

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF PROGRAM EVALUATION  
1500 BISCAYNE BOULEVARD  
MIAMI, FL 33132**

**SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM EVALUATION**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May of 2006, the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) Board approved implementation of Secondary School Reform (SSR) in the District. The SSR plan is a multi-phase and multi-year program that includes, in part, an eight period class schedule, common planning among teachers and career theme-based academies for students. In 2006-07, eleven M-DCPS high schools comprised the first cohort of schools implementing SSR. A second cohort of 17 additional senior high schools implemented SSR in 2007-08.

A request was made by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to evaluate the effect of the implementation of the SSR plan. A decision was made to focus on 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attending all 10 traditional SSR high schools in 2006-07 (Cohort 1) and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attending all nine traditional SSR high schools in 2007-08 (Cohort 2). Comparison groups were created from students attending non-SSR schools. The extent of SSR implementation, the academic performance of SSR students, and the reactions of students, teachers and school administrators to SSR were accessed via archival data, interviews, and surveys. The academic performance of SSR students, including FCAT results, enrollment in advanced courses, attendance, suspensions, promotion, and dropout rates, were examined.

A total of 4,514 SSR students and 5,558 Comparison Group students were included in the Cohort 1 analyses and 5,003 SSR students and 5,972 Comparison Group students in the Cohort 2 analyses. Additionally, 19 principals, 1,237 teachers, and 2,263 students completed questionnaires. The exact evaluation questions proposed and the accompanying results are presented below.

***Evaluation Question #1. What is the academic performance of students in the SSR schools?*** The results show that students attending SSR schools for the longest period of time, those who had been exposed to the initiative for two years, exhibited positive changes in academic performance. Specifically, these students took more advanced courses, such as AP and honors, and were more likely to receive grade level promotions than students in a comparison group. Also, their FCAT-SSS reading levels declined less than those of comparison students. Performance and behavior effects were less evident among students attending SSR schools in their first year of SSR implementation.

***Evaluation Question #2. Was the SSR program fully implemented at the schools?*** The majority of teachers and administrators reported that SSR was fully implemented in their schools. This was more often the case in Cohort 1 than in Cohort 2 schools. Funding of personnel for the eight period day was an issue mentioned by principals as an obstacle to full implementation. Additionally, some teachers resisted the changes brought on by SSR, although the great majority supported SSR. Principals were familiar with the goals of SSR and reported receiving adequate support from the district for implementation purposes.

***Evaluation Question #3. What is the opinion of students, teachers, and administrators concerning the effectiveness of SSR?*** Teachers and principals believe that SSR has had a positive impact on student academic performance and on their career plans. Students report that the academies have given them career skills, encouraged attendance, and motivated them to attend college. The students who participated in internships were pleased with their experiences. Overall, students, teachers, and school administrators have a positive opinion of SSR and consider it an effective educational component.

Based on the observed results the following recommendations are made:

1. Monitor the implementation of SSR.
2. Assess the long term effects of SSR on academic performance after full implementation.
3. Promote students' awareness of, and participation in, internships.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been growing national concern about the effectiveness of education at the high school level. Statistics indicate that approximately one-third of senior high school students and almost half of minorities fail to graduate from high school (Swanson, 2004). Furthermore, the trend is expected to continue if not vigorously countered (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Morinson, 2006). Educational researchers believe that high schools need to be reformed to provide students with personalized learning environments that include challenging and relevant courses (Bernstein, Millsap, Schimmenti & Page, 2008; David, 2008). The federal government has acted to address the issue by authorizing funding, under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, that allows local education agencies to design and implement Secondary School Reform (SSR).

In May of 2006, the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) Board approved implementation of a Secondary School Reform (SSR) initiative as delineated in the *Secondary School Reform 5 Year Plan* (M-DCPS, 2006). After considerable study, the District's SSR plan was generated by the Secondary School Committee, a group of M-DCPS school and District level administrators. The SSR plan is a multi-phase and multi-year program designed to implement six core principles associated with high academic achievement. These include: 1) personalized learning environments, 2) academic engagement of all students, 3) empowered educators, 4) accountable leaders, 5) engaged community and youth, and 6) integrated system of standards, curriculum, instruction, assessments, and support. The SSR plan includes, in part, an eight period class schedule, common planning among teachers, and theme-based career academies for students. A central component of SSR is to restructure high schools into small learning communities to be known as career academies. These personalized learning environments will provide high school students with academic opportunities that will prepare them for college and for the working world.

The *SSR 5 Year Plan* proposed to have an initial Cohort of 11 high schools implement the SSR plan in the 2006-07 school year. Ten traditional and one alternative M-DCPS high school comprised the SSR's first Cohort. A second cohort implemented SSR beginning in the 2007-08 school year. Cohort 2 consisted of nine traditional and eight alternative or specialized senior high schools.

A request was made by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to evaluate the effect of the implementation of the SSR plan. A decision was made to focus on 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attending traditional SSR schools in 2006-07, year one of the program (Cohort 1) and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attending traditional SSR schools in 2007-08, year two of the program (Cohort 2).

In the present evaluation the following specific questions will be examined:

1. *Was the SSR program fully implemented at the schools?*
2. *What is the academic performance of students in the SSR schools?*
3. *What is the opinion of students, teachers, administrators, and businesses concerning the effectiveness SSR program?*

## EVALUATION DESIGN

The Secondary School Reform (SSR) evaluation relied on archival student data and on survey and interview results. The details of the evaluation's data collection process are provided below.

### School Samples

**SSR School Selection.** According to SSR district staff, 10 senior high schools initiated SSR in 2006-07. All SSR schools that began in 2006-07 were included in the analyses and were designated as Cohort 1 (Appendix A1). An additional 9 senior high schools began SSR in 2007-08. The SSR schools that began in 2007-08 were designated as Cohort 2 (Appendix A2).

It should be noted that all M-DCPS secondary schools implement, to some extent, the SSR initiatives. For the purposes of the present study, senior high schools that adopted eight-period schedules will be designated as *SSR schools*. Senior high schools that did not adopt an eight period schedule will be referred to as the *Comparison schools*.

**Comparison Group School Selection.** A total of 17 senior high schools, excluding alternative and specialized schools, did not participate in SSR. From this group a comparison sample for the SSR Cohort 1 schools were selected. These 10 schools are listed in Appendix A1. From the group of 10 Cohort 1 comparison schools, nine were selected to act as the comparison sample for Cohort 2 schools. These Cohort 2 comparison schools are also listed in Appendix A2.

Comparison schools were selected on the basis of their similarity to SSR schools in free/reduced lunch status and ethnic breakdowns. The characteristics of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade student populations of the schools were examined and compared to SSR schools the year the programs were initiated. These figures are shown in Appendices A1 and A2.

### Student Samples

**Cohort 1 Student Selection.** The Cohort 1 SSR group, contrasted with the comparison group, was more likely to be Black (30% vs. 17%) and of low socioeconomic status, as indicated by the percentage of students participating in the free/reduced lunch program (55% vs. 50%). The ethnicity and free/reduced lunch (FRL) figures, for the schools and overall, are shown in Appendix A1.

All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in a Cohort 1 SSR or comparison school at the beginning of the 2006-07 school year were selected to participate in the student sample. This was the sample used for calculating the drop-out and the promotion rate. The promotion analysis included only students active as of 2007-08. For all other analyses only those Cohort 1 students who had remained active and at the same school through 2007-08 and who graduate each year were included. Therefore, the Cohort 1 student sample used for analyses of FCAT-NRT, FCAT-SSS, absences, and suspensions data included 4,514 SSR students and 5,558 Comparison Group students.

Cohort 2 Student Selection. The Cohort 2 SSR group, contrasted with the comparison group, was more likely to be Black (51% vs. 20%) and of low socioeconomic status, as indicated by the percentage of students participating in the free/reduced lunch program (62% vs. 51%). The ethnicity and FRL figures for the Cohort 2 schools, individually and overall, are shown in Appendix A2.

All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in a Cohort 2 SSR or comparison school at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year were selected to participate in the student sample. This was the sample used for calculating the drop-out rate. For all other analyses only those Cohort 2 students who were active in 2007-08 and promoted after the 2006-07 baseline year were included. Therefore, the Cohort 2 student sample used for analyses of FCAT-NRT, FCAT-SSS, absences, and suspensions data included 5,003 SSR students and 5,972 Comparison Group students.

### Survey Samples

Principal Survey. All 19 principals of SSR Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools were surveyed. In the fall of 2008 principals were asked to complete the SSR Principal Questionnaire (Appendix B1). The survey was conducted electronically and 17 of the 19 principals (89%) completed questionnaires.

Teacher Survey. All instructional personnel at the 19 SSR Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools were surveyed in the fall of 2008. Teachers were asked to complete the SSR Teacher Questionnaire (Appendix B2). The survey was conducted electronically and 1,237 teachers, representing all the SSR schools, completed questionnaires.

Student Survey. Five classes of students, selected from among home rooms, for the most part, in grades 10 and 11, at each of the 19 SSR Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools were surveyed in the fall of 2008. Students were asked to complete the SSR Student Questionnaire (Appendix B3). A total of 2,263 students, representing 16 of the 19 (84%) SSR schools completed questionnaires. Approximately half of the respondents (48%) were Cohort 1 SSR school students and the remainder (52%) were Cohort 2 SSR students.

In addition, SSR district staff and selected SSR school principals/administrators were interviewed concerning the implementation and effectiveness of SSR. Existing archival interview data of SSR school principals and district administrators, collected by a previous researcher in May 2008, was also utilized (the SSR Knowledge Capsule).

## RESULTS

### *Evaluation Question #1. What is the academic performance of students in the SSR schools?*

The following indicators were used to assess the academic performance of SSR students: FCAT-NRT, FCAT-SSS, attendance, suspensions, promotions, and drop-out rate. The results for each area of academic performance is presented below for students in Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools.

#### FCAT-NRT

The math and reading FCAT-NRT performance of SSR and comparison (Non-SSR) students was tracked for a period of two years for Cohort 1 students (8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade), and one year for Cohort 2 students (9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade).

**FCAT-NRT Reading.** The FCAT-NRT reading percentile scores of Cohort 1 and 2 students, which compares the students' performance to national norms, is presented in Table 1. As shown, SSR students in Cohort 1 improved their normative standing in reading across a two year period from the 58<sup>th</sup> percentile in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to the 64<sup>th</sup> percentile in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Similarly, Cohort 2 SSR students improved their normative standing in reading from the 47<sup>th</sup> percentile in grade 8 (2007) to the 48<sup>th</sup> percentile in grade 9.

The FCAT-NRT scale score gains made by the SSR and Non-SSR groups across the one or two year period were statistically contrasted using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) technique. The analyses statistically controlled for initial FCAT-NRT reading results and used key demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, gifted status, and limited English proficiency as covariates with the 2008 FCAT-NRT results acting as the dependent variable. The results indicate that after controlling for initial test results and relevant demographic variables the SSR and Non-SSR groups differed significantly in their final FCAT-NRT reading scores. This was true both for Cohort 1 students,  $F(1, 9,641) = 14.69, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .002$ , and for Cohort 2 students,  $F(1, 8,779) = 52.33, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006$ .

Table 1

FCAT-NRT Reading Percentile Scores for SSR and Non-SSR Students

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Cohort 1	SSR	58	61	64
	Non-SSR	64	68	70
Cohort 2	SSR	47	48	--
	Non-SSR	62	63	--

Nevertheless, it is important to note that in both instances the percentage of adjusted 2008 FCAT-NRT reading results variance explained by group affiliation (SSR and Non-SSR) was too small, less than one percent, to have any practical significance.

**FCAT-NRT Mathematics.** The math FCAT-NRT percentile scores of Cohort 1 and 2 students, which compares the students' performance to national norms, is presented in Table 2. As shown, SSR students in Cohort 1 declined in their normative standing in mathematics across the two year period from the 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to the 61<sup>st</sup> percentile in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. On the other hand, Cohort 2 SSR students increased their normative standing in mathematics from the 62<sup>nd</sup> percentile in grade 8 to the 64<sup>th</sup> percentile in grade 9.

The FCAT-NRT scale score gains made by the SSR and Non-SSR groups across one or two year periods were statistically contrasted using ANCOVA analyses. The analyses used the initial FCAT-NRT math results and key demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, gifted status and limited English proficiency as covariates and the 2008 FCAT-NRT results as the dependent variable. The results indicate that after controlling for initial test results and relevant demographic variables the SSR and Non-SSR groups significantly differed in their final FCAT-NRT mathematics scores. This was true both for Cohort 1 students,  $F(1, 9,624) = 12.25, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .001$ , and for Cohort 2 students,  $F(1, 8,769) = 60.58$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .007$ , but in both instances the percentage of adjusted 2008 FCAT-NRT mathematics results variance explained by group affiliation (SSR and Non-SSR) was too small, less than one percent, to have any practical significance.

Table 2.

FCAT-NRT Mathematics Percentile Scores for SSR and Non-SSR Students

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Cohort 1	SSR	72	71	61
	Non-SSR	77	76	67
Cohort 2	SSR	62	64	--
	Non-SSR	74	73	--

**Summary of FCAT-NRT Results.** The two SSR cohorts improved their reading scores across one and two year periods as compared to the national averages. The math scores of the Cohort 2 group also improved across a one year period but the math scores of Cohort 1 students declined across a two year period, as compared to national averages. The declining effect observed in NRT mathematics scores in Cohort 1 was observed in the Non-SSR group and throughout M-DCPS for students in those specific grades and for that time period. The FCAT-NRT reading and mathematics gains made by SSR students did not differ greatly from those of students in comparison high schools.

## FCAT-SSS

The math and reading FCAT-SSS performance of SSR and comparison students was tracked for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 students. M-DCPS students are required to achieve a certain threshold on the FCAT-SSS to graduate from high school. A FCAT-SSS score of Level 3 or above in reading and math guarantees that the student has achieved the graduation requirement. For this reason, the present analyses looks at the percentage of student scoring at Level 3 or above in these two tests.

FCAT-SSS Reading. The percentage of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 students whose scores reached or surpassed Level 3 in the reading section of the FCAT-SSS is presented in Table 3. As shown, the percentage of SSR students in Cohort 1 achieving Level 3 or above, declined 11 percent between the 2006 and 2008 administration of the FCAT. The percentage of Cohort 2 students who achieved Level 3 or above declined by one percent, across the one year period (2007 to 2008).

The reading FCAT-SSS performance of the comparison group of students (Non-SSR) differed slightly from the SSR groups in a negative direction. The percentage of students scoring at Level 3 or above in the Non-SSR Cohort 1 group decreased by 13 percent during the time period and by 2 percent for the Cohort 2 Non-SSR group.

Table 3

Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Scoring at Level 3 or Above in FCAT-SSS Reading

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Diff.
Cohort 1	SSR	39.3	34.6	28.4	-10.9
	Non-SSR	47.8	42.9	34.5	-13.3
Cohort 2	SSR	27.6	26.4	-	-1.2
	Non-SSR	44.4	42.4	-	-2.2

FCAT-SSS Mathematics. The percentage of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 students whose scores reached or surpassed Level 3 in the mathematics section of the FCAT-SSS is presented in Table 4. As shown, the percentage of SSR students in Cohort 1 achieving Level 3 or above, increased by 9.7 percent between the 2006 and 2008 administration of the FCAT. The percentage of Cohort 2 students who achieved Level 3 or above increased by 4.4 percent, across the one year period (2007 to 2008).

The reading FCAT-SSS performance of the comparison group of students (Non-SSR) did not differ greatly from the SSR groups. The percentage of students scoring at Level 3 or above in the Non-SSR Cohort 1 group increased by 9.3 percent during the time period and by 5.0 percent for the Cohort 2 Non-SSR group.

Table 4

Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Scoring at Level 3 or Above in FCAT-SSS Mathematics

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Diff.
Cohort 1	SSR	50.0	54.1	59.7	9.7
	Non-SSR	60.1	63.9	69.4	9.3
Cohort 2	SSR	40.7	45.1	-	4.4
	Non-SSR	60.2	65.3	-	5.1

**Summary of FCAT-SSS Results.** Cohort 1 and 2 SSR students improved their mathematics but not their reading FCAT-SSS performances during the periods assessed. With regard to the Cohort 1 reading results, it is important to note that there are technical problems with the scaling and assignment of FCAT reading levels in the secondary grades resulting in lower levels being assigned statewide relative to FCAT reading scores achieved (Abella & Shneyderman, 2007). Overall, the SSR students did not differ greatly from comparison students in their FCAT-SSS mathematics performances. SSR students did show less of a decline in their SSS reading levels, relative to the comparison group, with the gap between groups being greater in Cohort 1 (2 years of SSR) than in Cohort 2 (1 year of SSR).

#### ADVANCED COURSES

A count was made of the number of honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken by SSR and comparison (Non-SSR) students. The courses were tabulated the year before attending senior high (8<sup>th</sup> grade) and after attending either one (9<sup>th</sup> grade for Cohort 2 students) or two years (10<sup>th</sup> grade for Cohort 1 students) of senior high school.

**Honors Courses:** As shown in Table 5, approximately one-third (32%) of Cohort 1 students, both SSR and non-SSR, took honors courses in the eighth grade. They also took, on average, the same number of courses (1.6) in the eighth grade. Two years later, Cohort 1 SSR and non-SSR students were still participating at similar levels in honors courses (52% vs. 53%). But on average, 10<sup>th</sup> graders in SSR schools took more honors courses (2.6) than students in non-SSR schools (2.2).

Cohort 2 students in SSR schools were less likely to be enrolled in honors courses (19%) than non-SSR students (29%) prior to reaching high school (eighth grade). Once reaching high school (ninth grade), the level of Cohort 2 students enrolled in honors courses increased more steeply for SSR students (38%) as compared to non-SSR students (44%). The two groups did not differ in the average number of honors classes students took (2.6).

Table 5

Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Taking Honors Courses and the Average Number of Honors Courses Taken per Student

Cohort	Group	Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
		% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>	% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>	% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>
Cohort 1	SSR	32%	1.6	45%	3.1	52%	2.6
	Non-SSR	32%	1.6	47%	2.6	53%	2.2
Cohort 2	SSR	19%	1.7	38%	2.6	--	--
	Non-SSR	29%	1.6	44%	2.6	--	--

(1). Percentage of students who took honors courses. (2). Average number of courses taken by students taking honors courses.

Advanced Placement Courses: As shown in Table 6, less than one percent of Cohort 1 students, both SSR and non-SSR, took Advanced Placement (AP) courses in the eighth grade. They also took, on average, one AP course per student in the eighth grade. Two years later, SSR and non-SSR students were participating at the same level in Advanced Placement courses (10%). But on average, 10<sup>th</sup> graders in SSR schools were taking more advanced placement courses (1.6) than students in non-SSR schools (1.2).

Table 6

Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Taking Advanced Placement Courses and the Average Number of Advanced Placement Courses Taken per Student

Cohort	Group	n	Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
			% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>	% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>	% <sup>1</sup>	No. <sup>2</sup>
Cohort 1	SSR	4514	.2%	1.0	.2%	1.0	10%	1.6
	Non-SSR	5558	.3%	1.0	.4%	1.0	10%	1.2
Cohort 2	SSR	5003	.7%	1.6	4.6%	1.1	--	--
	Non-SSR	5972	.1%	1.6	2.6%	1.0	--	--

(1). Percentage of students who took Advanced Placement courses. (2). Average number of courses taken by students taking advanced placement courses.

Ninth grade Cohort 2 SSR students were more likely to be enrolled in AP courses (4.6%) than students attending non-SSR schools (2.6%). Ninth grade SSR Cohort 2 students were also, on average, taking more AP courses (1.1) than non-SSR students (1.0).

Summary of Advanced Courses Placement. Students attending SSR schools enrolled in a greater number of advanced courses, honors and AP, than students attending non-SSR schools.

## ATTENDANCE

The number of unexcused absences of SSR and Non-SSR students was tracked for a period of two years for Cohort 1 students and one year for Cohort 2 students. The average number of absences per year for Cohort 1 and 2 students are presented in Table 7. As shown, absences increased for SSR students in Cohort 1 across a two year period from an average of 4.5 per year in the eighth grade to 6.4 in the tenth grade. Similarly, Cohort 2 SSR students increased their absences from 5 in grade eight to 9.2 in grade nine.

Table 7

Mean Absences for SSR and Non-SSR Students

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Cohort 1	SSR	4.5	4.3	6.4
	Non-SSR	2.9	3.9	4.4
Cohort 2	SSR	5.0	9.2	--
	Non-SSR	3.7	5.2	--

The changes in mean absences generated by the SSR and Non-SSR groups across the one or two year periods were statistically contrasted using ANCOVA analyses. The analyses used key demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, gifted status, and limited English proficiency as covariates, and the change in the number of absences across two years (Cohort 1) or one year (Cohort 2) as the dependent variable.

The results indicate that after controlling for relevant demographic variables, the SSR and Non-SSR groups significantly differed in changes in attendance (absences). This was true both for Cohort 1 students,  $F(1, 10,021) = 4.11, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$ , and Cohort 2 students,  $F(1, 9,620) = 213.69, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .022$ . In the case of Cohort 1, the difference in the changes in attendance between the two groups was too small to be of practical significance, with group affiliation accounting for less than one percent of the observed outcome variance. In Cohort 2, the changes in attendance accounted for by group affiliation was large enough to be of practical consequence.

Summary of Attendance Results. The average annual number of unexcused absences increased for Cohorts 1 and 2 students during the periods assessed, i.e., the attendance rate for SSR students decreased. The attendance of the Cohort 1 group changed at a rate similar to that of the comparison group. The attendance of the Cohort 2 group students decreased more rapidly than that of the comparison group.

## SUSPENSIONS

The number of outdoor suspensions of SSR and Non-SSR students was tracked for a period of two years for Cohort1 students and one year for Cohort 2 students. The average number of outdoor suspensions per student per year for Cohort 1 and 2 students are presented in Table 8. As shown, suspensions decreased for SSR students in Cohort 1 from an average of .73 per student in the eighth grade to .62 per student in the tenth grade. On the other hand, Cohort 2 SSR students increased their suspension rates from 1.04 per student in grade eight to 1.63 per student in grade nine.

Table 8

Average Number of Outdoor Suspensions for SSR and Non-SSR Students

Cohort	Group	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Cohort 1	SSR	.73	.52	.62
	Non-SSR	.42	.32	.34
Cohort 2	SSR	1.04	1.63	--
	Non-SSR	.55	.51	--

The changes in outdoor suspensions generated by the SSR and Non-SSR groups across the one or two year periods were statistically contrasted using ANCOVA analyses. The analyses used key demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, gifted status and limited English proficiency as covariates, and changes in suspensions across a two year period (Cohort 1) or one year period (Cohort2) as the dependent variable.

The results indicate that after controlling for relevant demographic variables the groups in one cohort differed significantly in the average change in suspensions while the other cohort did not. That is, the Cohort 1 groups did not differ significantly in their changes in suspensions,  $F(1, 10,022) = 1.09$ ,  $p = ns.$ , while Cohort 2 students did,  $F(1,9,619) = 43.32$ ,  $partial \eta^2 = .004$ . In Cohort 2, the difference in changes in outdoor suspensions across time between the two groups was too small to be of practical significance, with group affiliation accounting for less than one percent of the observed outcome variance.

Summary of Suspension Results. The average annual number of suspensions per student decreased for Cohort 1 SSR students and increased for Cohort 2 SSR students during the periods assessed. The suspensions of the Cohort 1 and 2 SSR groups changed at a pace similar to that of the comparison groups.

PROMOTION

The promotion rate, from one grade to the next, was calculated for Cohort 1 SSR and Non-SSR students for the school years spanning from 2006-07 to 2007-08. All students in grade 9 at the beginning of the 2006-07 school year who were still active in the 2007-08 school year and attending the same senior high school were included in the analyses.

As shown in Table 9, approximately 95 percent of SSR student were promoted to grade 10, or in some cases, 11 and 12. Approximately 94 percent of Non-SSR students were promoted. Alternatively, the a smaller number of SSR students (5.5%) were retained at grade nine, when compared to Non-SSR student (6.2%). This difference approached statistical significance  $X^2(1) = 3.01, p < .08$ .

Table 9

Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Promoted and Retained

Cohort	Group	Promoted	Retained
Cohort 1	SSR	94.5	5.5
	Non-SSR	93.8	6.2

Summary of Promotion Results. SSR students were slightly more likely to be promoted to a higher grade level than students in the Non-SSR group.

DROP-OUT

The drop-out formula used by the State of Florida was used to calculate the drop-out rate for all Cohort 1 and 2 students. All students enrolled as 9<sup>th</sup> graders at the beginning of 2006-07, for Cohort 1 students, and at the start of 2007-08, for Cohort 2 students, were included in the analyses.

As shown in Table 10, the percentage of Cohort 1 students who dropped out of school during the two year period examined was 4.1 percent for the SSR group and 3.0 percent for the Non-SSR group. This difference was statistically significant,  $X^2(1) = 13.62, p < .001$

The percentage of Cohort 2 students who dropped out of school during a one year period was 2.2 percent for the SSR group and 1.3 percent for the Non-SSR group. This difference was statistically significant,  $X^2(1) = 17.74, p < .001$ .

Table 10

## Percentage of SSR and Non-SSR Students Who Dropped Out of School

Cohort	Group	n	Drop-Out Percent
Cohort 1	SSR	6891	4.1
	Non-SSR	8362	3.0
Cohort 2	SSR	6453	2.2
	Non-SSR	7351	1.3

**Summary of Drop-Out Results.** SSR students were more likely to drop out of school than Non-SSR students during a two year period, as examined in Cohort 1 analyses, and across a one year period, as observed with Cohort 2 students.

## Summary of Results for Evaluation Question #1:

There were differences observed in academic performance when contrasting SSR Cohort 1 students to the comparison group. In particular, Cohort 1 SSR students' FCAT-SSS reading levels declined less than those of comparison students. Additionally, Cohort 1 students took more advanced courses, such as AP and honors, and were more likely to receive grade level promotions than students in the comparison group. Therefore, Cohort 1 SSR students, who had been exposed to the initiative for two years, exhibited positive changes in academic performance. On the other hand, Cohort 2 SSR students did not show favorable results in the area of academic performance. Cohort 2 comparison students exhibited higher attendance than SSR students. Also, the drop-out rate in general was greater among SSR students. It should be noted that Cohort 2 SSR schools were in the first year of program implementation. Appendix D1 provides a table summarizing all results for evaluation question #1.

***Evaluation Question #2. Was the SSR program fully implemented at the schools?***

Principals and instructional personnel at SSR schools were surveyed and asked to report the extent of SSR implementation at their schools. In the survey, principals and instructional personnel (teachers) were asked to respond by referring to the status of SSR initiative as of the 2007-08 school year. For Cohort 1 SSR schools this would have been the second year of SSR implementation and for Cohort 2 SSR schools the first year of implementation. A total of 17 school administrators and 1,237 teachers completed questionnaires. All SSR schools participated in the surveys.

The results show that overall approximately three-fourths of principals (71%) and two-thirds of teachers (66%) claim SSR as having been fully implemented at their schools. When considering only those teachers who reported having been directly involved in planning or implementing SSR

(n = 727), three-fourths reported full SSR implementation at their schools (74%). SSR was more likely to have been fully implemented at Cohort 1 schools, according to both principals (89%) and SSR-involved teachers (78%), than at Cohort 2 SSR schools. In Cohort 2 school 50% of principals and 70% of SSR-involved teachers reported full SSR implementation (Table 11).

Table 11

Reports of Full SSR Implementation in 2007-08: Principal and Teacher Survey Responses

SSR Cohorts	Principals	Teachers*
Cohort 1	89%	78%
Cohort 2	50%	70%
Total	73%	74%

\*Among teachers who participated in SSR.

In the survey's voluntary write-in section principals wrote that they, "need additional funding to implement the program" and that "funding was cut to the point that we have not been able to fund the number of supplements that are created as a result of offering an eight period schedule"(Appendix C1) .

Almost all principals (94%) reported receiving sufficient information from district staff to fully understand and implement SSR at their schools. All principals (100%) indicated that they were familiar with the goals of SSR and most (94%) were familiar with the six core principles of SSR. Among the six SSR core principles, administrators rated as most important *the academic engagement of students* and *accountable leaders*. All administrators (100%) rated both of these principles as *very important*.

Approximately half of principals (47%) indicated that all their staff supported SSR while the rest (53%) indicated that three-fourths of their staff supported SSR. Principals reported that some teachers do not support SSR because it requires them to teach more classes (35%), and because of issues having to do with scheduling (29%), funding (23%) and the way teachers plan (11%). The factors that principals believe influenced teachers to support SSR include: providing more course options for students (82%), pay for additional teaching duties (65%), prospective positive impact of SSR on students' academic outcomes (47%), opportunity to share student data with other teachers (47%), and opportunity for teachers to collaborate on thematic lesson planning (41%). Some principals identified as major challenges to SSR the following: the availability of funds for implementation (47%), that some academies are better supported than others (41%), and that teachers are challenged to teach at a higher level (41%).

The majority of teachers reported that they support SSR (90%). More than half of the teachers surveyed (59%) were directly involved in implementing SSR in their schools. When considering only those teachers directly involved in SSR, the support rate was higher (95%). Teachers directly involved with SSR reported having received adequate SSR information and training (95%). Most were familiar with SSR's goals (87%) and with the six core principles (74%). Among the six SSR core principles, teachers rated the 'academic engagement of students' as most important, with 97 percent rating it as very important, followed by 'empowered educators' (94%).

Approximately two-thirds of SSR-involved teachers reported collaborating with other teachers as part of SSR. Many teachers created, in conjunction with other teachers, thematic lessons aligned with the academy (70%). Many collaborated with other teachers to evaluate student academic data for the purpose of enhancing student performance (69%).

#### Summary of Results for Evaluation Question #2.

The majority of teachers and administrators reported that SSR was fully implemented at their schools. This was more often the case in Cohort 1 than in Cohort 2 schools. Funding of personnel for the eight period day was an issue mentioned by principals as an obstacle to full implementation. Additionally, some teachers resisted the changes brought on by SSR, although almost all supported SSR. Principals were familiar with the goals of SSR and reported receiving adequate support from the district for implementation purposes.

#### ***Evaluation Question #3. What is the opinion of students, teachers, and administrators concerning the effectiveness of SSR?***

Students at SSR schools were surveyed in the Fall of 2008 and asked about their experiences with SSR during the 2007-08 school year. A total of 2,263 students completed surveys. Approximately, 70 percent of students participating in the survey indicated that they had attended the same school the previous year. That is to say, these students attended an SSR school in 2007-08. Among these students, 66 percent (n = 1,034) indicated that they had participated in an SSR academy at their school in 2007-08.

Since the Student Questionnaire (Appendix B3) asked students about their participation in SSR academies, these 1,034 students became the focus of subsequent analyses. Approximately, half of these students attended either Cohort 1 (44%) or Cohort 2 SSR schools (56%) during 2007-08. Most students were in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade (44%) with the rest in the 11<sup>th</sup> (33%) or 12<sup>th</sup> grade (23%).

The majority of students (84%) reported that academy participation allowed them to acquire knowledge and skills that would help them in a specific career. About two-thirds (68%) believed the academy had helped them decide upon a career choice. Most students (80%) indicated that the academy had encouraged school attendance and motivated them to attend college (89%).

As part of SSR, students enrolled in a career academy who have passed the majority of courses in their strand can participate in a supervised internship experience aligned to their course of study. Each student in a career academy is expected to participate in an internship experience before graduating. The results show that a subset of students (9%) had participated in a Career Experience Opportunity (CEO) internship. Almost all students participating in the internship reported that the CEO experience had helped them gain employment skills and knowledge (93%) and that it had helped them in making career choices (90%). A number of students wrote comments on the questionnaire to the effect that they had never heard of CEO internships, but that they would be interested in learning about it.

Overall, students were pleased with their academy experiences. The majority of students (91%) enjoyed participating in the academy and most (90%) indicated that they would recommend it to other students.

Principals and teachers also thought highly of SSR. All principals surveyed were of the opinion that students had benefitted from their participation in SSR. Both principals (100%) and teachers (90%) believe that the SSR experience had beneficially impacted the students' career goals.

As shown in Table 12, most teachers consider SSR to have been a positive influence on the students' academic performance (80%) and to have helped improve attendance (61%). Exactly half of the teachers surveyed (50%) believe SSR had exerted a positive influence on the students' behavior leading to reduced incidents of suspensions. Some teachers (39%) believe that SSR has improved promotion rates.

Table 12

Percent of Teachers Agreeing that SSR had a Positive Impact on Students

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Overall
Did students at your school benefit from being exposed to SSR in the following areas:			
Academic Performance	83%	76%	80%
Attendance	63%	59%	61%
Promotion	42%	37%	39%
Behavior (e.g., suspensions)	52%	49%	50%

### Summary of Results for Evaluation Question #3.

Teachers and principals believe that SSR has had a positive impact on student academic performance and on their career plans. All principals and almost all of the teachers surveyed were of the opinion that the SSR experience had beneficially impacted the students. A majority of teachers indicate that they consider SSR a factor that helped improve student attendance.

Students report that the academies have given them career skills, encouraged attendance and motivated them to attend college. The great majority of students surveyed indicate that the career academies helped them make decisions about career choices. Almost all students believe that SSR participation had encouraged school attendance as well as motivating them to attend college. Similarly, a great majority of students report that they enjoyed participating in the SSR academies and that they recommend the experience to other students. Only a few students participated in internships but those that did were pleased with their experiences.

Overall, students, teachers, and school administrators have a positive opinion of SSR and consider it an effective educational component.

## CONCLUSION

The Secondary School Reform (SSR) initiative, an attempt to infuse meaning into the educational experience of M-DCPS' youth, has been successfully introduced into most of the district's senior high schools. The present evaluation examined SSR implementation and its effects at 19 of the largest of these schools.

The results show that students attending SSR schools for a longer period of time, those who had been exposed to the initiative for two years, exhibited positive changes in academic performance. Specifically, their FCAT-SSS reading levels declined less than those of comparison students. SSR students also took more advanced courses, such as AP and honors, and were more likely to receive grade level promotions than students in a comparison group. Performance and behavior effects were less evident among students attending SSR schools in their first year of SSR implementation.

The SSR implementation process is an arduous one that requires many steps including transitioning into an eight period schedule, creating learning academies, and having teachers working collaborately to create theme-based instruction plans. Fortunately, most teachers involved in the process support SSR. According to principals, full implementation of SSR occurred more often in schools in their second year of implementation, as compared to schools in their first year. This may help explain the observed student performance results described above and suggests that the effects of SSR on student behavior and performance should be assessed only after schools have achieved full implementation. Additionally, the extended effects of SSR on student academic behavior, including graduation and college enrollment rates, should be examined after senior high students have had a chance to experience four years of SSR participation.

The vast majority of teachers, principals, and students had a positive view of SSR. Teachers and principals believe SSR exerts a positive impact on the students' academic performance and students are willing to recommend SSR to other students. All involved believe that SSR enhances career awareness and skills. Few students participated in internships but students seem to be interested in the concept and would like to receive information about it.

Overall, SSR was widely implemented in M-DCPS senior high schools with moderate academic effects observed after two years of student participation. SSR is viewed as an effective educational initiative by teachers and principals and is widely liked by students. Based on the observed results the following recommendations are made:

1. Monitor the implementation of SSR.
2. Assess the long term effects of SSR on academic performance after full implementation.
3. Promote students awareness of, and participation in, internships.

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## APPENDICES

**Appendix A:  
List of Cohorts 1 and 2 Schools**

Appendix A1  
List of Cohort 1 Schools

Demographics of 9th Grade Class(2006-07)  
Cohort 1 SSR Schools

	N	Ethnicity			FRL
		B	H	W	
J.A. Ferguson	1091	2%	87%	8%	42%
Hialeah-Miami Lakes	764	33%	62%	4%	60%
Miami Beach	592	10%	69%	18%	43%
Ronald Regan	429	2%	84%	11%	30%
Miami Edison	280	91%	8%	0%	67%
Miami Jackson	432	38%	61%	1%	60%
Miami High	891	4%	93%	2%	70%
North Miami Beach	772	69%	22%	4%	51%
Miami Southridge	1199	44%	47%	7%	60%
Booker T. Washington	441	54%	45%	1%	77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6891</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>55%</b>

Cohort 1 Comparison Schools

	N	Ethnicity			FRL
		B	H	W	
American	708	28%	66%	4%	51%
Michael Krop	1016	30%	41%	27%	26%
Robert Morgan	676	16%	60%	19%	44%
Miami Springs	920	14%	80%	6%	53%
Turner Tech	436	67%	30%	1%	67%
South Dade	891	28%	58%	13%	66%
South Miami	732	9%	83%	7%	57%
Southwest Miami	880	3%	87%	9%	53%
Barbara Goleman	1202	2%	92%	5%	49%
Felix Varela	901	5%	80%	10%	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8362</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>50%</b>

Appendix A2  
List of Cohort 2 Schools

Demographics of 9th Grade Class(2007-08)  
Cohort 2 SSR Schools

	N	Ethnicity			FRL
		B	H	W	
Westland Hialeah	433	1%	95%	3%	55%
Coral Gables	959	10%	79%	10%	52%
Hialeah	957	3%	94%	2%	64%
Homestead	843	40%	52%	6%	74%
Miami Carol City	645	86%	12%	1%	64%
Miami Central	609	80%	19%	1%	74%
Miami Norland	497	93%	5%	1%	63%
Miami Northwestern	742	94%	6%	0%	65%
North Miami	768	81%	16%	1%	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6453</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>62%</b>

Cohort 2 Comparison Schools

	N	Ethnicity			FRL
		B	H	W	
American	754	24%	70%	4%	55%
Michael Krop	1132	31%	38%	27%	31%
Robert Morgan	649	21%	55%	19%	47%
Miami Springs	527	17%	74%	8%	51%
Turner Tech	580	68%	30%	1%	68%
South Dade	885	25%	61%	13%	64%
South Miami	779	7%	84%	8%	61%
Southwest Miami	846	3%	86%	9%	48%
Barbara Goleman	1169	2%	94%	4%	48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7351</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>51%</b>

**Appendix B:  
SSR Questionnaires**

## Appendix B1: SSR - Principal Questionnaire

***Instructions:*** Please respond to each item by checking the appropriate box(es).  
Respond to all questions by referring to the previous school year (2007-08).

### SSR Implementation

#### 1. Identify your current school.

(Select only one.)

- 7049-Westland Hialeah
- 7071-Coral Gables
- 7111-Hialeah
- 7121-JA Ferguson
- 7131-Hialeah Miami Lakes
- 7151-Homestead
- 7201-Miami Beach
- 7231-Miami Carol City
- 7241-Ronald Reagan
- 7251-Miami Central
- 7301-Miami Edison
- 7341-Miami Jackson
- 7381-Miami Norland
- 7411-Miami Northwestern
- 7461-Miami High
- 7541-North Miami Beach
- 7591-North Miami
- 7731-Miami Southridge
- 7791-BT Washington

#### 2. Did your school participate in the process of implementing Secondary School Reform (SSR) last year?

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

#### 3. To what extent was the SSR implemented at your school.

(Select only one.)

- 100% Fully Implemented
- 75% Implemented
- 50% Implemented
- 25% Implemented
- 0% Not at all Implemented

**4. Did you receive sufficient information or training from the District and other sources to help you fully understand and implement SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**5. Are you familiar with the goals of SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**6. Are you familiar with the six core principles of SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO (Skip to Q. 13)

**Rate the educational importance of the six core principles of SSR :**

**7. a. Personalized learning environments.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**8. b. Academic engagement of all students.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**9. c. Empowered educators.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**10. d. Accountable leaders.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**11. e. Engaged community and youth.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**12. f. Integrated system of high standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment and support.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

<b>Staff Support</b>
----------------------

**13. What percent of your staff fully supports SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- 100%
- 75%
- 50%
- 25%
- 0%

**14. What helped you convince staff to support SSR?**

(Select all that apply.)

- Funds: To pay 7th and 8th period supplements, after school planning, etc.
- Courses: Give students more course options, remediation, academy focus, etc.
- Planning: Opportunity for teachers to collaborate thematically
- Data: Opportunity for teachers to share student data to create lessons.
- Outcomes: Impact of SSR on attendance, behavior, promotion, grades.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. What are some of the reasons teachers do not support SSR?**

(Select all that apply.)

- Changes the way teachers plan.
- Have to teach more classes.
- Scheduling issues.
- Funding issues.
- Don't believe in the reform.
- Don't support change in general.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



# SSR Student

## ***Instructions***

Please respond to each item by checking the appropriate box.

<b>Section I</b>
------------------

### **1. Which school do you currently attend?**

**(Select only one.)**

- 7049-Westland Hialeah
- 7071-Coral Gables
- 7111-Hialeah
- 7121-JA Ferguson
- 7131-Hialeah Miami Lakes
- 7151-Homestead
- 7201-Miami Beach
- 7231-Miami Carol City
- 7241-Ronald Reagan
- 7251-Miami Central
- 7301-Miami Edison
- 7341-Miami Jackson
- 7381-Miami Norland
- 7411-Miami Northwestern
- 7461-Miami High
- 7541-North Miami Beach
- 7591-North Miami
- 7731-Miami Southridge
- 7791-BT Washington

### **2. Did you attend the same school in the past.**

**(Select all that apply.)**

- YES, I attended this same school last year (2007-08)
- YES, I attended this same school two tears ago (2006-07)

### **3. What grade level are you now?**

**(Select only one.)**

- 9th
- 10th
- 11th
- 12<sup>th</sup>

## Appendix B2: SSR Teacher Questionnaire

### **Instructions**

Please respond to each item by checking the appropriate box. Respond to all questions by referring to the previous school year (2007-08)

### **SSR Implementation**

#### **1. Identify your current school.**

(Select only one.)

- 7049-Westland Hialeah
- 7071-Coral Gables
- 7111-Hialeah
- 7121-JA Ferguson
- 7131-Hialeah Miami Lakes
- 7151-Homestead
- 7201-Miami Beach
- 7231-Miami Carol City
- 7241-Ronald Reagan
- 7251-Miami Central
- 7301-Miami Edison
- 7341-Miami Jackson
- 7381-Miami Norland
- 7411-Miami Northwestern
- 7461-Miami High
- 7541-North Miami Beach
- 7591-North Miami
- 7731-Miami Southridge
- 7791-BT Washington

#### **2. To what extent was Secondary School Reform (SSR) implemented at your school.**

(Select only one.)

- 100% Fully Implemented
- 75%
- 50%
- 25%
- 0% Not at all Implemented

#### **3. Did you participate in the process of planning or implementing SSR at your school last year?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**4. Did you receive information or training to help you understand and implement SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**5. Are you familiar with the goals of SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**6. If properly implemented, will the SSR goals have a positive impact on the educational outcomes of high school students?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**7. Are you familiar with the six core principles of SSR?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO (Skip to Q. 14)

**Rate the educational importance of the six core principles of SSR :**

**8. a. Personalized learning environments.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**9. b. Academic engagement of all students.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**10. c. Empowered educators.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**11. d. Accountable leaders.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**12. e. Engaged community and youth.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

**13. f. Integrated system of high standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment and support.**

(Select only one.)

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important

<b>SSR Outcomes</b>
---------------------

**14. As part of SSR, did you corroborate with other teachers in the school to:**

(Select all that apply.)

- a. Create educational and thematic lessons aligned with the academy.
- b. Evaluate students academic data to enhance educational performance.

**15. Was collaborating with other teachers on academy themes good for the students' education?**

(Select only one.)

- YES
- NO

**16. Did students at your school benefit from being exposed to SSR in the following areas (check if YES):**

(Select all that apply.)

- a. Academic performance
- b. Attendance
- c. Promotion
- d. Behavior (e.g., suspensions, etc)
- Other:

**17. In your opinion, will SSR beneficially impact the students' career paths and goals.**

**(Select only one.)**

- YES
- NO

**18. Do you support SSR?**

**(Select only one.)**

- YES
- NO

**19. Please provide any comments you may have about your school's SSR program (e.g., benefits, challenges, etc.).**

## Appendix B3: SSR Student Questionnaire

### ***Instructions***

Please respond to each item by checking the appropriate box.

### **Section I**

#### **1. Which school do you currently attend?**

**(Select only one.)**

- 7049-Westland Hialeah
- 7071-Coral Gables
- 7111-Hialeah
- 7121-JA Ferguson
- 7131-Hialeah Miami Lakes
- 7151-Homestead
- 7201-Miami Beach
- 7231-Miami Carol City
- 7241-Ronald Reagan
- 7251-Miami Central
- 7301-Miami Edison
- 7341-Miami Jackson
- 7381-Miami Norland
- 7411-Miami Northwestern
- 7461-Miami High
- 7541-North Miami Beach
- 7591-North Miami
- 7731-Miami Southridge
- 7791-BT Washington

#### **2. Did you attend the same school in the past?**

**(Select all that apply.)**

- YES, I attended this same school last year (2007-08)
- YES, I attended this same school two years ago (2006-07)

#### **3. What grade level are you now?**

**(Select only one.)**

- 9th
- 10th
- 11th
- 12<sup>th</sup>

**4. Did you participate in an academy at your school last year (2007-08)?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, I did
- NO, I did not (End of survey)

**5. Did the academy help you acquire content knowledge and skills for a specific career?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

**6. Did the academy help you decide on a career choice?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

**7. Did participating in the academy encourage you to attend school?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

**8. Did the academy experience encourage you to attend college?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

## Section II

**9. Did you participate in a CEO internship last year?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, I did
- NO, I did not (Skip to Q. 12)

**10. Did the CEO internship help you gain employment skills and knowledge?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

**11. Did the CEO internship help you decide about the type of career you would like to pursue?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, it did
- NO, it did not

### Section III

**12. Did you know that your core course teachers and your academy class teachers met to plan your theme-based lessons?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, I did
- NO, I did not

**13. Did you like participating in the academy?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, I did
- NO, I did not

**14. Would you encourage other high school students to participate in the academy?**

(Select only one.)

- YES, I would
- NO, I would not

**15. Please provide any comments you may have about the academy and the CEO internship program.**

Appendix C:  
Principal's Survey Written Comments

Appendix C:  
SSR Principal Survey Open-Ended Comments

School No.

1. We need additional funding to implement the program.

We need to be informed earlier about the status of funding for the 8 period day.  
This greatly effects the development of our master schedule.

The District SSR office has been totally supportive in development and implementation of this initiative.

2. This is an excellent program that should help to strengthen high school curriculums.

SSR promotes college readiness/the world of work.

3. The SSR initiative is a solid program that meets the needs of large Senior High schools in this District.

4. I believe that the program has worked very well to support its initial goals. I am concerned however that funding was cut to the point that we have not been able to fund the number of supplements that are created as a result of offering an eight class schedule.

5. Gives lower level students who must take additional classes for remediation an opportunity to plan for their future.

Allows for more upper level courses.

6. SSR provides an opportunity for students to take a variety of courses that are relevant to their interested area of study.

7. Excellent initiative, as long as it is funded properly.

8. I strongly believe in connecting education to students' career goals.

This gives those students who have to be double dosed with intervention courses an opportunity to receive elected courses.

SSR motivates students to continue their educational track.

9. SSR allows ALL students access to courses that prepare them for post-secondary success - whether they are college bound or will work in a career first. It provides the infrastructure that is the necessary prerequisite for moving kids beyond achieving the bare minimum and into mastery.

SSR has given me and my faculty the tools and the freedom to dream about the possibilities for creating innovative programs for kids at both of my schools (BTW and MBSH), and has provided the framework to bring those dreams to fruition. The process of designing academies and finding internships has motivated us to seek community resources, and to find ways for both the school and our students to connect with our communities in a meaningful way.

The six principles provide direction for school improvement that goes beyond FCAT! :)

10. Provided student the opportunity to access a more well rounded education.

Appendix D:  
Indexed Summary of SSR Evaluation Results

Appendix D1  
Indexed Summary of SSR Evaluation Results

<b>Evaluation Question 1: Academic Performance of SSR Students</b>	Cohort 1	Cohort2	Overall
FCAT-NRT Reading	O	O	O
FCAT-NRT Math	O	O	O
FCAT-SSS Reading	+	+	+
FCAT-SSS Math	O	O	O
Honors Course Enrollment	+	O	+
AP Course Enrollment	+	+	+
Attendance	O	-	-
Suspension	O	O	-
Promotion	+	n/a	+
Drop-out	-	-	-
<b>Evaluation Question 2: Implementation of SSR</b>			
Principals	+	+	+
Teachers	+	+	+
<b>Evaluation Question 3: Opinions about the Effectiveness of SSR</b>			
Principals	+	+	+
Teachers	+	+	+
Students	+	+	+

KEY: (O) = No Difference in Results, (+) = Positive Results, (-) = Negative Results