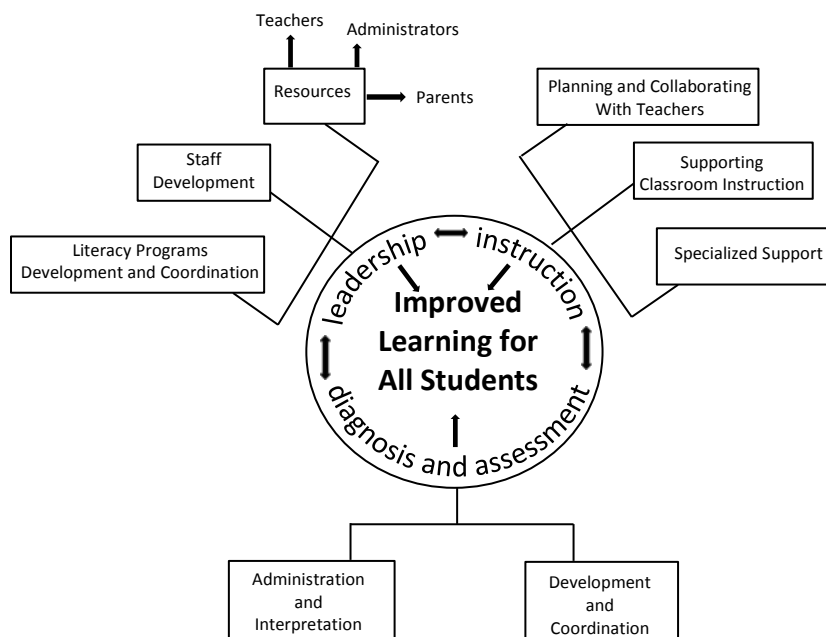


International Reading Association Recommendations for the role of Reading Specialists include:

- **Instruction**—The reading specialist supports classroom teaching, and works collaboratively to implement a quality reading program
- **Assessment**—The reading specialist evaluates the literacy program in general, and can assess the reading strengths and needs of students and communicate these to classroom teachers, parents, and specialized personnel such as psychologists, special educators, or speech teachers
- **Leadership**—The reading specialist is a resource to other educators, parents, and the community



MBUSD Reading Specialists: Where we’ve been, where we are now, and plans for the future.

Prior to the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation (MBEF) funding the Reading Specialist positions at each of the five elementary sites, specialist salaries were paid through School Site Council (SSC) funds. While the common goal was providing expert instruction, assessment, and leadership in the area of literacy, disparate populations, resources, methods, and tools from one site to the next resulted in dissimilar program designs.

Although the specialist positions are now funded by the MBEF, the ways in which the Reading Specialists are utilized at each site remain at the discretion of the Principal who determines specialist hours, schedules, and duties. Adding to the variance are the specialists themselves. Each brings her own professional experiences into developing practices that best support their population of students and teachers.

All our MBUSD specialists have advanced graduate preparation and appropriate educational credentials. Their prior classroom experiences provide them with a more thorough understanding of classroom instruction, appreciation for the classroom teacher’s role, and credibility. Our qualified specialists find value in meeting with each other to discuss successes and challenges, and though the in-and-outs of their duties lack some consistency, the consensus is to develop common recommendations for student instruction, identification procedures, assessments, parent communication, and resources for students, parents, and teachers.

Meet the MBUSD Reading Specialists:

Kathi Wagner – *Grand View*:

Q: Why did you choose to be an educator?

A: When my second grade teacher worked with me and each of my classmates, she was our biggest fan! She celebrated our progress, no matter how small. I knew then that I wanted to be the biggest fan for children when I grew up, so that I could help them discover new things and find the keys to unlock difficult doors. –*Kathi Wagner*

Beth Ford – *Meadows*:

Q: Why did you choose to be an educator?

A: I knew I had the skill set for teaching and that I had the heart to do it well. I started in special education and worked with the severely physically disabled for several years before moving over to general education. I guess you could say I became an educator because I just wanted my time to mean something... –*Beth Ford*

Cheryl Vanick – *Meadows*:

Q: What advice do you have for parents about motivating their children to read?

A: I always tell parents they should read to their child, read with their child, and have their child read independently. They should try to bring things into the home that the child enjoys reading. These can be books from the library, bookstore, eBooks, comic books, cereal boxes, and magazines—*anything* that will motivate their child. Keep it fun! It is amazing how much this can help. –*Cheryl Vanick*

Nancy Rosenberg – *Pacific*:

Q: Tell us something we don't know about your position?

A: It not only provides much needed support for the students, but it is really exciting for me to work closely with our principal and teaching staff to continually be innovative and creative, and tweak programs to meet the needs of the kids. – *Nancy Rosenberg*

Shirlee Rogers – *Pacific*:

Q: What is most rewarding about being a Reading Specialist?

A: What I find most rewarding about being a Reading Specialist is working with small groups of children and providing them with individualized instruction. The small group setting provides a safe, nonthreatening environment where they can blossom. –*Shirlee Rogers*

Tracey Windes – *Pennekamp*:

Q: What is one of your favorite books and why?

A: *Journey to the Heart of Pachamama*, by Ann Windes is my favorite book because it is my step-daughter's newly published memoir! It is about her journey from Manhattan Beach to the indigenous villages of Peru. –*Tracey Windes*

Amy Hogan – *Robinson*:

Q: If you could be a character in a novel, who would it be and why?

A: Hermione Granger was always my favorite *Harry Potter* character. She is smart, level-headed, and always has a trick up her sleeve. In most situations, she was the character who thought of the solution. Plus, like me, she loved to learn. In one novel, she actually used a device that stopped time so she could attend more classes—and they say education is wasted on the young! –*Amy Hogan*