

THE CREP REPORT

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for Research in
Educational Policy
(CREP) at the UofM is
a State of Tennessee
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rigorous, high-
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pride in serving as a
valuable resource in
educational research,
evaluation and
consultation.

PROJECT BRIEF

A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 Literacy System: *Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) in Rural Settings*

In partnership with two school districts in southern Georgia and upstate New York, a randomized controlled trial (RCT) study was conducted by a team at CREP led by Dr. Carolyn Kaldon to determine the efficacy of the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) System in grades K-2 in rural and suburban settings, as well as to examine program implementation fidelity. Developed by authors Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell and published by Heinemann, LLI is a short-term, small-group, supplemental literacy intervention system that uses a series of “leveled” texts (i.e., texts of progressing difficulty) to help students in kindergarten through 8th grade achieve grade-level competency in literacy. A mixed-method experimental design was used in which 427 K-2 students in two states were matched demographically and randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. Treatment and control group students’ pre- and post-test performance was compared on two measures of student literacy achievement: the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). For all three grade levels, students in LLI made significantly higher gains on the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, and in several areas of the DIBELS assessment, than students receiving classroom instruction alone. These findings indicate that, when implemented with fidelity to the program model, LLI can positively impact the literacy achievement of K-2 students, including ELL, special education, and economically disadvantaged children.