The 2018 CCRPI Third Grade Lexile Indicator was used for school recruitment because the 2019 data were not yet available.

[3] Schools that were participating in the Sandra Dunagen Deal Promise Schools initiative or other competing initiatives were not asked to participate in Growing Readers.

Program Goals

The yearly goals for Growing Readers, as identified in the strategic plan, are provided below:

By the end of year one (Spring 2020):
- Observation data will show 75% of grant teachers effectively implement conferring.
- Fifty percent of students reading below the end-of-year (EOY) benchmark on the midyear assessment will be on or above grade level at the end of the year.

By the end of year two (Spring 2021):
- Observation data will show 90% of grant teachers effectively implement conferring.
- Observation data will show 75% of grant teachers effectively implement strategy groups.
- Fifty percent of students reading below the EOY benchmark on the midyear assessment will be on or above grade level at the end of the year.
- Eighty-five percent of struggling readers in grant classrooms will increase reading achievement by a minimum of one year's growth.

Figure 1: Map of Participating Growing Readers Schools
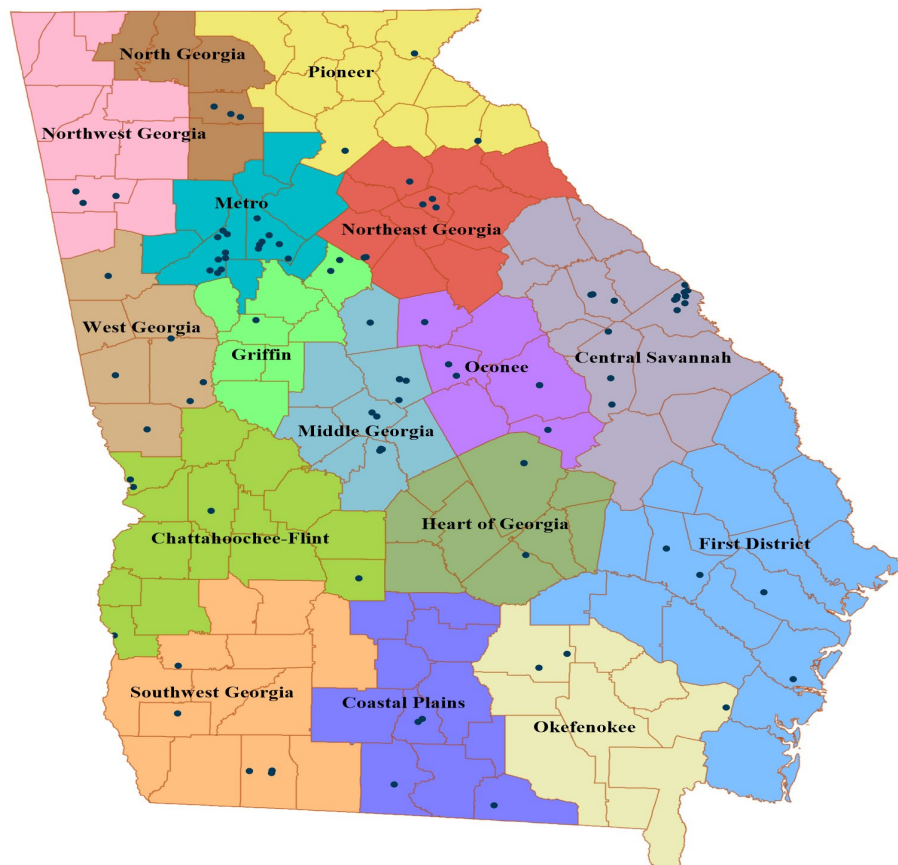
Overview of Methodology

The evaluation of Growing Readers focuses on four areas: implementation consistency, teacher practice, RESA cohesiveness and collaboration, and student outcomes. This report presents major findings for the 2019-2020 school year from multiple evaluation instruments. These instruments include quarterly status reports; the Teacher Observation Tool; professional learning session feedback form; regional meeting feedback session forms; EOY teacher, administration and candidate surveys, and the Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool for RESA Specialists.

For each of the four evaluation areas, GOSA's Research and Evaluation Team has created monitoring tools and protocols in coordination with the Growing Readers Design Team to ensure that appropriate data are collected, shared, and analyzed. A full description of each instrument, a discussion of collection and analysis methods, and findings related to each focus area are included in the appropriate section of the full report. However, several consistent methodologies are employed as guiding principles for the evaluation.

Collection of Perception Data and Status Reporting: All surveys and templates used in the Growing Readers evaluation are created by GOSA's Research and Evaluation Team with input from the Design Team. This collaboration ensures alignment between the program goals and evaluation instruments. All surveys are shared with stakeholders electronically and can be completed anonymously, and data from surveys is collected and analyzed by the evaluator and shared with GOSA's program manager and the Design Team. The status report template is updated annually to reflect implementation targets and timelines, and each RESA is required to submit an updated report quarterly. These documents are collected by the Design Team and submitted to GOSA for review.

Student Achievement Data: Each student in a participating Growing Readers classroom is assessed at three points in the year using an approved leveled reading assessment system. Each teacher collects results from his or her students, and data is uploaded to the GOSA evaluator through a secure file transfer protocol site administered by GOSA. Data are analyzed independent of Growing Readers staff and are shared with the Design Team for review.

Summary of Findings

Evaluation Focus Area I: Implementation Consistency

GOSA's Research and Evaluation team reviewed quarterly status reports submitted independently by each RESA, professional learning session feedback forms, and regional meeting feedback forms to evaluate implementation consistency. Key findings include:

- All RESAs implemented all required components of Growing Readers during 2019-2020, including but not limited to the completion of two formal observations, submission of assessment data for BOY and MOY, two professional learning sessions, and two regional meetings for Candidates.
- Although the amount of contact time between participants and Reading Specialists varied among RESAs, the accessibility and support from each specialist was consistent across all regions. According to surveys, most teachers felt that their Specialist was available when needed. RESA specialists were expected to visit classrooms for a minimum of nine in-person visits per year, which was met.
- Two professional learning sessions trained teachers on effective reading instruction, conferencing with students, and utilizing research-based reading assessment practices. All professional learning sessions were presented within a two-week window to ensure consistency among RESAs.
- Two regional meeting sessions trained Candidates on effective coaching practices for their teachers.
- Responses for each professional learning session and regional meeting were consistently positive among all participants.

Evaluation Focus Area II: Teacher Practice

To assess this focus area, GOSA's Research and Evaluation team analyzed EOY surveys for teachers, coaches, administrators, and Candidates. Key findings include:

- Ninety-eight percent of teachers were conferring with students by the MOY observation.
- Over 93% of teachers, administrators, coaches, and Candidates felt Growing Readers was valuable to improving literacy instruction and were likely to continue using Growing Readers strategies in the future.
- By the end of the 2019-2020 school year, 90% of teachers believed they were at least proficient in conferring with students, compared to 20% at the beginning of the school year.
- By the end of the 2019-2020 school year, 96% of teachers believed they were at least proficient in implementing independent reading with their students, compared to 35% at the beginning of the school year.
- By the end of the 2019-2020 school year, 99% of administrators and/or coaches stated that the school's participation in Growing Readers has slightly or much improved their school's literacy outcomes.

- One hundred percent of Growing Readers Candidates would recommend Growing Readers to a colleague.
- By the end of the 2019-2020 school year, 99% of Growing Readers Candidates felt that their participation in Growing Readers was valuable to their coaching practice.
- All participants recommended increasing the number of participants in Growing Readers to scale the program's impact schoolwide and proposed encouraging teachers within the program to collaborate with each other outside of professional learning sessions.

Evaluation Focus Area III: RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration

GOSA's Research and Evaluation team examined the cohesiveness and collaboration of RESAs through Growing Readers using a Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool.[4] Key findings include:

- All specialists felt the Growing Readers partnership has enabled consistent professional learning for teachers and Candidates across the state.
- All specialists felt that Candidates were doing quality work and added to Growing Readers in a positive way.
- All specialists felt like valued members of the Growing Readers Team.

Evaluation Focus Area IV: Student Outcomes

Due to COVID-19, schools in Georgia closed for a short period of time at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Following school closures, many students and teachers returned to school virtually through the end of the school year, but teachers were unable to assess students for their EOY reading levels because of inconsistency in instructional formats and delivery models. Teachers continued to virtually conference with students as time allowed, and Candidates and Reading Specialists continued to work with teachers and provide virtual coaching through the end of the school year. Teachers submitted BOY and MOY data for their students, but without EOY assessment data, student outcomes relative to reading levels could not be evaluated for the 2019-2020 school year.

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[4] Due to the RESA specialists' consistently positive responses in prior evaluations, the Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool was shortened from previous versions to five targeted questions to assess specialists' perceptions of collaboration relative to main themes of Growing Readers and to provide recommendations on possible Growing Readers expansion moving forward.

General Recommendations

Based on the findings outlined in this report, GOSA recommends the following changes in 2020-2021:

- Identify potential opportunities for Growing Readers participants to collaborate across RESAs.
- Conduct formal calibration exercises with Candidates and teachers to determine a student's independent reading level to improve inter-rater reliability and the validity of assessment data.
- Continue to immerse teachers into the goal-setting process for their students and ensure they understand what one-year-growth looks like for each student for each assessment.
- Continue to provide consistent professional development for Candidates.
- Continue to work with Candidates to ensure they are providing effective coaching to teachers.
- Encourage the training and support of more Candidates involved to continue to scale Growing Readers and increase positive impact on students.
- Ensure that districts are aware of Candidates' duties when selecting staff members to fill this role.
- Apply the results from the 2019-2020 evaluation to inform goals for the second year of this iteration.
- Identify additional opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own practice and growth because of Growing Readers to encourage the development of personal and professional goals.
- Encourage teachers to internalize their personal responsibility in sustaining Growing Readers practices after the end of their two-year guidance.
- Encourage administrators and coaches to become more involved with Growing Readers and to participate in more observations and modeling strategies.
- Utilize Certified Growing Readers Specialists to further the mission and unifying beliefs of Growing Readers.

Next Steps

The findings outlined in this evaluation indicate that the RESAs are successfully collaborating and delivering consistent, effective professional learning in K-3 literacy instruction to teachers and Candidates. The data also indicate that the RESA Certification Specialists have effectively trained the new Candidates to deliver the same caliber of coaching to their teachers. As a result of Growing Readers, teachers are changing their reading instructional practices to incorporate new strategies such as conferencing with students.

Growing Readers will continue its State Certification Project expansion during the 2020-2021 school year with the same schools and teachers. Candidates will continue to receive extensive training on coaching to increase students' literacy levels. RESA specialists will work with school districts in the fall and provide either face-to-face, virtual, or hybrid professional learning sessions to teachers and Candidates.

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Table of Abbreviations

BOY	Beginning-of-Year	CCRPI	College and Career Ready Performance Index
CEP	Community Eligibility Provision	EIP	Early Intervention Program
ELL	English Language Learner	ELA	English Language Arts
EOY	End-of-Year	FAY	Full Academic Year
FRL	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GaDOE	Georgia Department of Education	GOSA	Governor's Office of Student Achievement
GTID	Georgia Test ID	MOY	Middle-of-Year
RESA	Regional Educational Service Agency	RTI	Response-to-Intervention
SWD	Students with Disabilities		

Overview of Growing Readers

Growing Readers is a literacy initiative that includes professional development for K-3 teachers in selected schools from each of Georgia's 16 RESAs. For each iteration of Growing Readers, schools are chosen based on third grade Lexile levels as reported on the College and Career Readiness Index (CCRPI)[5]. Once these schools are chosen and agree to participate, administrators at each school select two teachers from each grade level in kindergarten through third grade, resulting in eight total teachers from each school. These teachers participate in two professional learning sessions throughout the year, formally assess their students' reading levels three times a year (beginning of year, middle of year, and end of year), have three formal observations throughout the year, and have ongoing classroom support from either their RESA Reading Specialist or Candidate.

Reading Specialists in each RESA work with three to five schools. Throughout the course of the year, RESA Reading Specialists attend the required training sessions, redeliver the content and training of the two Professional Learning Sessions and Regional Meetings, complete three formal observations for each teacher, assist teachers with collecting BOY, MOY, and EOY assessment data, and provide ongoing support to their teachers and/or Candidates.

Beginning in the 2019-2021 school year, Growing Readers has added Candidates to its model to further scale and sustain the positive results of the original program design. Candidates are trained, supported, and certified through an intensive coaching system with RESA Growing Readers Specialists, but they are employed by a local school district. A Certified Growing Readers Specialist can ensure a district's ability to sustain the program and create a systemic implementation structure for Growing Readers. For a school to be eligible to host a Growing Readers Candidate, it must be identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), or Promise School by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Introduction

Growing Readers works to provide consistent and research-based professional learning to teachers on effective reading instructional strategies to help more children read at grade level by the end of third grade. This grant is administered through the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Growing Readers is part of GOSA's mission to invest in universal RESA initiatives designed to ensure that teachers in all regions of the state are receiving high-quality, replicable professional learning that directly targets statewide goals, such as ensuring all students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. The first model for Growing Readers was implemented during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years as a single-year program, and that model was restructured as a two-year program for implementation in the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. The recommendations from previous annual evaluations were used to inform changes to the current program, which includes the State Certification Project. This component aims to implement, support, and sustain Growing Readers by certifying district and/or school staff members, known as Candidates, as Statewide Growing Readers Specialists. This change will

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[5] The 2018 CCRPI Third Grade Lexile Indicator was used for school recruitment because the 2019 data were not yet available.

increase the number of administrators, teachers, and students engaged in Growing Readers literacy practices. The current cycle of Growing Readers began in the 2019-2020 school year with new schools and teachers and will continue through the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Georgia's statewide network of 16 RESAs provides support services and professional development to local systems and schools. Historically, each RESA operates, plans, and provides support services to local systems and schools autonomously. Growing Readers presents an opportunity for RESAs to work together to provide the same content, quality of support, and professional learning throughout the state for a universal educational challenge.

In 2019-2020, each RESA identified at least one Reading Specialist to provide professional learning to three to five schools—eight teachers per school, two teachers per grade level (K-3) – in his/her RESA. In RESAs with a high number of federally identified schools, additional support was provided through the State Growing Readers Certification Project. In this model, previously trained RESA Growing Readers Specialists are assigned as mentors for Growing Readers Candidates. Each candidate is employed by a local system and works directly with teachers in a federally identified school. When a RESA specialist works with a candidate, the candidate provides coaching to participating teachers with support from the RESA specialist as needed. RESA Specialists also provide coaching to Candidates, teachers, and/or administrators on how to use reading assessments effectively to provide tiered instruction and interventions for students as Candidates work through the process of becoming fully certified. The goal is for these Candidates to become Certified Specialists able to impact more teachers and students in their district by creating a structure for internal scalability and sustainability. Reading Specialists from all RESAs collaborated to develop consistent professional learning sessions that are delivered to all participating Candidates and teachers throughout the school year. Although Specialists differentiate their coaching to address specific teacher needs, the focus of Growing Readers is to provide support for struggling readers through the effective use of instructional practices related to one-on-one conferencing and strategy groups. Growing Readers currently serves 90 schools and works with approximately 600 teachers and 12,000 K-3 students throughout the state. GOSA hopes that Growing Readers can continue to demonstrate the value of providing consistent, high-quality professional learning statewide through the RESAs to improve student achievement outcomes.

The 2019-2020 Growing Readers End-of-Year Evaluation Report is a comprehensive analysis of Growing Readers activities during the 2019-2020 school year. GOSA's Research and Evaluation team conducted this evaluation. The Research and Evaluation team collaborated with the Growing Readers Design Team to develop the evaluation plan and collect data. Analysis of the data was completed by the Research and Evaluation team independently from Growing Readers staff. The report includes the following components:

- A summary of Growing Readers' mission and goals;
- A Summary of changes to the 2019-2021 model;
- A profile of participating schools;
- A description of the evaluation methodology;
- A discussion of the findings for each evaluation instrument; and
- Recommendations for future practice.

Growing Readers Mission and Goals

The mission of Growing Readers is to design and implement high-quality and consistent professional learning sessions, with a focus on instructional strategies for struggling students, for Candidates, teachers, and administrators in each RESA to improve student reading performance.

Goals for the program are established based on teacher behavior and student achievement outcomes and are related directly to learning targets identified in professional learning sessions. The Growing Readers Design Team developed consistent thresholds for identifying "target students" in need of additional support based on the leveling systems used by participating schools. Schools are limited in the selection of leveling systems to ensure consistency of assessment data.

Growing Readers is implemented on a two-year cycle. Annual goals for each year identified in the strategic plan are provided below:

By the end of year one:
- Observation data will show a minimum of 75% of grant teachers effectively implement conferring.
- Fifty percent of students reading below the EOY benchmark on the midyear assessment will be on or above grade level at the end of the year.

By the end of year two:
- Observation data will show at least 90% of grant teachers effectively implement conferring.
- Observation data will show 75% of grant teachers effectively implement strategy groups.
- Fifty percent of students reading below the EOY benchmark on the midyear assessment will be on or above grade level at the end of the year.
- Eighty-five percent of struggling readers in grant classrooms will increase reading achievement by a minimum of one year's growth.

Because the 2019-2020 is the first of two-year cycle, this evaluation report focuses solely on the goals for year one. Given the impact of COVID-19 on school districts throughout Georgia, teachers were unable to collect EOY data and were unable to complete observations as planned; therefore, the data for year one goals is incomplete. This evaluation report will focus on other evaluation instruments which provided teacher, leader, and candidate feedback.

Summary of Changes for 2019-2021 Model

Growing Readers starts a new iteration every two years, allowing the Design Team to reflect on previous years and implement changes to better support participating teachers and schools. The changes for the 2019-2021 model are as follows:

- Began the State Certification Project which includes adding Candidates to the Growing Readers model to expand the impact of Growing Readers;
- Revised all rubrics and established protocols to ensure that all teachers, candidates, and coaches are calibrated on each rubric (independent reading, conferencing, etc.);
- Created and shared Growing Readers "Indicators of Success" so that all stakeholders have a consistent understanding of what success looks like in the classroom;
- Created and shared Growing Readers Principles in order to define how Growing Readers operates;
- Designed and launched a new electronic portfolio that allows for better resource sharing, a consistent virtual meeting space, and higher levels of collaboration between participating teachers;
- Collected and analyzed RESA Specialist feedback on Professional Learning and Regional Meeting sessions;
- The Design Team increased site visits across the state and observed more Growing Readers classrooms to ensure consistency;
- Received additional coaching from Kate Bishop throughout the year, ensuring continued professional growth for Specialists and Candidates;
- Improved coaching structures based on learning from Kate Bishop to strengthen that component of implementation; and
- Transitioned from face-to-face implementation to virtual implementation when COVID-19 affected schools.

In addition to the changes listed above, the Growing Readers team reflects on every professional learning session, regional meeting, RESA specialist meeting, classroom observation, etc. to evaluate where improvements can be made. The design continually reviews survey feedback and works to incorporate appropriate changes to better serve their teachers.

Growing Readers State Certification Project

The Growing Readers State Certification Project adds to the existing impact of Growing Readers by reaching more schools and training a sustainable cohort of Growing Readers Certified Specialists at the district and school level. The original Growing Readers model will continue to impact approximately 50 schools, 390 teachers, and 7,000 students during the 2019-2021 cycle, but the Growing Readers State Certification Project allows seven RESA Specialists to take on new roles as Certification Specialists.

Certification Specialists are integral to expanding the impact of Growing Readers statewide. Each Certification Specialist individually serves one school though the original Growing Readers model – allowing the continuation of coaching practice and to ensure they remain aligned with the goals and mission of Growing Readers. All Growing Readers RESA Specialists eventually become certification specialists as they attend all required Growing Readers events.

Additionally, each Certification Specialist serves eight Candidates in four schools (two Candidates per school). Each school has eight participating teachers.

During the first year of the Growing Readers State Certification Project, Growing Readers has expanded to an additional 40 schools, 240 teachers, and approximately 4,800 students beyond the original model. Because of the expanded model, Growing Readers had to hire additional employees to become RESA Specialists. Growing Readers specifically sought out teachers who had used Growing Readers strategies in their classrooms to become specialists. Although both the original Growing Readers model and the Growing Readers State Certification Project both integrate sustainable literacy practices into schools and teacher instruction, the Growing Readers State Certification Project builds capacity through the certification of State Certified Growing Readers Specialists because these Candidates are housed at the school or district level. Once certified, Candidates can utilize their new skills to increase literacy and sound teaching practices systematically throughout their districts. In this way, Certified Growing Reading Specialists can expand the use of Growing Readers practices beyond a single cohort of teachers.

Figure 1: Growing Readers State Certification Project Structure

Program Structure

One Certification Specialist

One School

Eight Specialist Candidates

Two Specialists per School

Four Schools

Eight Teachers per School*

*Two Teachers per Grade Level K–3
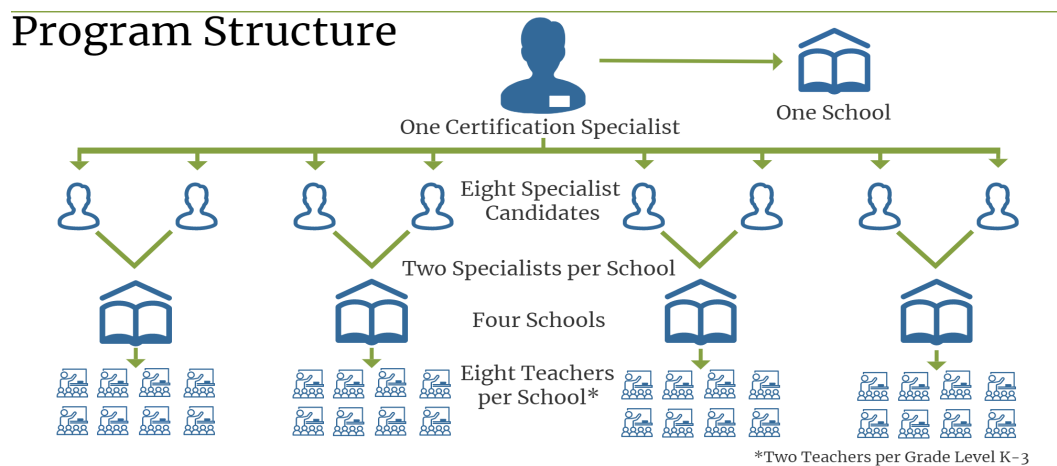
Profile of Participating Schools

Figure 2: Map of Participating Growing Readers Schools

During the 2019-2020 school year, Growing Readers served 90 schools throughout the state. Each RESA Specialist worked with three to five elementary schools in his/her region. RESA Reading Specialists reached out to schools with 2018 CCRPI Third Grade Lexile Indicator scores below the state average (50.65%).[6] Schools participating in the Sandra Dunagen Deal Promise Schools initiative or other potentially competing initiatives were excluded from consideration. If school administrators agreed to program implementation, the school was selected for participation. Reading Specialists continued to recruit schools until a minimum of three schools were selected for each RESA. After approval by GOSA, schools selected two teachers per grade level for kindergarten through third grade to participate in Growing Readers.[7] Figure above shows the geographic distribution of the 90 participating schools. A full table of participating schools, districts, and respective RESAs is available in Appendix A.

Reading Specialists used the 2018 CCRPI Third Grade Lexile Indicator to recruit schools.[8] The average 2018 Third Grade Lexile Indicator for Growing Readers schools was 29.10, which means, on average, only 29.10% of participating schools' full academic year (FAY) third grade

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[6] Primary schools that only served K-2 students were not included in this calculation.

[7] Some RESAs elected to serve an additional school if the identified participants did not total eight teachers, such as if they selected a primary school that does not serve 3rd grade.

[8] The 2018 CCRPI Third Grade Lexile Indicator was used for school recruitment because the 2019 data were not yet available.

students achieved a Lexile measure of 650 or above. (650 is considered the grade level target.)[9] On average, the Third Grade Lexile Indicator for selected schools was 21.55 percentage points lower than the state average of 50.65% in 2018. Even though Reading Specialists targeted lower performing schools during recruitment, since school selection was dependent on a school's willingness to participate, there is diversity among the participating schools in terms of reading performance. Preference was also given to districts which were engaged in Growing Readers during the previous cycle to continue building sustainability and capacity.

Reading Specialists only worked with select K-3 classrooms in participating schools in order to ensure a consistent level of support for all participating teachers. During the 2019-2020 school year, Growing Readers served approximately 12,000 students.

Table below shows the approximate racial/ethnic distribution of students in Growing Readers schools and the state. Overall, schools participating in Growing Readers had a racial/ethnic distribution of students that is somewhat aligned with the state's student population.

Table 1: Demographic Profile Comparison of Growing Readers Students and the State[10]

	Growing Readers Schools	All Schools in Georgia	Difference in Percentage Points
American Indian	<1%	<1%	0
Asian	<1%	4%	+3
Black	54%	37%	-17
Hispanic	12%	16%	+4
Multiracial	3%	4%	+1
White	30%	39%	+9

Source: GaDOE October 2019 FTE Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race & Gender and GOSA K-12 Public Schools Report Card.

Twelve percent of students in Growing Readers schools are Hispanic, which is four percentage points lower than the state's overall percentage (16%). Asian students comprise a smaller share of Growing Readers students (1%) than the state (4%). The representation of White students in Growing Readers (30%) is nine percentage points lower than that of Georgia (39%). Fifty-four percent of students in Growing Readers schools are lack, compared to 37% in all schools in Georgia. Given these differences, it is important to remember that the demographic profile in

Table is simply an overall summary of the racial/ethnic demographics for students in participating Growing Readers schools and does not capture school-level differences within the program.

Twelve percent of Growing Readers students are classified as students with disabilities (SWD), which is the same as the state's share of SWD students during the 2019-2020 school year.[11] Nine

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[9] To be counted as FAY, a student must be enrolled for at least two-thirds of the school year.

[11] State subgroup data were obtained through GOSA's Annual Report Card available here. GOSA used 2018-2019 data because 2019-2020 data are not yet available.

percent of Growing Readers students are English Learners, which is one percentage point lower than the 10% of all Georgia students classified as English Learners in 2019-2020.

Although Free/Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) status is commonly used as an indicator for poverty, this report does not provide FRL data because schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program do not collect student-level FRL data. For reporting purposes, these schools are coded as 100% FRL.[12] As an alternative measure of student poverty, GOSA studied the percentage of students who are "directly certified," which means students receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, or are identified as homeless, unaccompanied youth, or migrant. The average percentage of students who were directly certified in Growing Readers schools during 2019-2020 was 58%.

Evaluation Methodology

GOSA collected and analyzed developmental and summative information in four evaluation focus areas: implementation consistency, teacher practice, RESA cohesiveness and collaboration, and student outcomes. Table lists each evaluation focus area with its respective evaluation question(s) and instruments, but a detailed description of each instrument and its purpose is provided in this section. The remainder of the report will present major findings from the evaluation instruments. These instruments include quarterly status reports, professional learning session feedback forms, regional meeting feedback forms, end-of-year teacher, candidate, and administration surveys, and Collaboration Self-Assessment tools.

Table 2: Summary of GOSA's Growing Readers Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Focus Area	Evaluation Question(s)	Instruments
Implementation Consistency	Did RESA Reading Specialists present professional learning opportunities and research-based strategies that provide instructional support for struggling students? Were professional learning opportunities and supports consistent across RESAs? Was the grant program implemented with fidelity?	Quarterly Status Reports Professional Learning Session Feedback Forms Regional Meeting Feedback Forms
Implementation Consistency	Were Candidates appropriately supported and trained to effectively coach teachers?	Regional Meeting Artifacts Candidate End-of-Year Surveys

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[12] For more information on why FRL is not the most accurate measure of student poverty, please see GOSA's education update here.

Evaluation Focus Area	Evaluation Question(s)	Instruments
Teacher Practice	Are teachers learning and improving upon strategies to provide instructional reading support for struggling students?	Teacher and Administrator/Coach End-of-Year Surveys
RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration	Are the RESAs working cohesively to design and provide teacher support and professional learning opportunities? To what degree are the RESAs collaborating?	Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool
Student Outcomes	Are students benefiting from greater teacher preparation in providing reading interventions for struggling students?	No student assessment data is available for the 2019-2020 school year

Quarterly Status Reports

Reading Specialists and Candidates submit status reports to GOSA on a quarterly basis. In each status report, Reading Specialists or Candidates indicate whether grant milestones set by the GOSA program manager are on track or not, allowing GOSA to monitor how Growing Readers is implemented in each RESA and to identify any immediate needs. Reading Specialists and Candidates also record their cumulative contact hours with each school in the status reports.

Professional Learning Session Feedback Forms

Growing Readers consists of four total professional learning sessions administered over the course of two years. Participants attend Sessions 1 and 2 in year one and Sessions 3 and 4 in year two. GOSA's primary vision for Growing Readers is to ensure all regions in Georgia are receiving consistent, high-quality professional learning to improve K-3 literacy instruction. The Design Team develops the content and training materials for each professional learning session and trains all Reading Specialists on how to conduct the professional learning session. This ensures that training for participating teachers is consistent throughout all RESAs.

GOSA developed a common feedback form for all RESAs to use after each professional learning session. All RESAs delivered each session within a designated time frame. Session 1 occurred from late August through mid-September and Session 2 from late January to mid-February.[13] All sessions consisted of two eight-hour days and focused on the same five learning targets:

1. Establish a common understanding of the reading process and the Georgia Standards of Excellence for Reading;

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[13] The flexibility in professional learning scheduling allowed specialists to accommodate the availability of their teachers and Growing Readers participants.

2. Establish classroom structures that support effective reading instruction and student learning;
3. Engage in teacher-student conferences to assess readers, provide feedback, and set individual goals;
4. Understand and use effective reading assessment practices; and
5. Implement strategy groups based on student needs.

GOSA sent the feedback forms electronically to all participants after each professional learning session. The feedback forms were the same for each session to establish consistency. The surveys asked respondents for general information including their RESA, their instructional role, what grade they teach, and how many years they have been teaching. Reading Specialists welcomed school team members who were not official grant participants to attend the professional learning sessions, so participants at each session included teachers (full grant participation or professional learning only), instructional coaches, and administrators. In Session 1 and Session 2, approximately 6% of participants were professional learning only. GOSA staff analyze the data from session feedback, and trends and patterns are shared with the Design Team so that any necessary adjustments in training and support can be made.

Regional Meeting Session Feedback Forms

In 2019-2020, Growing Readers implemented regional meetings to support Candidates that are a part of the State Certification Project. There are four planned regional meetings which will be administered over the course of two years. Candidates attend Sessions 1 and 2 in year one and Sessions 3 and 4 in year two. The Design Team develops the content for each regional meeting session and then trains all Reading Specialists on how to conduct regional meeting sessions with Candidates. This ensures that training for participating Candidates is consistent throughout all RESAs and that teachers receive the same coaching across the state.

GOSA developed a common feedback form for all RESAs to use after each regional meeting. GOSA sent the feedback forms electronically to all Candidates after each regional meeting session. The feedback forms asked different questions for each regional meeting because each meeting focused on different strategies. The feedback forms asked respondents for general information including their RESA, their role, and how many years they have been working in education.

Participants evaluated the regional meeting sessions using a five-point Likert scale to determine how much they agree or disagree with the statements.[14] GOSA staff analyze the data from session feedback, and trends and patterns are shared with the Design Team so that any necessary adjustments in training and support can be made.

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[14] The response options were Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5).

Teacher End-of-Year Survey

GOSA created and administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers teacher participants to evaluate the impact of Growing Readers on teacher practice and collect feedback on the program. Teachers were asked to complete the survey electronically in April and May 2020. GOSA received 631 responses. The survey consisted of 17 questions, including general background questions, pre/post retrospective questions, open-ended questions, and perception questions rated on a five-point scale.[15] GOSA analyzed the answers to these questions to understand how teachers felt about Growing Readers and how confident they felt in implementing pieces from the professional development sessions. GOSA analyzed responses and identified themes from the open-ended questions to give recommendations to the design team for year two.

Administrator/Coach End-of-Year Survey

GOSA also administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers participants serving in an administrative or coaching role in a school or district to evaluate the impact of Growing Readers on teacher practice from a different perspective. Administrators and coaches were asked to complete the survey electronically in April and May 2020. GOSA received 132 responses from administrators and coaches. The survey consisted of 18 questions, including general background questions, pre/post retrospective questions, open-ended questions, and perception questions rated on a five-point scale.[16] The majority (58%) of respondents were principals, 31% were coaches, and 9% were assistant principals.[17] GOSA analyzed the answers to these questions to understand how administration felt about Growing Readers. GOSA identified themes from the open-ended questions to give recommendations to the design team for the next year.

Candidate End-of-Year Survey

GOSA administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers Candidates. Growing Readers Candidates were asked to complete the survey electronically in April and May 2020. GOSA received 94 responses from Candidates. The survey consisted of 19 questions, including general background questions, pre/post retrospective questions, open-ended questions, and perception questions rated on a five-point scale.[18] Sixty-nine percent of respondents were school-based staff members, and 28% of respondents were district level staff members. GOSA analyzed the answers to these questions to understand how Candidates felt about Growing Readers and how confident they felt coaching teachers. GOSA identified themes from the open-ended questions through the process of reduction in order to provide recommendations to the design team for the next year.

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[15] All response scales were designed so that a rating of 1 was the lowest and 5 was the highest.
[16] All response scales were designed so that a rating of 1 was the lowest and 5 was the highest.
[17] Other respondents included counselors and district-level coaches or administrators.
[18] All response scales were designed so that a rating of 1 was the lowest and 5 was the highest.

Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool

GOSA's Research and Evaluation team developed the Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool in order to collect data on the effectiveness of the collaboration among all RESAs as part of Growing Readers. The survey was administered in May 2020 to collect data at EOY. Due to consistency of Specialists' responses in the previous iterations of Growing Readers, the RESA Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool was altered to include open-ended questions and fewer scaled items.

Major Findings

Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, GOSA collected data on Growing Readers using the evaluation instruments in Table . This report includes findings and summative conclusions from quarterly status reports, professional learning session feedback forms, regional meeting feedback forms, end-of-year surveys, and the Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool. The findings that follow are organized according to the four evaluation focus areas listed in Table which are listed below.

- Implementation Consistency
- Teacher Practice
- RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration
- Student Outcomes

Evaluation Focus Area I: Implementation Consistency

To evaluate implementation consistency, GOSA collected quarterly status reports from each Reading Specialist that tracked each RESA's overall progress in program implementation. GOSA also analyzed data from the professional learning session and regional meeting feedback forms.

Quarterly Status Reports

Reading Specialists submit status reports to GOSA on a quarterly basis. An example of a quarterly status report can be found in Appendix D. Most RESAs have one Reading Specialist responsible for implementing Growing Readers, but some RESAs have more than one part- or full-time Reading Specialist. In total, there are 38 Reading Specialists, an increase from 25 during the previous iteration. Reading Specialists vary in the amount of time he/she can dedicate to the program; several Reading Specialists split their time between Growing Readers and other RESA work. Additionally, Reading Specialists vary in the number of schools and teachers they support. Nevertheless, in general, each RESA works with five schools and serves a minimum of 24 teachers—two teachers from each grade level (K-3) per school. Although some state-funded Reading Specialists do have additional RESA responsibilities, all participating teachers in Growing Readers receive the same amount of on-site support and coaching from their Reading Specialist.

Reading Specialists provided school administrators with suggested criteria for teacher selection that included qualities such as openness to new methods, willingness to collaborate, and commitment to fully participate in Growing Readers and meet all expectations.

During the 2019-2020 school year, RESA Reading Specialists spent roughly 6,000 hours in participating schools. Reading Specialists provided on average 72 hours of on-site support to each school in addition to frequent online support and communication and the off-site professional learning sessions. The majority of the on-site support involved conducting observations; assisting with reading assessment administration; and coaching teachers, coaches, and administrators. RESA Specialists with assigned Candidates worked directly with the Candidates to support their schools, and modeled coaching practices to these Candidates.

Some Reading Specialists also serve on the Growing Readers Design Team in addition to their duties as a Reading Specialist. The Design Team is a group of six highly qualified Reading Specialists who collaborate to develop the professional learning content and materials for Growing Readers. The Design Team members represent several RESAs across the state: First District, Metro, Middle Georgia, Pioneer, and West Georgia. Design Team members meet approximately once per month to develop professional learning content and resources, produce universal coaching materials, and make executive decisions regarding programmatic questions. A chart explaining the different artifacts and agendas for Growing Readers professional learning and regional meeting sessions can be found in Appendix E. The Design Team is critical to ensuring the Reading Specialists are aligned in their practice.

Regardless of any differences in capacity among RESAs, the status reports indicate that all RESAs are meeting all program implementation milestones. The conclusions that follow were made based on the analysis of data from quarterly status reports. Each RESA delivered both professional learning sessions and regional meetings (if RESAs had Candidates) during the specified time frames. Professional learning sessions are for participating Growing Readers teachers, while the regional meetings are for the Candidates who are working with the RESA specialists in order to become a more effective literacy coach. Even though the professional learning sessions and regional meetings were administered separately by RESA, the training content—which is developed by the Design Team—was consistent throughout each RESA. Reading Specialists and/or Candidates submitted baseline and midyear data for teachers using a common Teacher Observation Tool. Additionally, all RESAs had a Reading Specialist present at every programwide planning meeting. The meetings ensure that the research-based strategies and coaching support provided by the Reading Specialists are consistent across all RESAs.

Professional Learning Session Feedback Forms

Participants attend two Professional Learning Sessions in year 1. Participants evaluated the professional learning sessions using a five-point Likert scale to determine how much they agree or disagree with seven statements.[19]

Table shows the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the survey statements for each professional learning session. In general, responses to all statements from both sessions were very positive. Over 89% of participants in all sessions agreed with the survey statements. Participants overwhelmingly felt they learned useful strategies in each session and that the sessions were well planned and engaging.

Table 3: Professional Learning Session Feedback Form Results

Survey Statements	Session 1 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)	Session 2 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)
I learned useful literacy intervention strategies that I can apply in the classroom.	93%	95%
I feel more confident in supporting my Tier 2 and Tier 3 students instructionally.	89%	94%
I feel prepared to implement the strategies I learned today in the classroom.	89%	94%
The Professional Learning Session was well organized.	95%	94%
The Professional Learning Session was presented at an appropriate level.	94%	95%
The Professional Learning Session was engaging.	94%	95%

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[19] The response options were Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5).

Survey Statements	Session 1 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)	Session 2 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)
The strategies and resources utilized were appropriate for meeting the stated objectives of the Professional Learning Session.	95%	95%

The consistently positive response after each professional learning session demonstrates that Reading Specialists are delivering easily digestible professional learning to teachers across all RESAs. Reading Specialists have been successful in meeting the established learning targets of training teachers on effective reading instruction, conferencing with students, administering assessments, and implementing targeted interventions, based on teachers' ratings of their understanding and preparation.

Respondents were also given the option to comment on what they liked and disliked about the training and how they planned to implement their learning. When asked what participants liked about the session, participants mentioned the following after both sessions:
- Opportunities for collaboration and networking within and between schools;
- Relevant and engaging content that could be implemented immediately in the classroom;
- Useful reading instruction strategies and resources, including conferencing with students and targeted interventions that can immediately be applied in the classroom; and
- Modeling and hands-on practice with new strategies.

"This professional learning session was great. I really learned a lot from the in-depth training to understand the reading hierarchy. I learned how to set more appropriate goals and strategies for my learners."

Furthermore, when given the opportunity to provide any additional comments, of those who responded, almost all expressed praise for the Reading Specialists, excitement to be a part of Growing Readers, or a desire for the program to continue.

When asked what participants would like to improve about the sessions, most respondents stated they have no suggestions for improvement for either session. Of those who did list improvements, the most common suggestions were related to the logistics and timing of the sessions, such as condensing them into one day and having them earlier and more frequently in the year. Participants also recommended allowing more opportunities for collaboration within the Growing Readers network, such as collaborative discussions during sessions or observing teachers at other schools.

Finally, when participants were asked about their next steps after each session, the majority stated they would begin implementing the strategies learned immediately; prevalent answers included conferencing with students and using targeted intervention strategies with struggling students, both of which are directly linked to the learning targets for sessions 1 and 2. Several teachers also expressed a desire to share what they learned with other teachers. Thus, Growing Readers was also effective in meeting established learning targets and inspiring teachers to change their reading instructional practice. Overall, the professional

"The information presented during the session will help me to better support to my struggling readers."

learning session feedback forms reveal that throughout the program, Reading Specialists delivered professional learning that was perceived as valuable by participants to help teachers support struggling readers.

Regional Meeting Session Feedback Forms

Growing Readers implemented regional meetings to support the Candidates that are a part of the State Certification Project to ensure their ability to support teachers. Table 4 shows the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the survey statements for each regional meeting session. Some of the questions were specific to each session and were only asked once, while some questions were general and remained the same over both sessions. In general, responses to all statements from both sessions were very positive. Over 89% of participants in all sessions agreed or strongly agreed with the survey statements. Participants overwhelmingly felt they learned useful strategies in each session and that the sessions were well planned and engaging.

Table 4: Regional Meeting Feedback Form Results

Survey Statements	Session 1 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)	Session 2 (Percent Agree or Strongly Agree)
I feel confident using indicators to guide classroom support.	89%	n/a
I feel confident supporting teachers with matching students to "just-right" texts.	90%	n/a
I feel confident using the rubric to score a teacher-student conference in the observation tool.	n/a	92%
I feel confident working toward my personal learning goal.	n/a	98%
I feel confident doing a freeze frame for teachers.	n/a	90%
The Regional Meeting Session was well organized.	90%	100%
The Regional Meeting Session was presented at an appropriate level.	91%	100%
The Regional Meeting Session was engaging.	91%	95%

The consistently positive response after each regional meeting session demonstrates that Reading Specialists are delivering easily digestible professional learning to Candidates across all RESAs. These Candidates feel confident in re-delivering this information to their teachers.

Respondents were also given the option to comment on what they liked and disliked about the training and how they planned to implement their learning. When asked what participants liked about the session, participants mentioned the following after both sessions:

- Opportunities for collaboration and networking with Candidates across districts;

- Relevant and engaging coaching methods that could be implemented immediately in working with their teachers;
- Modeling and hands-on practice with new coaching strategies; and
- The welcoming atmosphere that RESA specialists created. Candidates felt that specialists were knowledgeable and extremely supportive.

"The organization, pacing, and hands-on activities made the regional session engaging, informative, and fun! I love how expectations and criteria are clearly defined and explained allowing for implementation with fidelity."

Furthermore, when given the opportunity to provide any additional comments, of those who responded, almost all expressed praise for the Reading Specialists, excitement to be a part of Growing Readers, or a desire for the program to continue.

When asked what participants would like to improve about the sessions, most respondents stated they have no suggestions for improvement for either session. Of those who did list improvements, the most common suggestions were related to the logistics and timing of the sessions. Some Candidates expressed concern regarding time management between their full-time position and being a Candidate. Given that responses to the improvement question were positive overall, Growing Readers is meeting its goal to offer high-quality professional learning to Candidates on coaching teachers across all RESAs.[20]

Finally, when Candidates were asked about their next steps after each session, the majority stated they would begin implementing the strategies learned in that particular session; prevalent answers included meeting with teachers and creating action plans, working with RESA Specialists to observe their reading blocks and modeling Growing Readers strategies. Overall, the regional meeting session feedback forms reveal that throughout the program, Reading Specialists delivered engaging and valuable professional learning to help Candidates support Growing Readers teachers.

"Setting up the coaching experience allowed me to better understand how to plan for coaching conversations."

Implementation Consistency Recommendations

The major findings from the quarterly status reports, Professional Learning Session Feedback Forms, and the Regional Meeting Session Feedback Forms indicate that Reading Specialists are implementing Growing Readers consistently across all RESAs to teachers, administrators, and Candidates. All participants are receiving the same professional learning on how to support struggling readers, and survey results indicate that an overwhelming majority of participants agree that they are learning useful strategies to implement.

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[20] GOSA conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test of the survey responses by RESA and found that there were no statistically significant differences between the responses from each RESA for each survey statement. As such, GOSA chose to discuss survey findings for Growing Readers as a whole, rather than by RESA.

Based on findings and feedback from the status reports and Professional Learning/Regional Meeting Session Feedback Forms, the evaluation team recommends the following actions moving forward.

- Maintain the accessibility of Reading Specialists to participants to preserve relationship-building.
- Facilitate improved communication between RESAs and Growing Readers teachers in order to maximize the impact of Growing Readers professional learning and avoid scheduling conflicts.
- Preserve the current model for developing professional learning content to maintain consistency across RESAs.
- Continue to offer professional learning sessions to non-grant participants to further build capacity in schools.
- Communicate among RESAs to learn about and share successful or innovative strategies for encouraging collaboration across schools and districts.
- Encourage participants from other districts to collaborate and work together.
- Continue to offer Regional Meetings to Candidates to support their coaching skills.
- Clearly communicate the duties and expectations for Candidates to participating school districts so that they can appropriately choose staff members for this role.

Evaluation Focus Area II: Teacher Practice

GOSA collected qualitative and quantitative data using various instruments to evaluate teacher practice. GOSA worked with the RESA Reading Specialists to develop a common Teacher Observation Tool that was used consistently to track changes in instruction for teachers throughout the school year. Due to COVID-19, Reading Specialists were only able to complete formal observations at the beginning and middle of the school year. Additionally, GOSA administered an EOY survey to teachers, administrators, and Candidates to collect qualitative data on the impact of Growing Readers on teacher practice.

Teacher Observation Tool

The Teacher Observation Tool is a comprehensive observation instrument that allows Reading Specialists to document teacher practices according to four professional learning targets identified by Growing Readers. Reading Specialists submitted observation data for teachers during the 2019-2020 school year in the BOY and MOY to demonstrate changes in teacher practice over time. The BOY observation is used as a baseline. Due to COVID-19, RESA specialists were unable to complete EOY observations, therefore the complete Teacher Observation Tool data will not be reported as MOY data is not sufficient to show significant changes from the baseline. GOSA was able to analyze and compare the 2017-2018 MOY data to the 2019-2020 MOY data to see if teachers were on track to meet target by the middle of the year.

The Teacher Observation Tool is not meant to be evaluative and is not used as part of a teacher's formal evaluation. Instead, the purpose of the tool is to allow Reading Specialists to document teacher and student behaviors, identify any strengths and areas for improvement, and determine

what coaching support is needed. The four learning targets, which also align with the professional learning session targets, are:

- **Target 1: Framework** – Establish classroom structures that support effective reading instruction and student learning.
- **Target 2: Conferring** – Engage in teacher-student conferences to assess readers, provide feedback, and set individual goals.
- **Target 3: Assessment** – Use informal and formal assessment data to make instructional decisions.
- **Target 4: Interventions** – Implement targeted reading strategies based on relevant data to address one or more of the five essential components of reading.[21]

The targets capture critical teacher practices that must be present to provide quality literacy instruction for all students, especially struggling readers, as identified by the Reading Specialists. For each target, the Reading Specialists record evidence of successful implementation of various strategies associated with each learning target. Growing Readers goal for year one is for at least 75% of teachers to effectively implement conferring. A copy of the complete Teacher Observation Tool is available in Appendix B.

GOSA compared the first school year (2017-2018) from the 2017-2019 iteration to the first school year (2019-2020) of the current 2019-2021 iteration to compare how both sets of teachers were conducting conferences with students and using assessment strategies during their first year of participating in Growing Readers. Without EOY data, GOSA could only analyze MOY data from both years to assess if teachers were on track to meet their EOY goals. Table 5 shows the percentage of teachers meeting specified indicators for each learning target during MOY observations for 2017-2018 and 2019-2020. During year 1 of implementation, RESA specialists specifically focus on conferring with students. In 2017-2018, teachers exceeded this goal by 99% of teachers successful conferring with students by MOY. In 2019-2020, teachers also exceeded this goal and had 98% of teachers conferring with students by MOY, which shows that teachers were on track to meet the goal of 75% of teachers conferring with students by the EOY. For the assessment target, reading specialists could mark several different strategies; GOSA calculated the percentage of teachers implementing at least one of the identified strategies.

Table 5: Percentage of Year One Teachers Observed Implementing Indicators

Learning Target	Indicator Measured	MOY 2017-2018	MOY 2019-2020
Conferring	Conferring with students	99%	98%
Assessment	Use of assessment strategies	99%	80%
	Use of assessment data to guide instruction	95%	85%

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[21] The five essential components of reading include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Teachers were on track in the 2019-2020 school year to meet their year 1 goal regarding conferencing. During the second year of implementation, teachers will focus on strategy groups. RESA specialists will continue to observe teachers using the Observation Tool during the 2020-2021 school year, either completing observations face-to-face or virtually, depending on the school district.

Teacher End-of-Year Survey

GOSA administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers teacher participants to evaluate the impact of Growing Readers on teacher practice and collect feedback on the program. Table below summarizes the responses to the perception questions as well as "yes" or "no" questions from the survey. The results are split into teachers who had Candidates in their schools, and teachers who did not have Candidates in their schools to evaluate whether there was a major difference between having a Candidate or not. All teachers did have a RESA specialist in their schools, and that specialist either worked directly with the teachers or directly with the Candidates to support those teachers. The overall results are positive, regardless of whether teachers had a candidate, which shows that RESA specialists are providing high-quality professional learning to both teachers and Candidates. Over 95% of respondents felt supported by the Reading Specialist, applied what they learned from Growing Readers in the classroom, would recommend the program to a colleague, and were likely to continue using Growing Readers strategies in the future. Of the different professional learning supports provided, respondents felt that materials and/or resources provided by the specialist and the professional learning sessions were more valuable than other supports like classroom observations. Respondents also appreciated the on-site support in tandem with the professional learning that ensured follow-up and implementation of strategies.

Table 6: End-of-Year Teacher Survey Attitude Question Results

Survey Question		Percentage of:	Teachers with Candidates	Teachers without Candidates
How valuable have the following Growing Readers supports been to your teaching practice?	Professional learning sessions led by the RESA Reading Specialist/Candidate	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	93%	94%
	Materials and/or resources provided by the RESA Reading Specialist/Candidate	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	96%	87%
	Observations of your classroom by the RESA Reading Specialist/Candidate	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	89%	92%
	One-on-one coaching with the RESA Reading Specialist/Candidate	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	91%	94%
How often have you been able to do the following?	Reflect on your reading instructional practice	Percent Often or Always	91%	88%
	Communicate with other teachers about reading instruction	Percent Often or Always	88%	85%
How supported do you feel by the RESA Reading Specialist and/or candidate?		Percent Very or Extremely Supported	97%	97%
How valuable is your participation in Growing Readers to improving your instructional practice?		Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	93%	94%
How often do you apply what you learn from the Reading Specialist in your classroom?		Percent Often or Always	96%	95%
What is the likelihood that you will continue using the strategies you learned from Growing Readers in the future?		Percent Very or Extremely Likely	95%	97%
Would you recommend Growing Readers to a colleague?		Percent Yes	98%	99%

When asked to rate their interactions with the Reading Specialist during the year, teachers indicated a high level of satisfaction. Ninety-eight percent of all respondents felt their Specialist was prepared for professional development, easily accessible, trustworthy, and provided constructive feedback. Almost all respondents agreed that the classroom support provided by the Specialists met their expectations. Specialists were thus successful in establishing strong relationships with teachers.

The EOY survey also included a pre/post retrospective question that analyzed any changes in teacher practice because of participating in Growing Readers. Respondents were asked to rate their level of knowledge of specific learning targets before Growing Readers and at the time of the survey. Table shows that teachers felt their knowledge of reading instructional strategies had significantly increased from the beginning of the program to the time of the survey. Teachers gained the most knowledge in conducting conferences with students, as the percent proficient in

these areas increased by 70 percentage points. The significant growth in all areas reflects the emphasis on conferring, intervention strategies, and strategy groups during professional learning sessions. Growing Readers was successful in equipping teachers with the knowledge to support struggling readers in the classroom.

Table 7: Pre/Post Retrospective Teacher Practice Question Results

Learning Target	Percent Proficient or Above	
	Beginning of Program	Now
Conducting teacher-student conferences with students	20%	90%
Administering reading assessments to monitor student progress	35%	92%
Using assessment data to create goals for students	24%	87%
Selecting strategies to support struggling students	24%	88%
Implementing independent reading	35%	96%
Creating leveled classroom libraries	37%	94%

Teachers also provided feedback through open-ended response questions. When asked how Growing Readers has benefited them, the most frequent responses included increased confidence as a reading teacher, better ability to assess and address individual student needs, new instructional strategies like conferencing, and hands-on resources such as the book of reading strategies.[22] When asked what challenges they have faced from participating in Growing Readers, most teachers listed finding time in the classroom to conference with students. Teachers also mentioned implementing the new strategies learned correctly and having enough leveled books for students as challenges.

"I have benefited from Growing Readers not only by being able to supply my students with books that they can read on their levels, but also being able to properly assess my students to see what strategies to put in place in order to help them improve their reading skills."

When asked what they would improve about Growing Readers, many teachers had no improvements. Of those who did list improvements, frequent recommendations included:

- Including more teachers and administrators in the program,
- Additional classroom modeling,
- Creating opportunities to collaborate with and potentially observe other Growing Readers teachers, and
- Providing more examples of effective conferring during sessions or through videos.

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[22] All Growing Readers teachers received a copy of Jennifer Serravallo's, *The Reading Strategies Book* as part of their professional learning.

Overall, the EOY teacher survey findings reveal that participating teachers felt they have learned valuable and applicable reading instructional strategies to support struggling readers. Growing Readers has had a noticeable impact on teacher practice during the 2019-2020 school year.

Administrator/Coach End-of-Year Survey

GOSA also administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers participants serving in an administrative or coaching role in a school or district to evaluate the impact of Growing Readers on teacher practice from a different perspective.

The survey asked respondents to indicate how often they participated in various Growing Readers activities during the school year. Seventy-two percent of respondents often or always attended the professional learning sessions, and 52% of respondents often or always had discussions about reading performance with the Reading Specialist. Respondents were not as involved (28%) in classroom observations with the Reading Specialist, but some noted that they would debrief with the Reading Specialist if they were unable to observe with them. Overall, participating administrators and coaches seem to have actively engaged with the Reading Specialists.

Table below summarizes the responses to the perception questions as well as "yes" or "no" questions from the survey. Similar to the teacher survey, the responses from administrators and coaches are also largely positive. All respondents felt the quality of K-3 literacy instruction in their school has improved as a result of Growing Readers. Over 97% of respondents felt supported by the Reading Specialist. One hundred percent of respondents planned to continue the use of Growing Readers strategies and would recommend Growing Readers to another school. Over 97% of respondents felt the professional learning sessions, materials and resources, and feedback from Reading Specialist were valuable supports.

Table 8: End-of-Year Administrator/Coach Survey Attitude Question Results

Survey Question		Percentage of Respondents	
How valuable have the following Growing Readers supports been to your teachers?	Professional learning sessions led by the RESA Reading Specialist/Candidate	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	95%
	Materials and/or resources provided by the RESA Reading Specialist	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	98%
	Feedback on reading instruction from the RESA Reading Specialist	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	93%
How informed do you feel by the Reading Specialist?		Percent Very or Extremely Supported	96%
How has the quality of K-3 reading instruction in your school changed as a result of participating in Growing Readers?		Slightly or Much Improved	99%
How valuable is your school's participation in Growing Readers in meeting your school's literacy goals?		Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	97%
What is the likelihood that you will continue to encourage the use of strategies learned from Growing Readers in the future?		Percent Very or Extremely Likely	98%
Would you recommend Growing Readers to another school?		Percent Yes	98%
Would you be willing to pay your RESA to continue providing Growing Readers?		Percent Yes	71%

Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay their RESA to continue providing Growing Readers because they felt it is a worthwhile program.[23] Some respondents felt Growing Readers should be implemented statewide and incorporate grades past K-3.

Similar to the teacher survey, when asked to rate their interactions with the Reading Specialist during the year, administrators and coaches responded positively. All respondents felt the Specialist was prepared for professional development, provided adequate on-site support, was on time and was knowledgeable about reading. Ninety-six percent of respondents knew when the Specialist was going to be in their school, 96% felt like they could trust their specialist, and 95% said the specialist provided them with aggregate feedback on the reading performance of participating classrooms. Overall, perception data suggest that Reading Specialists developed very strong relationships with administrators and coaches.

Table shows that administrators and coaches saw significant increases in teachers implementing Growing Readers learning targets as a result of Growing Readers. At the time of the survey, over 83% of respondents observed teachers conferencing with struggling readers to assess progress; providing feedback and setting goals using formal and informal reading assessment data to make instructional decisions; and using a combination of whole group instruction, small group instruction, and independent practice during literacy blocks. Respondents observed the greatest growth (64 percentage points) in teachers implementing independent reading during their reading blocks. There was also a significant increase in the percentage of teachers conferencing with struggling readers and sharing reading instructional strategies with each other. Thus, in

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[23] Some respondents indicated no because they do not have control over financial decisions.

alignment with the teacher EOY survey, administrators and coaches also observed changes in teacher practice because of Growing Readers.

Table 9: Pre/Post Retrospective Teacher Practice Question Results: Administrator/Coach Survey

Learning Target	Percent Proficient and Above	
	Before Growing Readers	Now
Teachers conducting teacher-student conferences	20%	83%
Teachers assessing readers	34%	90%
Teachers implementing independent reading	29%	93%
Teachers creating leveled classroom libraries	30%	89%

"Our teachers are able to conference one on one with students in a strategic manner. It has helped build reading confidence in our students, and it has also helped build teacher-student relationships."

Finally, administrators and coaches provided additional feedback in open-ended responses. When asked how Growing Readers has benefited their schools, respondents highlighted the new strategies to support struggling readers and the increased knowledge among teachers, administrators, and coaches on the reading process. Some respondents also stated that they are sharing their learning with the rest of the staff or other schools in the district. When asked what challenges they have faced from participating in Growing Readers, administrators and coaches also cited taking time to attend the professional learning sessions and finding time in classroom schedules to implement strategies. Multiple respondents also expressed a desire to include more teachers in Growing Readers. When asked what they would improve about Growing Readers, the following recommendations were provided:

- Increase the number of participating teachers and/or train the entire school to reach higher grade levels,
- Condense professional learning days and offer them earlier in the school year, and
- Set clear expectations for administrators, coaches, and districts about the program model at the beginning of the year.

Overall, the findings from the administrator/coach EOY survey align with the findings from the teacher survey. Administrators and coaches felt Growing Readers has been valuable to improving reading instruction in their schools and have noticed changes in teacher practice because of the program.

Candidate End-of-Year Survey

GOSA administered an EOY survey to all Growing Readers Candidates. Table 9 below summarizes the responses to the perception questions as well as yes or no questions from the survey. Like the teacher and administrator surveys, answers were largely positive. Over 99% of respondents felt supported by their assigned Reading Specialist. One hundred percent of respondents planned to continue the use of Growing Readers strategies and would recommend Growing Readers to another school. Over 97% of respondents felt the professional learning sessions, materials and resources, and feedback from Reading Specialist were valuable supports.

Table 10: End-of-Year Candidate Survey Perception Question Results

Survey Question		Percentage of Respondents	
How valuable have the following Growing Readers supports been to coaching practice?	On-site support from your RESA specialist	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	99%
	Regional Meetings	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	94%
	Teacher professional learning sessions	Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	99%
How supported do you feel by the RESA Reading Specialist?		Percent Very or Extremely Supported	99%
How valuable is your participating in Growing Readers to your coaching practice?		Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	99%
How valuable is your participation in Growing Readers in enhancing your knowledge, skills, and confidence with teaching reading?		Percent Very or Extremely Valuable	97%
How often do you apply what you learn from Growing Readers in your practice?		Percent Often or Always	97%
Would you recommend Growing Readers to a colleague?		Percent Yes	100%
As a result of participating in Growing Readers, please indicate how often you have been able to do the following:	Coach teachers in classrooms	Percent Often or Always	73%
	Reflect on your coaching practice	Percent Often or Always	83%
	Strengthen your understanding of the reading process	Percent Often or Always	93%

Like the teacher and administrator survey, when asked to rate their interactions with the Reading Specialist during the year, Candidates provided positive responses. All respondents felt the specialist was prepared for professional development sessions, provided coaching that met expectations, and was available when Candidates needed coaching or on-site support. Ninety-nine percent of Candidates indicated a feeling of trust in their specialist. Overall, the data suggest that Reading Specialists developed very strong relationships with Candidates.

Table 10 shows that Candidates had significant increases in understanding identified learning targets as a result of participation in Growing Readers. At the time of the survey, over 99% of respondents observed teachers conferencing with struggling readers. Respondents observed the greatest growth (55 percentage points) in observing teacher-student conferences. There was also a significant increase in the percentage of Candidates observing teachers setting goals with struggling readers after the assessments had taken place. Thus, in alignment with the teacher EOY survey, Candidates also observed changes in teacher practice because of Growing Readers.

Table 11: Pre/Post Retrospective Candidate Question Results

Learning Target	Percent Proficient and Above	
	Before Growing Readers	Now
Observing independent reading	66%	100%
Helping to create leveled classroom libraries	66%	98%
Observing teacher-student conferences	44%	99%
Observing teachers setting goals with readers	46%	95%
Observing teachers selecting strategies for readers	51%	99%

"I was able to develop trusting relationships with the Growing Readers teachers. We were able to collaborate to discuss ideas, strategies, as well as constructive criticism to become better at what we do as a team."

Finally, Candidates provided additional feedback in open-ended responses. When asked how Growing Readers has benefited their coaching, respondents highlighted the new strategies to support teachers in helping struggling readers and the increased knowledge among teachers, administrators, and coaches on the reading process. Candidates stated that the Growing Readers professional development has helped them with their coaching practice. When asked what challenges they have faced from participating in Growing Readers, Candidates cited taking time to attend the professional learning sessions and finding time in classroom schedules to implement strategies. Many Candidates are already full-time school or district staff members, so adding this responsibility to their schedule seemed challenging for some. Finally, when asked what they would improve about Growing Readers, some limited recommendations were provided. Responses are listed below:

- Increase the number of participating teachers and grade levels;
- Offer more professional learning sessions and on-site support throughout the school year; and
- Set clear expectations about the program model at the beginning of the year.

Overall, the findings from the candidate EOY surveys align with the findings from the teacher and administrator survey. Candidates felt Growing Readers has been valuable to improving reading instruction in their schools and districts and have noticed changes in teacher practice because of program participation.

"Implementing coaching rounds at my school was a game changer. Everyone became more focused and it was a great way for me to ensure that Candidates were meeting with teachers between visits and doing intentional coaching based on the things we modeled."

Teacher Practice Recommendations

The findings from the EOY surveys all support the conclusion that Growing Readers has positively impacted teacher practice during the 2019-2020 school year by introducing instructional reading strategies for teachers to support struggling readers. Based on the findings and feedback from the EOY surveys, GOSA recommends the following:

- Facilitate increased communication with teachers, such as through personal phone numbers, to utilize the specialist's time most effectively and ensure that teachers are anticipating or are available for observations on a given day.
- Continue to focus on conferencing and implementing strategy groups to keep percentages high.
- Continue to work with Candidates to ensure they are providing high-quality coaching to teachers.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders at the beginning of the year and revisit periodically during implementation.

Evaluation Focus Area III: RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration

GOSA's Research and Evaluation team developed the Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool for Growing Readers to collect data on the effectiveness of the collaboration among all RESAs as part of this program.

Overall, Reading Specialists agreed that inter-RESA collaboration is strong and provides consistent professional learning for teachers and Candidates across the state. All specialists rated Growing Readers as being good or excellent in comparison to other professional learning they have experienced. All respondents also felt Growing Readers has enabled consistent professional learning for teachers across the state. The high percentage of agreement among specialists indicates cohesiveness among the specialists and a strong, collaborative partnership.

The open-ended responses regarding the Growing Readers partnership were universally positive. All Reading Specialists recognized the growth they have observed in teachers and schools as a result of Growing Readers. Specialists are aware of implementation expectations and operate under the guidance of their shared foundational belief. Specialists also enjoyed the coaching professional development they received from Kate Bishop over the course of the year. When asked what could have been done differently to see more results, specialists agreed that there

needed to be more calibration for teachers and Candidates, additional classroom modeling, and potentially working with students beyond third grade.

The overall agreement among all Reading Specialists on the effectiveness and successes of Growing Readers suggests cohesiveness throughout the program. Although Growing Readers can always continue to improve certain aspects of the partnership, these results show that an initiative like Growing Readers, which aims to enhance collaboration among all RESAs and provide standardized professional learning for educators in Georgia, is both feasible and beneficial to RESAs and the schools, teachers, and students they serve.

RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration Recommendations

The Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool results demonstrate strong alignment and collaboration between RESAs for Growing Readers. Given the positive feedback, GOSA recommends the following:

- Continue to use the current collaborative model moving forward, especially the leadership of the Design Team and the program wide meetings with all Specialists, to establish and maintain consistency.
- Provide more calibration activities for teachers and Candidates regarding student assessment for more consistency statewide.
- Continue to utilize reflection and evaluation to improve program components while maintaining consistency.
- Promote Growing Readers collaboration within each RESA as an exemplar of how RESAs can collaborate more in the future to address other professional learning initiatives.
- Develop a handbook or best practices guide on how to successfully collaborate among RESA to deliver effective professional learning.
- Continue working with Candidates on best coaching practices

Evaluation Focus Area IV: Student Outcomes

To analyze student outcomes, GOSA evaluates independent reading levels for students in all participating teachers' classes. To align with the emphasis on conferring and independent reading in Growing Readers and to establish a consistent measurement system by which to assess student achievement, schools are required to choose one of four leveled reading systems to assess reading and track student growth:

- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA);
- Fountas and Pinnell;
- Reading A-Z; or
- Rigby PM Benchmark Collection.

Using a leveled reader system, teachers determine a student's independent reading level during an individual conference by assessing the student's fluency, accuracy, and comprehension.[24] Growing Readers specialists use students' independent reading levels at the BOY, MOY, and EOY to track student growth. Due to the flexibility in the selection of reading materials, there was some diversity in the types of reading assessments Growing Readers schools used.

There are two challenges with using leveled reader systems to assess students. First, leveled reader system scales are not directly comparable. Some use letter scales, while others use numeric scales. In addition, the systems do not use equal interval scales. Thus, within a single system, progressing from a level A to level C is not the same as progressing from level F to level H, for example. Similarly, progressing from level 1 to 2 in one system is not the same as progressing from level A to B in another. As a result, GOSA cannot compare reading levels across grade levels or leveling systems. The second challenge is that teachers determine a student's independent reading level during an individual conference by evaluating the student's fluency, accuracy, and comprehension while reading. Given the subjective nature of the process, variability in teachers' abilities to determine a student's independent reading level accurately and consistently may impact the data.

To address these challenges, after extensively researching each leveling system, Growing Readers identified its own independent reading level grade level benchmarks for each leveling system (included in Appendix C). Growing Readers then used available research-based resources and their knowledge of each leveling system to correlate the reading levels of each system with one another. Specifically, the design team used Fountas & Pinnell's growth models and aligned this one to each leveling system so that students can be compared across leveling systems. Growing Readers agreed to use the program-defined grade level benchmarks to assess overall student progress in reading performance. GOSA used Growing Readers benchmarks to evaluate the percentage of all students meeting program benchmarks at the MOY and EOY. Growing Readers analyzes student growth data by looking at students independent reading levels, which is defined as a student reading a text at 96% accuracy.

Due to COVID-19, teachers were unable to assess students for their EOY benchmarks, therefore student assessment data could not be analyzed for the 2019-2020 school year. Although data were collected at BOY and MOY, without EOY data, evaluation of student learning goals is not possible. This analysis will resume for the 2020-2021 evaluation.

Conclusion

The 2019-2020 Growing Readers End-of-Year Evaluation Report is a comprehensive analysis of Growing Readers' activities during the 2019-2020 school year. This report includes major findings for the four evaluation focus areas: implementation consistency, teacher practice, and RESA cohesiveness and collaboration, and student outcomes. Although this report discusses each evaluation area, due to COVID-19 some EOY data could not be collected and analyzed.

Implementation Consistency

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[24] A student's independent reading level is a text level that the student can read successfully without any assistance.

Data collected from quarterly status reports submitted by the Reading Specialists reveal that all RESAs completed program implementation milestones. The professional learning sessions, regional meetings, observations, and submission of assessment data were administered consistently, and all schools received similar services across all RESAs. The professional learning sessions and regional meeting sessions received consistently positive feedback overall. The majority of participants agreed that the sessions taught useful strategies, were engaging and organized, and prepared teachers and Candidates to support struggling students. These findings provide evidence that each RESA is implementing all components of the grant, and Growing Readers has successfully delivered engaging and valuable professional learning to teachers across the state during the 2019-2020 school year.

Teacher Practice

Data from the teacher, administrator, and candidate EOY surveys provide insight on how Growing Readers has impacted teacher practice. EOY survey data reveal that over 99% of teachers, administrators, and coaches felt Growing Readers was valuable to improving reading instruction and were likely to continue using Growing Readers practices in the future. All stakeholders felt more proficient in and have seen increased use of conferencing and targeted interventions. These data demonstrate that teachers have begun to implement new strategies and change their practices after participating in Growing Readers.

RESA Cohesiveness and Collaboration

The Collaboration Self-Assessment Tool evaluates how cohesive, successful, and meaningful the RESA collaboration has been to Reading Specialists. All specialists felt the partnership has enabled the delivery of consistent professional learning across the state, allowed for collaboration among RESAs, and is likely to positively impact K-3 literacy instruction. All specialists agreed that the addition of Candidates was positive and that they are adding scalability to the Growing Readers model. They largely attributed Growing Readers cohesiveness to the work of the Design Team, the evidence-based practices, and their shared program focus.

Student Outcomes

Student outcome data could not be analyzed for the 2019-2020 school year due to EOY assessments being canceled because of COVID-19. Assessments will resume based on metrics provided in Appendix C in the fall of 2020 and year two benchmarks will be evaluated in the 2020-2021 evaluation cycle.

Summary

Overall, the major findings for implementation consistency and RESA cohesiveness and collaboration indicate that RESAs are collaborating and delivering consistent and high-quality K-3 literacy professional learning to teachers and Candidates through Growing Readers. The teacher practice findings reveal that teachers are changing their instructional practice and implementing new strategies learned from Growing Readers in their classroom. Candidates are learning new coaching skills as well. GOSA will continue to look at implementation consistency, teacher practice, RESA cohesiveness and collaboration, and student outcomes during the second year of this cycle, school year 2020-2021.

Appendix A: List of Participating Schools in Growing Readers

RESA	School	District
Central Savannah River Area	Terrace Manor Elementary	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Lamar-Milledge Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Garrett Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Tobacco Road Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Monte Sano Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Bayville Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Hains Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Glenn Hills Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Wilkinson Gardens Elementary School	Richmond County
Central Savannah River Area	Dearing Elementary School	McDuffie County
Central Savannah River Area	Thomson Elementary School	McDuffie County
Central Savannah River Area	Maxwell Elementary School	McDuffie County
Central Savannah River Area	Louisville Academy	Jefferson County
Central Savannah River Area	Carver Elementary School	Jefferson County
Central Savannah River Area	Wrens Elementary School	Jefferson County
Chattahoochee Flint	Clay County Elementary School	Clay County
Chattahoochee Flint	Quitman County Elementary School	Quitman County
Chattahoochee Flint	J. D. Davis Elementary School	Muscogee County
Chattahoochee Flint	South Columbus Elementary School	Muscogee County
Chattahoochee Flint	L. K. Moss Elementary School	Marion County
Chattahoochee Flint	Crisp County Primary School	Crisp County
Coastal Plains	Cook County Primary	Cook County
Coastal Plains	Cook County Elementary	Cook County
Coastal Plains	Echols County Elementary	Echols County
Coastal Plains	Quitman Elementary	Brooks County
First District	Lyman Hall Elementary School	Liberty County
First District	Reidsville Elementary School	Tattnall County
First District	Todd Grant Elementary School	McIntosh County
First District	Glennville Elementary School	Tattnall County

Griffin	Beaverbrook Elementary School	Griffin-Spalding
Griffin	Flint Hill Elementary School	Newton County
Griffin	Porterdale Elementary School	Newton County
Heart of Georgia	Telfair County Elementary School	Telfair County
Heart of Georgia	East Laurens Primary School	Laurens County
Heart of Georgia	East Laurens Elementary School	Laurens County
Metro	C.H. Gullatt Elementary School	Fulton County
Metro	Scott Elementary School	Atlanta Public Schools
Metro	Brookview Elementary School	Fulton County
Metro	Panola Way Elementary School	DeKalb County
Metro	Boyd Elementary School	Atlanta Public Schools
Metro	Murphey Candler Elementary School	DeKalb County
Metro	Peachcrest Elementary School	DeKalb County
Metro	Dunaire Elementary School	Dekalb County
Metro	Toney Elementary School	DeKalb County
Metro	Dresden Elementary	Dekalb County
Metro	Flat Shoals Elementary School	DeKalb County
Metro	College Park Elementary School	Fulton County
Metro	Harper Archer Elementary School	Atlanta Public Schools
Metro	S.L. Lewis Elementary School	Fulton County
Metro	Mary M. Bethune Elementary School	Fulton County
Metro	Conley Hills Elementary School	Fulton County
Middle Georgia	Parkwood Elementary School	Houston County
Middle Georgia	Westside Elementary School	Houston County
Middle Georgia	Miller Elementary School	Houston County
North Georgia	Hill City Elementary School	Pickens County
North Georgia	Tate Elementary School	Pickens County
North Georgia	Harmony Elementary School	Pickens County
Northeast	Howard Stroud Elementary	Clarke County
Northeast Georgia	Alps Elementary School	Clarke County
Northeast Georgia	Social Circle Primary and Elementary School	Social Circle Schools
Northeast Georgia	South Jackson Elementary School	Jackson County
Northwest Georgia	Young's Grove Elementary School	Polk County

Northwest Georgia	Van Wert Elementary School	Polk County
Northwest Georgia	Northside Elementary School	Polk County
Oconee	Ridge Road Primary School	Washington County
Oconee	Ridge Road Elementary School	Washington County
Oconee	Midway Hills Primary School	Baldwin County
Oconee	Midway Hills Academy	Baldwin County
Oconee	Johnson County Elementary School	Johnson County
Oconee	Putnam County Primary School	Putnam County
Okefenokee	Waynesville Primary School	Brantley County
Okefenokee	Satilla Elementary School	Coffee County
Okefenokee	Nicholls Elementary School	Coffee County
Pioneer	Royston Elementary School	Franklin County
Pioneer	Lavonia Elementary School	Franklin County
Pioneer	Chicopee Woods Elementary School	Hall County
Southwest Georgia	Miller County Elementary School	Miller County
Southwest Georgia	Calhoun County Elementary School	Calhoun County
Southwest Georgia	Northside Elementary School	Grady County
Southwest Georgia	Southside Elementary School	Grady County
Southwest Georgia	Whigham Elementary School	Grady County
West Georgia	George E. Washington Elementary School	Meriwether County
West Georgia	Unity Elementary School	Meriwether County
West Georgia	Berta Elementary School	Troup County
West Georgia	Bruce Elementary School	Bibb County
West Georgia	Hartley Elementary School	Bibb County
West Georgia	Mountain View Elementary	Meriwether County
West Georgia	Park Elementary School	Harris County
West Georgia	Carrollton Elementary School	Carrollton City

Appendix B: Teacher Observation Tool

Learning Target 1: Framework

Indicate whether each of the following statements was true for the lesson that you observed by checking the box.
- ☐ The instructional activities observed were clearly aligned to one or more of the Georgia Standards of Excellence.
- ☐ The instructional activities observed were clearly aligned to one of the five components of reading.

What type(s) of instruction were used during this observation?
- ☐ Whole Group
- ☐ Small Group
- ☐ Independent Practice
- ☐ An effective balance of instructional formats was observed.

Learning Target 2: Conferring

Conferring was observed during this visit:
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

For the instances of conferring you observed during the session, please rate the effectiveness of the practices for each phase that was implemented. <u>Note: If a phase was not observed during the observation, do not provide a rating</u>.

	4	3	2	1
Research	☐	☐	☐	☐
Design	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teach	☐	☐	☐	☐
Try	☐	☐	☐	☐

During the instances of conferring that were observed, the texts that were read by students were best described as being:
- ☐ On the student's independent reading level.
- ☐ Not appropriate for the student's independent reading level.

(If appropriate level) The text read by the student during the observed conferring session was appropriate based on which of the following criteria (select all that apply):
- ☐ The student's accuracy rate was at or above 96%.
- ☐ The student's fluency did not impact his/her understanding of the text.
- ☐ The student could accurately retell major events of the story

(If not appropriate level) The text read by the student during the observed conferring session was not appropriate based on which of the following criteria (select all that apply):
- ☐ The student's accuracy rate was less than 96%.
- ☐ The student's fluency did seem to impact his/her understanding of the story.
- ☐ The student could not accurately retell major events of the story.

Learning Target 3: Assessment

Evidence of Effective Assessment Strategies
- ☐ Observes reading behaviors
- ☐ Confers with students
- ☐ Formally assesses students
- ☐ Involves students in setting goals
- ☐ Diagnoses students' strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills
- ☐ Documents anecdotal notes about students
- ☐ Other

Evidence of Effective Assessment Uses
- ☐ Create flexible groups
- ☐ Provide feedback
- ☐ Engage students in appropriate independent practice
- ☐ Match students to appropriate leveled texts
- ☐ Deliver targeted, focused instruction to students
- ☐ Other

Learning Target 4: Interventions

The use of strategy groups was observed during the visit.
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

For the instances of strategy groups you observed during the session, please rate the effectiveness of the practices for each phase that was implemented. Note: If a phase was not observed during the observation, do not provide a rating.

	4	3	2	1
Research	☐	☐	☐	☐
Design	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teach	☐	☐	☐	☐
Try	☐	☐	☐	☐

Next Steps/Feedback

This section should describe the targeted area for feedback and additional coaching that will occur as a result of this observation.

Ongoing Support/Coaching

Appendix C: Assessment Leveling System

Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading and Lucy Calkins Benchmark Assessment System

	1 **August**	2 **September**	3 **October**	4 **November**	5 **December**	6 **January**	7 **February**	8 **March**	9 **April**	10 **May**
K	-	-	A	A	B	B	B	C	C	C
First Grade	C	D	E	E	F	G	G	H	H	I
Second Grade	I	J	J	J	K	K	K	L	L	L
Third Grade	L	M	M	M	N	N	N	O	O	O

Easy to Use Reference Goal Chart

First Grade	Year Goal		Second Grade	Year Goal		Third Grade	Year Goal
-	C		-	C		-	C
A	E		A	E		A	E
B	G		B	G		B	G
C	I		C	I		C	I
			D	J		D	J
			E	J		E	J
			F	K		F	K
			G	K		G	K
			H	L		H	L
			I	L		I	L
						J	M
						K	N
						L	O

Developmental Reading Assessment-DRA (2)

	1 August	2 September	3 October	4 November	5 December	6 January	7 February	8 March	9 April	10 May
K	-	-	A, 1	A, 1	2	2	2	3	3	3
First Grade	3	4	6	8	10	12	12	14	14	16
Second Grade	16	18	18	18	20	20	20	24	24	24
Third Grade	24	28	28	28	30	30	30	34	34	34

Easy to Use Reference Goal Chart

First Grade	Year Goal		Second Grade	Year Goal		Third Grade	Year Goal
-	3		-	3		-	3
A, 1	8		A, 1	8		A, 1	8
2	12		2	12		2	12
3	**16**		3	16		3	16
			6	18		6	18
			8	18		8	18
			10	20		10	20
			12	20		12	20
			14	24		14	24
			16	**24**		16	24
						18	28
						20	30
						24	**34**

Rigby PM Benchmark Collection

	1 August	2 September	3 October	4 November	5 December	6 January	7 February	8 March	9 April	10 May
K	-	-	1	1	2	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4
First Grade	3-4	5-6	7-8	7-8	9-10	11-12	11-12	13-14	13-14	15-16
Second Grade	15-16	17-18	17-18	17-18	19-20	19-20	19-20	21	21	21
Third Grade	21	22	22	22	23	23	23	24	24	24

Easy to Use Reference Goal Chart

First Grade	Year Goal		Second Grade	Year Goal		Third Grade	Year Goal
-	3-4		-	3-4		-	3-4
1	7-8		1	7-8		1	7-8
2	11-12		2	11-12		2	11-12
3-4	**15-16**		3-4	15-16		3-4	15-16
			5-6	17-18		5-6	17-18
			7-8	17-18		7-8	17-18
			9-10	19-20		9-10	19-20
			11-12	19-20		11-12	19-20
			13-14	21		13-14	21
			15-16	**21**		15-16	21
						17-18	22
						19-20	23
						21	**24**

Reading A to Z

	1 August	2 September	3 October	4 November	5 December	6 January	7 February	8 March	9 April	10 May
K	aa	aa	A	A	B	B	B	C	C	C
First Grade	C	D	E	E	F	G	G	H	H	I
Second Grade	I	J	K	K	L	L	L	M	M	M
Third Grade	M	N	O	P	Q	Q	R	R	S	S

Easy to Use Reference Goal Chart

First Grade	Year Goal	Second Grade	Year Goal	Third Grade	Year Goal
aa	C	aa	C	aa	C
A	E	A	E	A	E
B	G	B	G	B	G
C	I	C	I	C	I
		D	J	D	J
		E	K	E	K
		F	L	F	L
		G	L	G	L
		H	M	H	M
		I	M	I	M
				J	N
				K	P
				L	R
				M	S

Appendix D: Growing Readers Status Report

Growing Readers
Status Report
Federally Funded

Cover Sheet

Instructions: Submit this form to Kathy Matthews (Kathy.matthews@mresa.org) three times per year: Status Report Four, Friday, Oct. 30, 2020; Status Report Five Friday, Jan. 29, 2021; and Status Report Six Friday, May 28, 2021. This form does not need to be signed. Please cc: your Executive Director on the correspondence.

Organization Information

RESA District:

Report Submitted By

Name: Title:

Phone: Email:

Grant Information

Dates Covered by Report:

Comments about Current Status

Status Summary:

	Yes	No	Comments/Notes
Are you experiencing any major issues?			
Do any issues need to be escalated? If yes, please list issues in the Comments/Notes section.			
Are you experiencing any staffing issues?			
Is the project being impacted by external factors?			
Are there any problems impacting the project team's ability to perform the work?			
Are there significant areas of success for this period? If yes, please list these items in the Comments/ Notes section.			

School Name			
Candidate Name	**Date**	**Contact Hours**	**Certification Specialist Actions**
Kimberly Richmond	8/31	2 hours	Co-conducted baseline and debriefed observations.
	9/6	3 hours	Designing PL Session for on-site support
Total			

	Agreements and Planning Federally Funded Certification Specialists			
Key Milestones or Deliverables	**Assessment of Progress** *(green, yellow, orange, or red)*	**Target Completion Date**	**Candidate Name(s) Who Have Not Completed**	**Next Steps** *If activity was not completed based on proposal timeline*
List of Participating Candidates Finalized	🟩	7/31/2019		
Collaboratively Conduct Orientation for Principals	🟩	8/30/2019		
Collaboratively Conduct Orientation for Teachers	🟩	8/30/2019		
Collaboratively Conduct the Midyear Leadership Check-in	🟩	1/31/2020		
Updated List of Candidates		10/30/2020		
Updated List of Teachers		10/30/2020		

Training and Professional Learning Federally Funded Certification Specialists				
Key Milestones or Deliverables	**Assessment of Progress** *(green, yellow, orange, or red)*	**Target Completion Date**	**Action Steps Taken and/or Activities Completed with Completion Date**	**Next Steps** *If activity was not completed based on proposal timeline*
Participate in Statewide Kick-Off		8/13/2020		
Conduct Professional Learning Session Three		9/25/2020		
Conduct Regional Meeting Four (with RESA Specialists Meeting)		12/10/2020		
Professional Learning Session Four Delivered		2/26/2021		
Conduct Regional Meeting Five (with Kate Bishop 3/10/21)		3/10/2021		
Conduct Leadership Session Two		6/4/2021		
Conduct and Attend Graduation		6/4/2021		

On-site Professional Learning For Federally Identified Certification Schools				
Key Milestones or Deliverables	**Assessment of Progress** *(green, yellow, orange, or red)*	**Target Completion Date**	**Candidate Name(s) Who Have Not Completed**	**Next Steps** *If activity was not completed based on proposal timeline*
Conduct Observation Strategy Groups Focus		12/18/2020		
Conduct Final Observation (Entire Observation Form)		5/14/2021		
Minimum of 15 on-site coaching visits per year, per candidate		5/31/2021		

	Candidate Assessment Federally Identified Certification Schools			
Key Milestones or Deliverables	**Assessment of Progress** *(green, yellow, orange, or red)*	**Target Completion Date**	**Candidate Name(s) Who Have Not Completed**	**Next Steps** *If activity was not completed based on proposal timeline*
Baseline Observation (Performance Assessment)	🟩	9/30/2019		
Classroom Library Inventory (Performance Assessment)	🟩	9/30/2019		
Assessment Calibration (Group Calibration)	🟩	By MOY Assessments		
Calibration for Conferring Rubric (Group Calibration)	🟩	Year One		
Calibration for Strategy Groups Rubric (Group Calibration)		12/18/2020		
Matches Students to Texts (Performance Assessment)		By MOY Assessments		
Provides Coaching and Feedback (Performance Assessment)		Year Two		
Proficiency with Conferring (Conferring Rubric)		Year One		
*Facilitation and Training (Year 2)		Year Two		
Content Knowledge (Measurement TBD)		Ongoing Assessment		

*Strategy Groups (Year 2)		Year Two		
Reporting (Performance Assessment – reports)		Ongoing Assessment		
*Final Collection of Achievements (Year 2)		Year Two		

Data Analysis **Federally Identified Certification Schools**				
Key Milestones or Deliverables	**Assessment of Progress** *(green, yellow, orange, or red)*	**Target Completion Date**	**Action Steps Taken and/or Activities Completed with Completion Date**	**Next Steps** *If activity was not completed based on proposal timeline*
Ensure Baseline Assessment Results Are Submitted		10/30/2020		
Ensure Middle of Year Assessment Results Are Submitted		1/29/2021		
Ensure End of Year Assessment Results Are Submitted		5/28/2021		

Appendix E: Growing Readers Documents & Artifacts

Growing Readers Documents and Processes that Promote Consistency	
Document/Process	**Purpose**
1. Common PowerPoints for Professional Learning Sessions	Common PowerPoints ensure that delivery of Professional Learning Sessions is consistent across all RESAs.
2. Facilitator Guides for Professional Learning Sessions	The Facilitator Guide provides common language and key points that facilitators are to ensure are made during each Professional Learning Session.
3. Participant Guides for Professional Learning Sessions	The Participant Guides provide a common set of handouts and resources for teachers who engage in the Professional Learning Session across all RESAs
4. Implementation Expectations	Each Professional Learning Session has Implementation Expectations that define what teachers are expected to do as a result of engaging in the session.
5. Indicators	Indicators define the success criteria for implementation of expectations from each Professional Learning Session. They provide RESA Specialists with clarity regarding on-site coaching and support and keep learning during on-site support consistent across all RESAs.
6. One-pagers	One-pagers are short, succinct, and clear informational documents that are used during on-site support to strengthen what teachers learned during each Professional Learning Session. One-pagers address one indicator in-depth.
7. Conferring Rubric	The conferring rubric defines each stage of growth over time for teachers implement teacher-student conferences. The rubric is also used to inform coaching for individual teachers.
8. Strategy Group Rubric	The strategy group rubric defines each stage of growth over time for teachers implementing strategy groups. The rubric is also used to inform coaching for individual teachers.
9. Assessment and Rubric Calibration Processes	Calibration is a process of review carried out by members of a professional community who typically discuss, review and compare student/teacher work in order to reach a shared understanding of the expectations for which such work needs to meet. The process results in shared understanding of assessment tools.