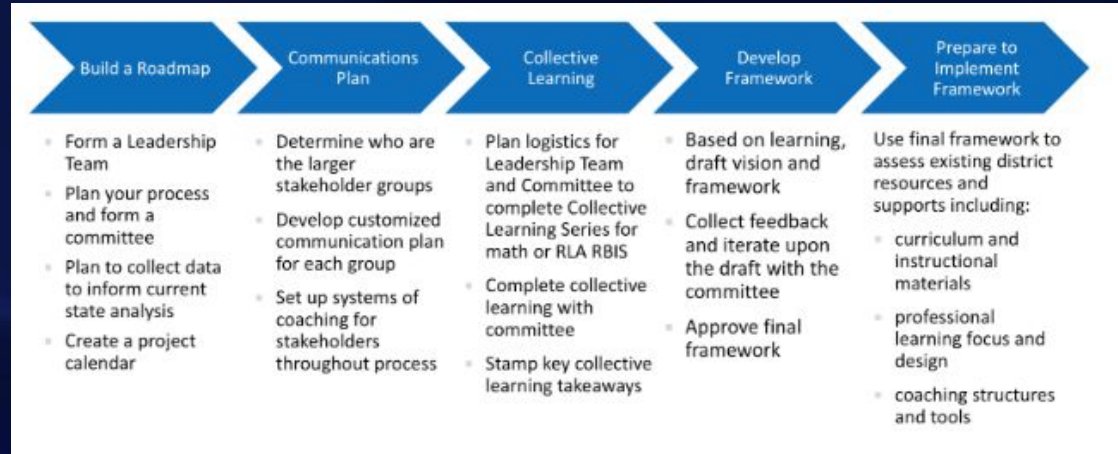


# Strong Foundations Planning

Grant Update-September 2023

# Grant Announcement & Approved Vendor

Last spring, we were notified that we were awarded the Strong Foundations Planning Grant from TEA for a total of \$140,000 to be used toward training and support in writing an instructional framework for our Reading and Language Arts department. In May, the board approved our partnership with Moak Casey to complete all requirements of the grant. The grant supports a multi-step project that will take the majority of the 2023-2024 school year.



# Who's Involved?

## Leadership Team

The Leadership Team was appointed based on their roles within the district:

Bethany French–Project Lead (District)  
Monnie Metcalfe–Special Programs Representative (District)  
JoLynn Wilson–Reading/Language Arts Specialist (District)  
Cindy Black–Principal/Campus Representative (Elementary)

## Moak Casey

According to their website, “The Moak Casey team is comprised of strong professionals with deep experience within Texas school districts, the Texas Legislature, Texas state agencies and education organizations. Our unparalleled breadth of experience and diversity of skill sets equips our consultants to provide clients cutting-edge, personalized, full-service solutions.”

## Feedback Committee

The Feedback Committee was selected by a combination of application and appointment by principals:

Casey Sellers–Principal/Campus Representative (HS)  
Bridgett Null–Assistant Principal/Campus Representative (IMS)  
Windie Shipp–Curriculum Representative (District)  
Danielle Davis–Teacher Representative/English (HS)  
Kari Robinson–Special Education Representative (Elementary)  
Megan Coleman–Teacher Representative/English (Elementary)  
Tania Jimenez–Emergent Bilingual Representative (Elementary)  
Cassandra Fisher–Teacher Representative/Early Childhood (Elementary)  
Carrie Phillips–Teacher Representative/Career & Technology (HS)  
Hunter Thedford–Teacher Representative/Science (IMS)  
Jennifer Long–Teacher Representative/Math (IMS)

# Collective Learning Series

The first step in the process was completing the collective learning series, a two-day training titled Research Based Instructional Strategies in Reading/Language Arts. This training was a requirement for all grant committee and leadership team members, but it was also open to all Rice ISD staff. We had 24 educators attend the July 20th session and 19 attend on August 14th. At these training days, staff members developed key ideas and belief statements that will ground the development of the instructional framework.

## Rice ISD Math RLA I Group key take-aways & Power Rating

- Group 1**
- Print out RLA Look-for's to use and review regularly. (2 sticky notes)
  - Research-Based Instruction takes the guess work out of teaching. (3 sticky notes)
  - Vertical alignment will help strengthen foundational skills. (10 sticky notes)
- Group 2**
- Research-based (3 sticky notes)
  - Systemic and explicit (6 sticky notes)
  - Use the CCR for (3 sticky notes)
  - Hear it, Say it, Read it & Write it (3 sticky notes)
- Group 3**
- Reading is NOT natural (1 sticky note)
  - Reading instruction should be systematically and explicitly taught (8 sticky notes)
  - Phonics x Vocabulary = Reading Comprehension (5 sticky notes)
- Group 4**
- Intentional teaching everyday/all day (3 sticky notes)
  - Foundational skills - reading, writing, listening & speaking (2 sticky notes)
  - Mindset change (Buy-in) (3 sticky notes)
- Group 5**
- Research based (2 sticky notes)
  - The foundational skills are the roots of teaching reading (6 sticky notes)
  - Reading is unnatural and will later become automatic...if explicitly taught (2 sticky notes)



## Rice ISD Math RLA 2 Groups & their key take-aways!

- Group 1**
- Text Complexity (2 sticky notes)
  - Set high expectations (5 sticky notes)
  - Enforce the Look-For's (2 sticky notes)
- Group 2**
- Grade level texts are important (4 sticky notes)
  - Allow kids to productively struggle (4 sticky notes)
  - Complex texts MATTER (3 sticky notes)
- Group 3**
- Complex grade-level texts (2 sticky notes)
  - Teacher support/scaffolding, allow productive struggle (6 sticky notes)
  - Ensure ALL students have access to grade-level texts (7 sticky notes)
- Group 4**
- Let them struggle (6 sticky notes)
  - Teacher support & appropriate scaffolding leads to success with complex texts (5 sticky notes)
  - Complex texts = strengthen vocab, language & comprehension (2 sticky notes)
- Group 5**
- Productive struggle is imperative. (3 sticky notes)
  - Focus on the Text first
  - Grade level NOT reading level (scaffolding) (3 sticky notes)



## Rice ISD Math RLA RBIS 4 Group key take-aways & Power Rating

- Group 1**
- Reading, Writing & Speaking are grounded in evidence from the text. (3 dots)
  - Students should write: evidence-based & every day! (5 dots)
  - Teachers should model & scaffold. (4 dots)
  - Have an (writing) exemplar! (1 dot)
- Group 2**
- Reading and Knowledge -- in any language, supports writing -- in any language. (3 dots)
  - Writing must be taught explicitly (2 dots)
  - Writing and speaking about texts supports comprehension (3 dots)
- Group 3**
- Reading and Writing are reciprocal (5 dots)
  - Writing must be taught explicitly (2 dots)
  - Reading and Knowledge in any language support writing (2 dots)
- Group 4**
- Ask higher-level questions (2 dots)
  - Writing about what you read increases comprehension (3 dots)
  - Explicit writing instruction (5 dots)
- Group 5**
- Intentionally use DOK/Bloom's (9 dots)
  - Define writing to teach it, explicitly (1 dot)
  - Provide exemplars/graphic organizers and other supports for writing (2 dots)



## Rice ISD Math RLA RBIS 3 (Day 2) Group key take-aways & Power Rating

- Group 1**
- Skills gaps vs. knowledge gaps (7 dots)
  - Implementing change is like growing ivy (4 dots)
  - Repetitive exposure enhances comprehension (5 dots)
- Group 2**
- Less skill based and more knowledge based. (6 dots)
    - Vocabulary
      - Background knowledge
  - Integrate Science and Social Studies into ELAR (5 dots)
  - Knowledge of words/world leads to comprehension of text (2 dots)
- Group 3**
- Reading multiple texts on the same topic accelerates learning (6 dots)
  - Metalinguistic strategies support building knowledge that transfers across languages
  - Background knowledge and vocabulary facilitate comprehensions (4 dots)
- Group 4**
- Knowledge and vocabulary = better comprehension (3 dots)
  - Facilitator must have the knowledge and vocabulary to support learners (6 dots)
  - Instructional material needs to be engaging (4 dots)
- Group 5**
- Background knowledge is critical! (5 dots)
  - Isolation vs. Exposure (repeated exposure through text)
  - Are we doing RBIS 3 effectively in RSD?



On August 18th, the Leadership Team celebrated the completion of the first phase of the project which included building a roadmap, communications plan, and collective learning.

Since the collective learning series was completed, the leadership team has been working to form the key takeaways from the training into the beginning drafts of an instructional framework document which the committee will meet to review on September 18th, 2023.

