

### **Decision-Making for Misha**

The following case study was presented at Irvington Elementary School's Tier 2 problem-solving meeting. The team, which included representatives from speech and language, special education, ESOL, and administration as well as the grade-level team, was trying to determine if Tier 3 intervention or special education screening might be the appropriate next step for Misha, one of their English language students. Below are the data points they considered.

#### ***Family information***

- Born in Russia
- 9 years old
- Moved to the United States 2 years ago
- Misha's family speaks Russian at home.
- He has a younger sibling who is not yet in school.

#### ***Academic history***

- Completed K–2nd grade in Russia.
- Completed third grade in the United States.
- Currently in the fourth grade, marking period 4

#### ***Strengths***

- Oral language in social settings (both listening and speaking)
- Engaging, hardworking, and personable
- Friendly with several groups of students in the grade

#### ***Needs and concerns***

- Reading comprehension
- Written expression
- Limited participation in classroom discussions

#### ***ESOL instruction***

- In accord with school district policy, initial entry and assessments were through International Office in grade 3
  - Entry testing results: Level 1 (beginner) overall English language proficiency level
- Current ESOL instruction: push-in, 3 times weekly
- Current English language proficiency information
  - Speaking Proficiency Level: 3 (intermediate)
  - Listening Proficiency Level: 4 (high intermediate)
  - Writing Proficiency Level: 2 (low intermediate)
  - Reading Proficiency Level: 2 (low intermediate)

**Reading data**

- Intervention: Fast Track Reading
- Measures of Academic Progress—Reading
  - Fall 2015: 158 (Benchmark 170)
  - Fall 2016: 165 (Benchmark 185)
  - Strand Data: Very low
- Instructional Reading Level: J (using an A–Z scale)

**Interventions: Third grade**

- Early interventions in reading (EIR): began in MP3
  - Provided by Intervention/Focus teacher
  - For reading comprehension and decoding
  - Saw increased oral language and participation in class discussions
- Small-group guided reading: focus on fluency and comprehension
  - Was a level H in September
  - Was a level J at end of the year

**Interventions: Fourth grade**

- Fast Track Reading
  - Progress with informational text noted
  - Maintained present level with narrative/literary text
  - Written expression of ideas still a need area

After reviewing the data and information, the team decided not to screen for special education services and to continue the Tier 2 interventions currently in place. Misha made progress in the interventions, and the team planned to continue to monitor for additional growth. In addition, keeping in mind that it can take 7 to 10 years to gain full academic language proficiency in a new language, Misha can benefit from more time in ESOL, and a “watch and wait” approach is more appropriate than a special education referral. Although Misha’s language proficiency (WIDA) reading and writing proficiency levels are depressed compared to speaking and listening, he has made steady progress in all three, suggesting a positive growth trajectory.