

## **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

### **Third Grade Summer Reading Camps, 2014 Evaluation**

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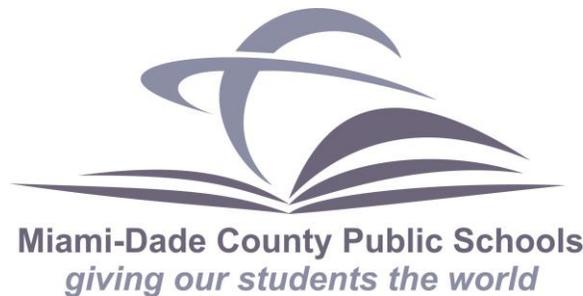
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fundamental goal of the Third Grade Summer Reading Camp program is to bolster the reading skills of third grade students scheduled for retention and to prepare them to demonstrate mastery of state standards in order to be promoted to the fourth grade. The Office of Program Evaluation undertook an evaluation to gauge whether students who completed the program in Summer 2014 exhibited improved performance on the summer alternative assessment when compared to a comparison group of non-participants. The summer alternative assessment, the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT-10), was offered to students after the reading camp and served as the posttest. The spring alternative assessment, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Edition C (ITBS-C), served as the pretest.

Principals were surveyed regarding their opinions of the reading camps and generally gave positive accounts of planning, transportation, and curriculum/instruction. However, the duration of the instruction provided to the students using the instructional intervention varied and was less than specified by program staff. Therefore, the program could not be judged to be implemented with fidelity.

A sizable majority of the principals endorsed the level of technical support provided by District reading specialists and felt that the program was effective at improving the students' reading skills. Most agreed that the program should continue in its current form.

Students who participated in the Reading Camps were not significantly more likely to pass the alternative assessment test administered at the end of summer school. Although, participating students with scores from the 20<sup>th</sup>-49<sup>th</sup> percentile on the pretest, scored significantly higher on the posttest than similarly scoring students who did not attend, the improvement was not high enough to result in promotion to the fourth grade. Previously cited variations in the implementation of the program may explain why the program's benefits were not consistently distributed.

## INTRODUCTION

The Third Grade Summer Reading Camps (Reading Camps) is an intensive reading remediation program designed to prepare the students to demonstrate grade level proficiency by earning a passing score on an alternative assessment given at the end of summer school. Students targeted for enrollment are third graders who failed to score above Level 1 on the reading subtest of the FCAT 2.0 and did not qualify for one or more of the statutory "good cause exemptions," and as such are prevented from advancing to grade 4. The following report details the evaluation of the eleventh implementation of the camps (summer 2014) and focuses on their impact on the students' subsequent performance on the alternative assessment test.

### Background

Florida Statutes currently prohibit social promotion and mandate that students with academic deficiencies be provided with intensive remediation with particular emphasis on the reading proficiency of students in the grades K through 3. Districts are required to develop an academic improvement plan for each student who exhibited a deficiency in reading that would "identify the student's specific areas of deficiency, . . . , the desired levels of performance in these areas, and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance" (*Public School Student Progression*, 2014).

The fundamental goal of such a plan is to remediate the student's reading deficiency by the end of grade 3 as evidenced by the attainment of a score of Level 2 or above on the reading subtest of the FCAT 2.0, administered in grade 3. Scoring at Level 1 on the reading subtest of the FCAT may lead to retention in grade 3, unless the student meets one of the following six types of "good cause" exemptions:

- an acceptable level of performance on an alternative assessment;
- demonstration, through a portfolio, of the ability to read on grade level;
- status as an English Language Learner, with less than two years in English for Speakers of Other Languages programs;
- eligibility for special education (SPED) with an individual education plan (IEP) that indicates that it is not appropriate to take the FCAT;
- eligibility for SPED without FCAT exemption with an IEP or 504 plan demonstrating receipt of two years of intensive remediation in reading, a continuing deficiency in reading, and a previous retention in grades K through 3; or,
- receipt of two years of intensive remediation in reading, a continuing deficiency in reading, and two previous retentions in grades K through 3.

Because large numbers of the state's third graders have historically scored at level 1, the State called for districts to provide "intensive reading camps" during the summer, designed to prepare such students for the next opportunity to pass the test (Florida Department of Education, 2008).

The program has undergone numerous changes in format and length of delivery since its inception and has produced mixed results. While the results of the evaluation of the program that operated during summer 2012 showed an improvement in participating students' reading skills,

their chances of passing the alternative assessment were not significantly different from that of non-participants.

### Description of the Program

The Reading Camps' curriculum that operated during in the past two summers (i.e., 2013 and 2014) represented a change from the curriculum that had operated for the previous four years. It focused entirely on bolstering students' reading skills and did not contain dedicated test preparation activities. The program in place provided students with five hours of reading-related activities per day, five days per week, for four weeks. The curriculum that operated within the school day was *After the Bell* developed by Scholastic.

A half-day training was provided to teachers by the vendor. Teachers were given the scope and sequence of instruction, previewed materials, and given a suggested schedule for the 5 hour block of instruction. Teachers were given the opportunity to walk through the components of the program and ask questions regarding implementation (Department of Language Arts/Reading, personal communication).

The research-based intervention program utilized both whole group and small group instruction. Targeted skills were taught using a program that provided fiction and non-fiction libraries. Each unit targeted reading comprehension skills, phonics instruction, and fluency practice. The following materials were included in the program:

- Student workbooks
- Reading Skills Cards
- Fluency cards
- Phonics reproducibles
- Teacher guides
- Assessment book
- Read-Aloud books
- Independent Reading Library
- Instructional Reading Library

Students were also directed to independent reading activities during small group instruction. Successmaker may also have been used as a supplemental technology component during small group instruction (Department of Language Arts/Reading).

The Department of Language Arts/Reading periodically monitored the delivery of the curriculum during on-site visits to selected Reading Camps. The program vendor also visited every summer service site at least once. Reports of the findings from the vendor's visits were provided to district administrators (Department of Language Arts/Reading).

The program that was implemented in 2014 provided students with 20 full-days of instruction prior to the alternative assessment. The District's, *2014 Summer Implementation Document* (Department of Summer Services, 2014) limited participation in the Reading Camps to “retained third grade students” (p. 8). Consequently, the students targeted by the program remained

primarily the third graders who scored at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT 2.0 administered in April of 2014 and did not meet one of the "good cause" exemptions outlined earlier in this report.

**Table 1**  
**Features of the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps**

Program Features					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Hours per day <sup>a</sup>	3	3	3	5	5
Days per week	5	5	5	5	5
Daily schedule	8:30-11:30	8:30-11:30	8:30-11:30	8:30-2:00	8:30-2:00
Weeks per term	5	5	5	5	5
Hours of instruction per term	60 <sup>b</sup>	60	60	100	100
Teacher-student ratio	1:18	1:18	1:18	1:18	1:18
Number of camps	26	33	34	25	25
Student enrollment	2,375	2,273	1,833	2,048	2,656

*Note.* Each column represents the schedule in effect for that year.

<sup>a</sup> Includes ½ hour for lunch. <sup>b</sup> Post testing was conducted after 17 days of instruction

Table 1 provides information on various operational features of the Reading Camp program in each summer that it was implemented during the last five years. The 2013 and 2014 summer programs saw two major changes to their operation: (a) the length of the instructional day was nearly doubled, and the number of host sites was reduced. The schools that implemented Reading Camps in 2014 are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**List of Reading Camps, 2014**

Location	School Name	Location	School Name
<b><u>North Regional Center</u></b>		<b><u>Central Regional Center</u></b>	
0641	Bunche Park	0201	Banyan
5005	David Lawrence Jr., K-8	2041	Benjamin Franklin, K-8
0761	Fienberg/Fisher, K-8	1081	Coral Terrace
2401	Hibiscus	1121	Coral Way, K-8
2181	Joella C. Good	5861	Dr. H. W. Mack/W. Little River, K-8
1481	John G. Dupuis	5561	Frances S. Tucker
3421	M.A. Milam, K-8	3381	Miami Springs
3941	North Miami		
<b><u>South Regional Center</u></b>		<b><u>Educational Transformation Office</u></b>	
3621	Coconut Palm, K-8 Academy	3021	Jesse J. McCrary, Jr.
1811	Dante B. Fascell	1441	Paul Laurence Dunbar, K-8
2151	Jack D. Gordon	4461	Pine Villa
4611	Redondo		
5421	Sunset Park		
2511	Zora Neale Hurston		

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## METHODOLOGY

### Research Questions

An evaluation was undertaken by the district's Office of Program Evaluation to assess the implementation of the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps, to explore the attitudes of responding principals toward the program, and to gauge its impact. The evaluation was guided by a series of questions:

- 1. Were the Reading Camps implemented as planned?**
- 2. Did students who participated in the Reading Camps score higher on the summer alternative assessment than students who did not participate?**

### Data Sources

Data were gathered from four sources to address the evaluation questions. The first source of data consisted of a review of documents obtained from the District's Division of Language Arts/Reading, the District's School Choice and Parental Options, and the Florida Department of Education. The second source of data was an online survey of principals designed to measure various aspects of the summer program including enrollment, planning, staffing, transportation, resources, materials, supplies, and specific curricular-factors. The third source and fourth sources of data were students' demographic and assessment records maintained on the District's mainframe computer system. Each of the data sources will be discussed in detail in ensuing sections.

### Implementation

Implementation was examined so that any observed effects on participants' achievement could be properly attributed to the program. This portion of the evaluation was concerned with determining whether the Reading Camps were being operated as specified; and, whether or not sufficient planning, resources, and support were evident. Data were gathered from an online survey of principals entitled the Summer Reading Camps Implementation Survey to gauge implementation. (A copy of the survey may be found in Appendix A). The sample of schools for this portion of the evaluation included all participating schools.

The Summer Reading Camps Implementation Survey measures various aspects of the summer program including enrollment, planning, staffing, transportation, resources, materials, supplies, and specific curricular-factors (i.e.; dosage, frequency, and duration of treatment; engagement; and, perceived effectiveness). The survey comprised 33 items of which 24 adhered to a Likert-type format with response options that varied. Two filter questions (16 and 22) were used to enable a branching process by which only an appropriate subset of items were presented to respondents. Respondents were typically exposed to 24 items and two filter questions. Five items (1, 4, 5, 23 and 24) were used for identification, programmatic information, and to provide space for schools that did not offer the district-defined curriculum to describe their program. Two items (2 and 3) gauged enrollment; six items (5-10) assessed the adequacy of planning, resources, and staffing levels; and, three items (11 – 13) pertained to transportation.

Seventeen program-specific curricular-questions were also defined: Four items (17, 18, 25, and 26) measured dosage, two items (21 and 29) pertained to program effectiveness, and two items (19 and 27) gauged the program's ability to provide differentiated instruction. Two additional items (20 and 28) measured students' engagement. Three summary items (30-32) solicited respondents' overall impressions of the program and the technical support that was available. Finally, space was provided to give respondents the option of suggesting areas for improvement. In all, 17 items measured implementation. The survey was administered online to administrators of participating sites during July and August 2014. Key items were organized into one of four implementation categories: Planning, Resources, Transportation, and Curriculum/Instruction. The percent of positive responses within a category are classified as 0-50 (not implemented), 51-69 (partially implemented), and 70-100 (fully implemented). Otherwise, the analysis of the results of the Summer Reading Camps Implementation Survey was limited to descriptive statistics.

An attitudinal component measured principals' summative perceptions of the program. The issues addressed included technical support, effectiveness, satisfaction with the status quo, and suggestions for improvement. Data for this component were drawn from the Summer Implementation Survey. Three of those items (30-32) measured attitude. The analysis of the results for the attitudinal component was limited to descriptive statistics.

## **Program Impact**

### ***Design and Samples***

A non-equivalent groups quasi-experimental design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) was used to compare the performance of students who participated in the Reading Camps with students who did not, using pretest scores to equate the groups' performance prior to exposure and posttest scores to measure their performance afterwards. The groups were considered nonequivalent, because group membership was not assigned randomly.

The population for this evaluation consisted of third grade students who were scheduled for retention after having exhausted all options for promotion available to them prior to the end of the regular school year. Of the 26,287 third grade students who took the reading subtest of the FCAT 2.0 and were active in the District at the end of the 2013-14 school year, 21.4% ( $n = 5,621$ ) scored within achievement Level 1.

Of those students, 91.9% ( $n=5,168$ ) faced mandatory retention under state statute, as indicated by their promotion code. A subset of those students qualified for one or more of the good cause exemptions outlined by the state. Table 3 lists the number and percent of students who utilized those exemptions. Students listed as receiving exemptions based on the Portfolio and/or Alternative assessments earned a passing scores on one of those tests. The remaining 2,973 students were eligible to attend the Reading Camps.

**Table 3**  
**Good Cause Exemptions to Mandatory Retention Granted to M-DCPS Third Graders**  
**Who Scored at Level 1 on the FCAT Reading Subtest, 2012-13**

	n	%
English Language Learner <sup>a</sup>	816	37.2
Portfolio Assessment	568	25.9
Alternative Assessment <sup>b</sup>	180	8.2
Students with Disabilities <sup>c</sup>	513	23.4
Other <sup>d</sup>	118	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,195</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup>Students with less than two years in an English for Speakers of Other Languages Program <sup>b</sup> Includes ITBS-C given in spring. <sup>c</sup>Students with Disabilities who were retained once and had one year of intensive remediation or for whom statewide assessment is not appropriate. <sup>d</sup>Students who received intensive remediation for two or more years and were previously retained for two years.

The students who elected to attend and went on to complete the Reading Camps were included in a treatment pool comprised of students who were either in their first or second year of exposure to summer programs. This was done to separate any effect of prior exposure from the effect of the Summer Reading Camps. Only students who participated in the *Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students* (Rising Literacy) program in summer 2013 were included in the treatment pool. Double retainees who previously attended the Reading Camps were excluded from the analysis. A comparison group was also defined which consisted of the eligible students who did not attend either the Reading Camps or Rising Literacy programs.

Of the 2,973 students slated for retention, a total of 93.4% (n=2,778) were eligible to included as described above. Table 4 partitions those students according to their current participation in the Reading Camps and their prior participation in the Rising Literacy programs. Students with partial exposure were excluded from both groups because their involvement would have precluded the isolation of each program's impact.

**Table 4**  
**Crosstabulation of Treatment Exposure**

Rising Literacy (2013)	Reading Camps (2014)			Total
	Complete	Partial	None	
Complete	537	13	92	642
Partial	31	1	8	40
None	1,494	42	560	2,096
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,062</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>2,778</b>

Table 4 shows the treatment pool to be comprised of 2,123 (shaded) of the 2,704 (642+2,062) students who completed the Reading Camps, Rising Literacy, or both programs. Fifty-one of those students, drawn from those who completed the Reading Camps alone (n=25) or in combination with Rising Literacy (n=24), attended charter schools and were excluded from the analysis.

The comparison pool was comprised of the 560 students who were not exposed to either program. Of the 2,123 students in the program pool, 89.7% (n = 1,905) had valid pre- and post-test (i.e., spring and summer alternative assessment) scores, and constituted the treatment groups. Of the 560 students in the comparison pool, only 9.8% (n = 55) had valid pre- and post-test scores, and constituted the comparison group. The characteristics of the final sample are described in Table 5. It lists for each subgroup, the percentage of students in the program groups and the comparison group.

**Table 5**  
**The Groups' Demographic Characteristics as a Percentage of the Sample**

Subgroup <sup>a</sup>	Programs			Comparison
	One		Two	
	Reading Camps	Rising Literacy	Reading Camps/ Rising Literacy	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	40.6	45.5	38.5	38.2
Female	59.4	54.5	61.5	61.8
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Black	42.7	45.5	44.4	32.7
Non-Black	57.3	54.5	55.6	67.3
<b>Free/Reduced Price Lunch</b>				
Eligible	94.4	100.0	93.7	89.1
Non-Eligible	5.6	0.0	6.3	10.9
<b>English Language Learner</b>				
Current	43.6	36.4	42.8	41.8
Former	4.4	0.0	3.1	1.8
Never	52.0	63.6	54.2	56.4
<b>Special Education</b>				
Disabled	16.7	36.4	18.5	20.0
Non-Disabled	83.3	63.6	81.5	80.0
<b>Over Age for Grade</b>				
Overage	16.5	27.3	11.4	18.2 <sup>a</sup>
Non-Overage	83.5	72.7	88.6	81.8
Age	9.5	9.4	9.5	9.5
N	1,403	11	491	55

*Note.* Statistically significant differences between the programs' demographic distributions within the subgroups are denoted by superscripts. Age is expressed in years.

<sup>a</sup> Statistically significant  $\chi^2(3,1960)=8.78, p=.03$ .

Table 5 shows that the distribution of the program groups did not differ significantly for any of the demographic subgroups.

### *Instrumentation*

The posttest used for this analysis was the Reading Comprehension subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition, SAT-10, a standardized norm-referenced test designed to

measure students' performance in comparison to a national normative sample, and to facilitate comparisons among individuals and groups. It is currently administered by the district to third grade students as an Alternative Assessment for Grade Three Promotion (AAGTP) at the end of summer school.

The Reading Comprehension subtest of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Edition C (ITBS-C) was used as the pretest. The ITBS-C is also a standardized norm-referenced test. It is currently administered by the District to third grade students as an alternative assessment at the end of the school year.

### *Data Analyses*

Demographic and pretest differences are known to influence achievement so that any between-group variation on such variables can mask the program's impact. Therefore, the application of the quasi-experimental design used regression analysis to compare the groups' posttest scores, while controlling for students' initial ability and demographic characteristics.

### *Promotion*

The question of whether participants were more likely than non-participants to have scored high enough on the alternative assessment to be promoted was gauged through a logistic regression analysis that estimated the impact of the program on the likelihood that students' would exceed the criterion for passing the alternative assessment, controlling for students' pretest scores and demographic characteristics. The passing criterion was the attainment of a score at or above the 45<sup>th</sup> percentile on the AATGP, which is the cutoff for promotion to the fourth grade.

Students' demographic characteristics (i.e., Gender, Ethnicity, Free/Reduced Price Lunch eligibility, English Language Learner status, Special Education participation, and Over age for Grade status), pretest, and program participation (i.e., Reading Camps, 1=participant, 0=non-participant and Rising Literacy, 1=participant, 0=non-participant) were the main predictors in the model. Interaction terms (Reading Camps x Pretest, Rising Literacy x Pretest, and Reading Camps x Rising Literacy x Pretest) were also included to ascertain whether the impact of the Reading Camps program was affected by prior participation in the Rising Literacy program, differed with students' pretest scores, or some combination of both.

### *Status*

The question of whether participants scored higher on the alternative assessment than non-participants was gauged through a regression analysis that estimated the impact of the program on the students' posttest scores, controlling for students' pretest scores and demographic characteristics. Students demographic characteristics, pretest, and program participation were the main predictors in the model. Interaction terms were also included to determine if the impact of the Reading Camps program was affected by prior participation in the Rising Literacy program, differed with students' pretest scores, or some combination of both.

## RESULTS

The evaluation of the Reading Camps was guided by a series of research questions. Question 1 pertains to implementation and perception. Question 2 gauges the program's impact on two measures: (a) on their likelihood of exceeding the cutoff on the alternative assessment required to be promoted and (b) students' alternative assessment scores..

### Return Rate

Administrators at 25 schools were targeted to receive the Summer Reading Camps Implementation Survey, which was administered online during the summer session. Of those targeted, 96.0% (n=24) completed the survey. The high response rate is sufficient to generalize the results to the full population.

### Implementation

Implementation was gauged so that any observed effects on participants' achievement could be properly attributed to the program. The online survey was used to make this determination, by measuring various aspects of the summer program including enrollment, planning, staffing, transportation, resources, materials, supplies, and specific curricular-factors, i.e., dosage (frequency/duration of treatment), engagement, and perceived effectiveness. Several schools operated more than one program during the summer. Table 6 lists the number and percent of respondents that reported operating each program.

**Table 6**  
**Programs that Operated in Conjunction with the Reading Camps**

Program	n	%
Course Credit Recovery	5	20.8
Extended School Year Services	8	33.3
Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students (below 50th percentile on the SAT-10, Grade 2 Reading Comprehension Subtest)	15	83.3
One or more additional program	21	87.5

*Note.* Most schools reported operating one additional program

Of the responding principals, 50.0% (n=12) reported operating one or more additional programs, 37.5% (n=9) reported operating two or more, and 8.3% (n=2) reported operating three. The most prevalent program was Literacy for Rising Third Grade Students second grade tutoring followed by Extended School Year Services.

Despite the multiple programs that operated in many cases, the enrollment at the schools was often reported to be below capacity. Over one-third of the schools operated at or less than one-quarter of capacity, and two-thirds of the schools operated at less than half of capacity. The capacity of the school buses that transported the students was also addressed.

Table 7 lists the number and percent of schools that reported school bus capacity in each of six listed ranges. The table shows that the school buses were often better utilized than the school facilities with over one-third operating at near capacity. Nonetheless, half the of the buses were reported to be less than sixty-percent full.

**Table 7**  
**Categories of School Bus Capacity**

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Less than 20% full	1	4.2
20 to 39% full	6	25.0
40 to 59% full	5	20.8
60 to 79% full	5	20.8
80% or more full	7	37.5
Total	24	100.0

The bulk of the implementation analysis was based on the results of 13 Likert type responses that gauged principals' perception of the adequacy of each of the five major dimensions of implementation: Planning, Resources, Transportation, Instructional Materials/Supplies, and Curriculum. Table 8 lists the positive and negative response options (classified according to a rubric) for each implementation dimension.

**Table 8**  
**Response Option Categories Assigned  
to Each Implementation Dimension**

<b>Implementation Dimension</b>	<b>Response Option Category</b>	
	Positive	Negative
	Response Option	Response Option
Planning	Adequately More than adequately	Less than adequately
Resources	An appropriate level More than needed Much more than needed	Much less than needed Somewhat less than need
Transportation	Usually on time Mostly on time	Mostly not on time Usually not on time
Instructional Materials/Supplies	An appropriate level Much more than needed	Much less than needed
Curriculum	Average Good Very good	Poor Fair

Table 9 lists the number and percent of principals who responded positively and negatively to each item within each implementation dimension. A total line is also provided that summarizes the responses within each dimension. Total scores for each dimension are classified as: 0-49.9%

(not implemented), 50-69.9% (partially implemented – dark), and 70-100% (fully implemented – light).

**Table 9**  
**Principals' Responses to Selected Items Addressing Implementation**

Dimension/Item	Positive		Negative			
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%		
<b>Planning</b>						
5	How well was your summer location informed about the academic needs of the students who would be attending?		22	91.7	2	8.3
6	How well was your summer location informed of the number of students that would be attending?		22	91.7	2	8.3
7	How adequate were the instructional staffing levels at the school, relative to the number of students that attended		21	87.5	3	12.5
Total			65	90.3	7	8.3
<b>Resources</b>						
8	How would you characterize the amount of basic supplies (e.g., paper, ink, towels, etc.) available at the school?		19	79.2	5	20.8
9	How would you characterize the number of ancillary (e.g., clerical, cafeteria, janitorial, etc.) staff available at the school?		22	91.7	2	8.3
10	How would you characterize the number of security personnel available at the school?		20	83.3	4	16.7
Total			61	84.7	11	15.3
<b>Transportation</b>						
12	To what extent did the arrival of the buses typically align with the schedule of the school?		22	91.7	2	8.3
13	To what extent did the departure of the buses typically align with the schedule of the school?		22	91.7	2	8.3
Total			44	91.7	4	8.3
<b>Instructional Materials/Supplies</b>						
14	How sufficient was the amount of curricular materials (i.e., books, workbooks, manipulatives, etc.) available?		6	25.0	18	75.0
15	How sufficient was the amount of instructional supplies (i.e., computers, whiteboards, pencils, paper, etc.) available?		19	79.2	5	20.8
Total			25	52.0	23	48.0
<b>Curriculum</b>						
19	How would you rate the ability of the After the Bell to remediate different students with different learning problems in the same classroom at the same time?		22	91.7	2	16.7
20	How would you rate the engagement of students in the thematic subject matter covered by After the Bell?		23	95.5	1	4.5
21	How would you rate the effectiveness of After the Bell at addressing the skills deficits of the students?		23	95.5	1	4.5
Total			68	94.4	4	5.6

*Note.* Total scores for each aspect are categorized as follows: 0-49.9% (not implemented), 50-69.9% (partially implemented – dark), and 70-100% (fully implemented – light). Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The table shows that nearly all the principals rated the planning, for the number and needs of students that would be attending their schools, positively. Staffing levels were assessed

positively as a result. In terms of planning, the program may be considered to be fully implemented.

On the issue of resources, the principals were slightly less sanguine with over 15% reporting shortages of clerical staff and/or not having an adequate number of security staff. In terms of resources, however, the program may still be considered to be fully implemented.

On the issue of transportation, the vast majority of principals reported that the arrival and departure of the school buses aligned with the school schedule. In terms of transportation, the program may be considered to be fully implemented.

On the issue of Instructional Materials/Supplies, while nearly 80% of the principals felt that the amount of instructional supplies was adequate, 75% were dissatisfied with the amount of curricular materials. In terms of instructional materials/supplies, the program may be considered to be partially implemented.

Curriculum was the primary area of inquiry and as such was addressed by four items, one of which asked respondents to identify the program operating in their school. While all of the administrators identified After the Bell as an implemented program. 16.7% (n=4) reported using a blended model that included iRead as a Web based supplement.

Nearly all respondents felt that After the Bell was able to remediate students with different learning problems within the same classroom, that its subject matter was engaging to students, and that it was effective at addressing their skill deficits. On the issue of curriculum, the program may be considered to be fully implemented.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, principals were asked to indicate the daily time allotted to After the Bell. Table 10 lists the number and percent of schools that reported operating After the Bell for each of the range of times provided.

**Table 10**  
**After the Bell Daily Dosage**

Range (minutes)	Schools	
	<i>n</i>	%
301 or more <sup>a</sup>	8	33.3
241 to 300	11	45.8
181 to 240	1	4.2
121 to 180	3	12.5
61 to 120	0	0.0
60 or less	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

*Note.* Recommended daily dosage is 300 minutes per day per program guidelines.

<sup>a</sup>Half of the schools with a reported dosage of more than five hours also reported operating another program for one hour daily either three (n=1) or five (n=3) times a week exceeding the time available for instruction.

Although, all of the responding schools reported operating the program five days per week, two-thirds (n=16) reported operating the program for less than the recommended time. Moreover, four schools reported using a blended model that may have reduced the dosage of the designated program. Regarding the uniformity and nature of instructional delivery, the program does not appear to have been consistently implemented.

The attitudinal component of implementation measures principals' summative perceptions of the program. The issues addressed included technical support, effectiveness, satisfaction with the status quo, and suggestions for improvement. Table 11 lists the number and percent of principals who responded positively and negatively to the pertinent items.

**Table 11**  
**Principals' Attitudes Toward the Program**

		Positive		Negative	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
30	How would you characterize the support provided by staff from curriculum and instruction?	24	100.0	0	0.0
31	How effective do you believe the Reading Camps were at helping students improve their reading skills?	22	91.7	2	8.3
32	To what extent do you agree that the program should continue to operate in its current form?	20	83.3	4	16.7

*Note.* Positive responses: (Average to Very Good and Agree to Strongly Agree). Negative responses: (Poor to Fair and Strongly Disagree to Unsure). Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The table shows that nearly all principals endorsed the level of technical support provided by District reading specialists and the effectiveness of the program at improving the students' reading skills. Moreover, more than 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the program should continue in its current form.

Space was also provided for principals to provide an open ended comment. One quarter of the administrators who completed the implementation items responded to this question. Two thirds of the comments concerned the availability of materials and supplies.

One administrator said, "Ensure there are enough materials for all students, which would include the student workbooks, blue cards, and phonics workbooks." A second administrator continued, "Materials need to be available for all students [so] that copies do not have to be made on a continuous basis." A third administrator noted, "Schools hosting summer camp should receive supply money. There is an expense associated with running summer reading programs." A fourth administrator added, "Instructional materials should be delivered **before** day one" [emphasis in original].

One of the six comments concerned the availability of student records. One administrator said, "It would be beneficial if summer school site administrator would have access student's academic records . . . . Every school should send a list of all their retained/eligible students with their test scores and working parent contact information."

Finally, one of the six comments concerned the appropriateness of staffing. One administrator opined, "[The] ratio of teachers to students, particularly for retained [third] graders should be smaller."

In sum, principals generally gave positive reports of the core aspects of implementation (i.e., planning, resources, transportation, instructional materials/supplies and curriculum). However, the availability of materials/supplies were rated as sufficiently wanting to cause them to be judged as only partially implemented. These sentiments were echoed in open ended comments in which lack of materials featured prominently. Finally, although, the Reading Camps curricula were rated as effective and most respondents agreed that they should continue in their present form, an analysis of program dosage revealed wide variation.

### Program Impact

The quasi-experimental designs were applied by using statistical procedures called regression analyses to compare the posttest scores of participating and non-participating students. The analyses controlled for students demographic characteristics and initial ability as measured by their pretest scores when making these comparisons.

#### *Promotion*

**Of the 1,960 students included in this analysis, 21.0% (n=398) of the students who attended the Reading Camps and 15.2% (n=10) of the students who did not, passed the AATGP administered at the end of summer school.** However, factors other than participation in the Reading Camps, such as baseline achievement, demographic characteristics, and prior participation in the Rising Literacy program may have accounted for a portion of the those differences.

Therefore, the program's impact on the likelihood that participants would pass the alternative assessment, and ultimately be promoted, was gauged through a special regression analysis that compared the odds of exceeding the cutoff for participating and non-participating students after their demographic characteristics and pretest scores and were taken into account. The posttest scores were converted to pass/fail outcomes based on whether or not the scores met or exceeded the criterion for promotion (i.e., 45<sup>th</sup> percentile). The analysis estimates the impact of the various predictors including the program impact in terms of the odds<sup>1</sup> of passing.

Table 12 lists for each effect, the predictor weight (*B*) and its standard error (*SE*) followed by the change in the odds ratio due to the predictor, and the Wald statistic used to gauge its statistical significance).

The Intercept gives the odds of passing for a student who is in the reference group, i.e., non-Black, English Language Learner (ELL)/non-ELL, non-Special Education (SPED)/Gifted with a pretest score equal to the sample mean of 162.4 (16<sup>th</sup> percentile), who did not attend either the Reading Camps or Rising Literacy program, which are 0.14 to 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Odds, which represent the likelihood of passing divided by the likelihood of failing, enable the discontinuous change from failing to passing to be mathematically modeled as a smooth transition called a logistic curve.

**Table 12**  
**Logistic Regression Analysis of the Posttest Scores**

	B	S.E.	Odds Ratio	Wald
Intercept	-1.98	0.37	0.14	28.03 ***
Black	-0.30	0.13	0.74	5.58 *
English Language Learner (ELL) - Former	0.58	0.26	1.78	4.91 *
Special Education (SPED)	-1.03	0.21	0.36	24.66 ***
Pretest	0.09	0.01	1.09	201.96 ***
Reading Camps	0.61	0.37	1.85	2.70
Rising Literacy <sup>a</sup>	-0.03	0.14	0.97	0.04
R <sup>2</sup>	.23			
N	1,960			
Pretest Mean	162.04 <sup>b</sup>			

*Note.* All predictors are grand-mean centered. *B* gives the predictor weight, which is the influence of the indicated effect on the outcome variable expressed on a log-odds scale. Wald is a measure of statistical significance given by the square of the ratio of *B* to its standard error. The odds ratio is found by raising the base of the natural logarithm to the power given by the predictor. This gives the probability of meeting the criterion divided by the probability of not meeting the criterion.

<sup>a</sup>Prior participation (2013) <sup>b</sup>16<sup>th</sup> percentile

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The odds of passing were lower for Black and SPED students and higher for ELL students than their non-Black, non-SPED/non-Gifted and Current-ELL/non-ELL counterparts, respectively. **The odds of passing the test for students who completed the Reading Camps were a non-significant 1.85 times higher than those who did not participate**, once their pretest scores and demographic characteristics were taken into account. Finally, the odds of passing, for students who previously participated in the Rising Literacy program, were not significantly different from those who did not participate.

### Status

Regression analysis was used to apply the quasi-experimental non-equivalent groups design and to compare the groups' posttest scores as depicted in Table 13, which lists for each effect, the mean and standard error of its unstandardized predictor weight, followed by the standardized weight, followed by the results of a test which gauges the statistical significance of that weight. The model R<sup>2</sup>, included at the bottom of each table, is an effect size that classifies the proportion of variation in the outcome explained by the predictors in the model as .01 (weak), .13 (moderate), and .26 (strong), Cohen (1988).

All continuous predictors are expressed as deviations from their sample mean value. Therefore, the intercept gives the value of the outcome variable when all dichotomous predictors are at their references values (i.e., non-Black, non-Female, non-ELL, non-SPED/non-Gifted, non-Reading Camps participant, and non-Rising Literacy participant) and the continuous predictors are equal to their sample mean values. The table gives the incremental impact of a one point change in each predictor on the students' posttest scores, when all the remaining predictors are included in the model. The second through fifth predictors are dichotomously coded so their predictor weights give the difference in the outcome variable between the group coded "1" (i.e., the listed group) and the group coded "0."

**Table 13**  
**Regression Analysis of the Posttest Scores**

Predictor	Unstandardized (B)		Standardized ( $\beta$ )	t
	M	S.E.		
Intercept	594.17	2.98		199.47 ***
Black	-2.66	1.26	-.05	-2.11 *
English Language Learner - Current	-3.32	1.26	-.06	-2.64 **
English Language Learner - Former	6.95	2.77	.05	2.51 *
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	-4.78	2.19	-.04	-2.18 *
Pretest	0.52	0.23	.22	2.25 *
Special Education	-14.69	1.38	-.21	-10.65 ***
Reading Camps	4.75	2.87	.03	1.65
Reading Camps x Pretest	0.61	0.24	.25	2.58 **
Rising Literacy	0.01	1.18	.00	0.01
R <sup>2</sup>	.30			
N	1,960			
Pretest Mean	162.04			

*Note.* The weights represent the influence on the criterion variable of a unit change in the predictor. All predictors are expressed as deviations from the sample mean (i.e., grand-mean centered). Unstandardized weights are in original units. Standardized weights result from rescaling all variables to zero mean and unit variance. The t statistic represents the ratio of the mean weight to its standard error and tests whether the weight is significantly different from zero.

<sup>a</sup> Prior participation (2012)

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 13 shows that Black, Current-ELL, and SPED students scored lower on the posttest, while Female students scored higher, and students who previously participated in the Rising Literacy program scored a non-significant 0.01 points higher on the posttest than students who did not previously participate. **The statistically significant Reading Camps x Pretest interaction term indicates that the impact of the Reading Camps varied with the students' pretest scores: It was significantly positive for the 35.2% with scores greater than 163, significantly negative for the 4.8% with scores less than 143, and not significant for the 60.0% with scores between 143 and 163.** Examination of the standardized weights for the main effects show students' pretest scores to have the strongest predictor on the posttest followed by SPED status. Less influential were Current and Former-ELL status, and classification as Black.

In sum, the Reading Camps did not have a significant impact on participants' chances of passing the AAGTP. Differences in the mean scores of participants and non-participants varied widely as a function of their pretest scores, so that some students benefited, while other students did not. Previous participation in the Rising Literacy program had no significant impact on students' chances of meeting the passing criterion or their scores on the AAGTP.

## DISCUSSION

The district undertook an evaluation to gauge whether students who completed the Reading Camps program exhibited improved performance on the alternative assessment when compared to a comparison group of students who did not participate.

### Summary

The evaluation of the Reading Camps described the operation and assessed outcome measures for the program that operated during its eleventh year of implementation. Conducted by the district's Office of Program Evaluation, the study was guided by a series of questions that can now be answered.

#### 1. Were the Reading Camps implemented as planned?

While principals gave positive accounts of planning, transportation, and curriculum/instruction, and rated all three parts of the curriculum as effective. Most principals also endorsed the level of technical support provided by District reading specialists and the effectiveness of the program at improving the students' reading skills. However, an analysis of *After the Bell* program dosage revealed wide variation. Therefore, the program could not be judged to be consistently implemented, and the following results must be reviewed with this in mind.

#### 2. Did students who participated in the Reading Camps score higher on the summer alternative assessment than students who did not?

Students who participated in the Reading Camps were not significantly more likely to meet the cutoff for promotion than students who did not attend but only registered to take the test. Although, the mean scores of students who participated was significantly higher among students whose pretest scores were in the top third of participants, only one-third of those students scored high enough to be promoted at the end of the Summer Reading Camps.

### Conclusions

Students who participated in the Reading Camps were not significantly more likely to pass the alternative assessment test. Although, participating students with scores from the 20<sup>th</sup>-49<sup>th</sup> percentile on the pretest, scored significantly higher on the posttest than similarly scoring students who did not attend, the improvement was not high enough to result in promotion to the fourth grade. Reported variations in the implementation of the program may explain why the program's benefits were not consistently distributed. Principals gave mostly positive reports of the core aspects of the program and endorsed the level of technical support provided by District reading specialists as well as the program's effectiveness at improving the students' reading skills.

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**Appendix A**  
**Summer School Implementation Survey**

# Summer Reading Camps Implementation Survey, 2014

## Instructions

This survey is designed to assess various aspects of the programs that operate at the school to which you are assigned during the summer. The information that you provide will be used to furnish formative feedback and inform future planning in the areas of logistics, human resources, and curriculum. Your impressions are very important to the future success of this initiative. If you have any questions or need assistance with this survey you may contact Dr. Steven M. Urdegar at (305) 995-7538. Please reflect honestly on your experience as an administrator and answer each item in the survey that follows to the best of your ability. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## Introduction

The items that follow pertain to the school to which you are assigned during the summer.

### *1. Which of the following choices best describes your role at the school?*

**(Select only one)**

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Other (specify):

### *2. Approximately, how many students are enrolled in this school during the regular school year?*

**(Provide only one response)**

### *3. Approximately, how many students participate in one or more of the summer programs?*

**(Provide only one response)**

## Planning

The items that follow pertain to ALL the programs operating at the school during the summer session.

### *4. Which programs operate at the school?*

**(Select all that apply)**

- Course Credit Recovery
- Extended School Year (ESY) Services
- Literacy for Rising 3rd Grade Students (below 50th percentile on the SAT-10, Grade 2 Reading Comprehension Subtest)
- Summer Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)
- Third Grade Summer Reading Camps
- Other (specify):

**5. How well has your present summer location been informed about the academic needs of the students who would be attending?**

**(Select only one)**

- Less than adequately
- Adequately
- More than adequately
- Not applicable

**6. How well has your summer location been informed of the number of students that would be attending?**

**(Select only one)**

- Less than adequately
- Adequately
- More than adequately
- Not applicable

**7. How adequate are the instructional staffing levels at the school, relative to the number of students that attended**

**(Select only one)**

- More than 20% understaffed
- 10 to 19% understaffed
- Appropriately staffed
- 10 to 19% overstaffed
- More than 20% overstaffed

## Resources

The questions that follow pertain to all the programs operating at the summer school.

**8. How would you characterize the amount of basic supplies (e.g., paper, ink, towels, etc.) available at the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Much less than needed
- Somewhat less than needed
- An appropriate level
- More than needed
- Much more than needed

**9. How would you characterize the number of ancillary (e.g., clerical, cafeteria, janitorial, etc.) staff available at the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Many fewer than needed
- Somewhat fewer than needed
- An appropriate level
- More than needed
- Many more than needed

**10. How would you characterize the number of security personnel available at the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Many fewer than needed
- Somewhat fewer than needed
- An appropriate level
- More than needed
- Many more than needed

## Transportation

**11. On average, how full are the school buses used to transport the students to and from the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Less than 20% full
- 20 to 39% full
- 40 to 59% full
- 60 to 79% full
- 80% or more full

**12. To what extent does the arrival of the buses typically align with the schedule of the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Mostly not on time
- Usually not on time
- Usually on time
- Mostly on time

**13. To what extent does the departure of the buses typically align with the schedule of the school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Mostly not on time
- Usually not on time
- Usually on time
- Mostly on time

## Instruction

The items that follow pertain ONLY to the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps

**14. How sufficient is the amount of curricular materials (i.e., books, workbooks, manipulatives, etc.) available?**

**(Select only one)**

- Much less than needed
- Somewhat less than needed
- An appropriate level
- More than needed

- Much more than needed

**15. How sufficient is the amount of instructional supplies (i.e., computers, whiteboards, pencils, paper, etc.) available?**

**(Select only one)**

- Much less than needed
- Somewhat less than needed
- An appropriate level
- More than needed
- Much more than needed

**Branch1**

**16. Does After the Bell (developed by Scholastic) operate in your school?**

**(Select only one)**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Curriculum**

**17. How many days per week is instruction in After the Bell typically delivered to students?**

**(Select only one)**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**18. On the days in which it is used, for how many minutes daily was After the Bell provided?**

**(Select only one)**

- 60 or less
- 61 to 120
- 121 to 180
- 181 to 240
- 241 to 300
- 301 or more

**19. How would you rate the ability of After the Bell to remediate different students with different learning problems in the same classroom at the same time?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor
- Fair
- Average

- Good
- Very Good

**20. How would you rate the engagement of students in the subject matter covered by After the Bell?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor
- Fair
- Average
- Good
- Very good

**21. How would you rate the effectiveness of After the Bell at addressing the skills deficits of the students?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor
- Fair
- Average
- Good
- Very Good

**Branch4**

**22. Did any other component of the Reading Camps other than After the Bell operate in the school during the regular school day of the present summer session?**

**(Select only one)**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Other**

**23. Please provide the name and a description of the program that includes publisher/developer, series, and materials used.**

**(Provide only one response)**

**24. Which of the following skills were addressed by the program?**

**(Select all that apply)**

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary development
- Fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Writing
- Test preparation

- Other (specify):

**25. How many days per week was instruction in the program typically delivered to students?**

**(Select only one)**

- 1  
 2  
 3  
 4  
 5

**26. On the days in which it is used, for how many minutes daily was the program provided?**

**(Select only one)**

- 60 or less  
 61 to 120  
 121 to 180  
 181 to 240  
 241 to 300  
 301 or more

**27. How would you rate the ability of the program to remediate different groups of students with different learning problems in the same classroom at the same time?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor  
 Fair  
 Average  
 Good  
 Very Good

**28. How would you rate the engagement of students by the program?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor  
 Fair  
 Average  
 Good  
 Very good

**29. How would you rate the effectiveness of the program at addressing the skills deficits of the students?**

**(Select only one)**

- Poor  
 Fair  
 Average  
 Good  
 Very Good

## Summary1

The questions that follow pertain to your overall impression of all aspects of the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps

*30. How would you characterize the technical support provided by staff from curriculum and instruction?*

**(Select only one)**

- Poor
- Fair
- Average
- Good
- Very Good
- Not applicable

## Summary2

*31. How effective do you believe the Third Grade Summer Reading Camps were at helping students to improve their reading skills?*

**(Select only one)**

- Poor
- Fair
- Average
- Good
- Very Good
- Not applicable

*32. To what extent do you agree that the program should continue to operate in its current form?*

**(Select only one)**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Unsure
- Agree
- Strongly agree

*33. Optionally, use the space below to provide any suggestions you might have on how the Summer Reading Camps can be improved.*

**(Provide only one response)**