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Council of North America

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# Reading Recovery Salutes Outstanding Principals



**Kelly Jackson**  
Don Jeter Elementary School  
Alvin, TX

“I wish every teacher could get Reading Recovery training,” said Principal Kelly Jackson. “It’s a wonderful program. We use the instructional model set up by the Literacy Collaborative at Lesley University.”

Don Jeter Elementary School serves 900 students in grades K–6, 62% of whom are on free or reduced-price lunch. The school is located in the farmland outside Houston, along a main thoroughfare that facilitates commuting to and from the city. The community is a mixture of neighborhoods, trailer parks, and farms.

## *Using the Literacy Collaborative Model*

Jackson explained that Literacy Collaborative is a research-based instructional model formulated by Lesley University. The university trains a school-based leadership team to carry out a literacy program that’s tailored to the school’s needs. Then the team, which includes the literacy coordinator and the principal, meets regularly to make sure that the program maintains its high quality. Classroom teachers receive ongoing professional development training.

“Also, Reading Recovery teachers work closely with classroom teachers so they share instructional techniques, like word study and phonics,” Jackson said. “Also, it helps the staff be flexible and differentiate the class—that is, provide varied activities for small groups of children based on their abilities.”

## *Reading Recovery Is The Support System for Struggling Readers*

Within the Literacy Collaborative, Reading Recovery is the support system for the students who are struggling the most, Jackson explained.

“With Reading Recovery, the lowest of the low get support. It’s very important because if we don’t get the kids at first grade, they’re sunk academically,” she said. But the program is cost effective, in her view. “The majority of the Reading Recovery students are successful. Those who don’t succeed in Reading Recovery are students who may need special education. But even the lowest students make progress.”

“Reading Recovery training would benefit all teachers, including teachers in the upper grades,” Jackson said. “It would give all the teachers the philosophy, the foundation for teaching.”