

Comments from Council Member Lisa Thomas; Retired Teacher, Coventry Town Council Chairwoman:

1. Minutes of our meetings are brief and while they might meet what is legally required, do not reflect the Council's oversight, and do not reflect the concerns some of us have raised regarding:

- The fact that 3 of the currently adopted commercial reading programs/models were found to be culturally non-responsive by an analysis and evaluation conducted by NYU's Steinhardt School * the response to these concerns was that schools can - at additional expense - purchase texts that are culturally responsive in order to supplement the commercial program/model
- The cost to districts to implement this mandate when a potentially more effective, less expensive means for supporting science of reading in our schools is available; has there been an analysis for this?
- The role of commercial programs/models in the failure of districts to recognize and adopt the science of reading research.
- The lack of timeliness of adding additional programs/models to the approved list. Given the current timeline for districts to implement the legislative mandate, they might not have the option to look at future approved materials. Districts are already deep into reviewing the list of approved programs/models, which involves both unpaid time by teachers and/or teachers being pulled out of their classrooms to do this work at a time when it is extremely difficult to find subs.

2. What is the actual role of the Reading Leadership Implementation Council?

- The statute reads:
The Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success shall be under the direction of a director who shall, in consultation with the Reading Leadership Implementation Council described in subsection (c) of this section, be responsible for (1) overseeing all activities of the center, (2) facilitating communication between the center, local and regional boards of education and other affiliates of the center, and (3) coordinating the dissemination of information, tools and services made available by the center.
- How is our feedback being used in "overseeing" the Center? I have engaged several superintendents and boards of education in discussions, as well as active teachers. I have brought their concerns back to this Council but don't feel they have been heard.
- How do we move forward in a way that inspires productive discussion and effective outcomes?