Utah’s Reading First

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Overview

- Background on Reading First
- Utah’s Reading First
- Reading First Components
  - For Districts
  - For Schools
  - For Teachers
- Data From First Three Years
What is Reading First?

- Federally Funded Initiative
  - Money given to states with 80% of funding directly to schools
  - $6 billion project over course of five years
  - Purpose is to improve literacy skills of children in grades K-3 in high poverty schools, and
  - Narrow the minority achievement gap
How does RF relate to No Child Left Behind?

- Specific charge under NCLB targeting reading for a specific population (high poverty, K-3)

- Many sections of NCLB unfunded or under funded, but RF is fully funded
Utah’s Reading First

- $4.5 million/year for 5 years
- 6 districts in rural and urban settings
  - Granite, SLC, Ogden, North Sanpete, Duchesne, San Juan
- 18 schools
- 5,000 students
- 250 general classroom teachers
  - 40 other teachers (special education, ELL, specialists, etc.)
Reading First For Districts

- Coordinators responsible for implementation of RF in the districts’ participating schools

- Assistance from the state related to identifying professional development needs of individual schools, setting goals and benchmarks, and budgeting to participating schools.

- Professional development for principals, coaches and teachers
Reading First For Schools

- Funds for purchasing scientifically based instructional materials, including supplemental and intervention programs and materials that are integrated and coordinated with the comprehensive reading program
- Coaches to work with teachers
Reading First For Teachers

- Compensation for Reading Endorsement Classes (Required to Obtain Level 1)
- Professional Development at the State and District Levels
- Participation in School Level Study Groups (Discuss students progress and instructional strategies)
- Coach Feedback and Training
Instructional Impact

- Select and implement scientifically-based comprehensive reading programs that teach the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary), without layering selected programs on top of other programs already in use
- Daily 3-hour uninterrupted literacy block
- Collect student progress data and use it to drive instruction
Results for Reading First Schools on the Utah Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs)

First Grade CRTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Non-proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for Reading First Schools on the Utah Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs)

Second Grade CRTs

Percentage of Students

Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3

Proficient: 61% | 62% | 66%
Non-proficient: 39% | 38% | 34%
Results for Reading First Schools on the Utah Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs)

Third Grade CRTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Non-proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for Reading First Schools and Comparison Schools on the Utah Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs)

![Graph showing the percentage of students who are proficient and non-proficient in Reading First and Comparison Schools over three years.](image)
Results for Reading First Schools on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-9) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

![Graph showing reading achievement over three years for Reading First ITBS. The graph illustrates the percentage of students at or above the 50th percentile and below the 25th percentile.](image)
Teacher Surveys

- Teacher Knowledge
  - Instrument measures teachers’ knowledge of reading and reading instruction. It measures four kinds of teacher knowledge: 1) knowledge of the reading process; 2) knowledge of effective instructional techniques; 3) knowledge of the elements of language structure related to reading, and 4) knowledge of instructional and behavioral management.

- Teacher Attitude
  - Participants’ overall attitudes toward the project were measured through a brief instrument that asked participants to rate their attitudes and enthusiasm about participating in Reading First.
Teacher Surveys

- Over the 3 years of the project, teachers have significantly improved their knowledge of reading and reading instruction.

- Teachers’ attitudes towards Reading First also have significantly improved over this time.
Teacher Surveys

Teacher Knowledge

Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3
---|---|---
18 | 19 | 20
18.5 | 19.5 | 20.5
19 | 20 | 21

Teacher Attitude

Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3
---|---|---
9 | 9.5 | 9.9
9.1 | 9.6 | 9.9
9.3 | 9.7 | 9.9
9.4 | 9.8 | 9.9
9.5 | 9.9 | 9.9

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District Interviews

- Strengths of the Project
  - Student Improvement
  - Materials and Resources
  - Student Data
    - Identifying students at-risk for reading failure
    - Ability to track student progress
  - Teacher Knowledge
    - Professional development
    - Focused direction for change
District Interviews

- Weaknesses of the Project
  - Lack of time to...
    - Complete additional endorsement requirements
    - Implement new strategies
    - Complete extra paperwork, testing, attend workshops and meetings
Conclusions

- Project is successful in terms of student and teacher growth
- Narrowing achievement gap, but there is work to be done
- Progress takes time