



Evaluation Matters

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Literacy for Rising 3rd Grade Students: *An Analysis of Participation and Impact, 2014*

1. What is the purpose of this report?

This report examines the Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students program of the summer initiatives that operated in the District during 2014. The program focused on strengthening the reading comprehension and stimulating the readiness skills of students who had been promoted to the third grade, but who scored at or below the 50th percentile on the standardized districtwide reading comprehension assessment, the Stanford Achievement Test, 10th edition (SAT-10). The curriculum used in the Rising Literacy component for entering, first-time third graders was a research-based intervention program called After the Bell, developed by Scholastic. It may be noted that this curriculum was also used in the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps, offered to retained third grade students. The curriculum utilized whole group and small group instruction and targeted reading comprehension skills, phonics instruction and fluency practice.

2. Which populations are targeted in this report?

The samples for the study included all students in grades 3 who entered prior to the second day of the summer reporting cycle and remained enrolled in the respective component for the duration of the cycle. A comparison group was also defined by identifying non-participating students having pre- and post- test data. Only students who attended the same school from June through October 2014, and who also had the same language arts teacher from August through October 2014, were included. Students who did not have valid pre- and post- test scores at consecutive grades or who only partially participated in the program, were excluded from the analysis.

3. How were the data for this report collected and analyzed?

Participation data were obtained from the student course registration data file and examined through descriptive statistics. Demographic characteristics were obtained from the student database system maintained on the district's data warehouse. Outcomes were then compared for students who participated in the program and students who did not, while taking into account the influence of demographic differences and baseline achievement, as measured by a pretest.

4. What are the outcomes of the Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students component?

Participation. Table 1 lists the number and percentage of registered students who completed the Rising Literacy component, participated and withdrew prior to completion, and registered but did not participate.

Table 1. Participation in the Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students Component

Total	Participation					
	Full ^a		Partial ^b		None ^c	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
3,251	2,262	69.6	228	7.0	761	23.4

^aStudents who completed the component. ^bStudents who participated and withdrew prior to completion. ^cStudents who initially registered but did not attend (i.e., no shows).

- Over 3,250 students registered for the component.
- Over two-thirds of the students who registered to participate, completed the component.
- **Impact.** Students who attended the same school from June through October 2014, and who also had the same language arts teacher from August through October 2014, were identified. Participation data obtained from the student course registration data file were used to separate the treatment from the comparison group. Then, statistical regression procedures were used to compare the outcomes for students who participated in the program with students who did not, controlling for the influence of demographic differences and initial ability as measured by the SAT-10 pretest. The outcome measure was students' Probability of Literacy Success (PLS) on the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR), administered during the fall of 2014.
 - A total of 43.3% (n=979) of the students who completed the program were included in the analysis.
 - A limitation of the FAIR, from which the intended outcome measure used in this analysis was obtained, was that its administration window varied across a three month time frame, thus leading to varied exposure to tested content once the fall term began.
 - All the variables in the model accounted for only 9.9% of the variance in the students' PLS scores.

5. What are the principal conclusions of this report?

Over 3,000 struggling readers who were newly promoted into the third grade received support through the Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students program that operated during the summer. Over two-thirds of those students completed the program. However, because of variations in the administration dates of the FAIR from which the intended outcome measure was obtained, and the lack of any other suitable achievement measures it was not possible to determine the extent that exposure to the program was associated with improved outcomes.