

# Here's what I think ...

**By Ty Ankrom**

March 6, 2015



A year after Pickaway County implemented a \$242,000 grant to help identify and work with children who might not be at the correct reading levels, the results are impressive.

The PLUS Consortium – Pickaway Literacy United for Success – was created by curriculum directors Lisa Heins of Circleville City, Jill Riddle of Logan Elm Local, Sabrina Vallery of Teays Valley Local and Debbie Younge of Westfall Local.

The grant was used to provide Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) training to teachers in the summer of 2013. The teachers then used LLI during the 2013-14 school year.

LLI is a method of instruction that delivers small-group instruction in a strongly supportive setting for lower-achieving students.

Debbie Younge gave a presentation last month to the ESC Governing Board that highlighted the successes of the program. Specifically, of the nearly 600 third-graders tested in the four districts, more than 96 percent met the threshold established for them to advance.

“We’re trying to prevent reading failure,” Debbie said. “It’s important to be proactive with the kids and not reactive.”

Another benefit of the grant was being able to provide the text *When Readers Struggle* for the kindergarten through third-grade teachers in the districts, Debbie said. This professional book study supported all classroom teachers through collaboration and discussions of best practices for reading instruction.

“Sustainability – which is a key part of the grant – allows the training to continue and benefit more students,” Debbie said.

The training has been embedded in daily use of the LLI resources, coordination with other reading programs, such as MAP and Lexia, and in classroom follow-up.

Overall, the Plus Consortium has done an A-plus job for third-graders in our county.

*Ty Ankrom is the superintendent of the Pickaway County Educational Service Center.*

