

Results with

# Reading Mastery



Case studies of schools and districts  
demonstrating positive effects on  
reading achievement through the use  
of SRA/McGraw-Hill's Reading Mastery  
Direct Instruction Program

# Reading is the key to virtually every other kind of learning.

In recent years, experts have come to understand how children learn to read, why some children have difficulties doing so, and what can be done to prevent and remediate reading failure. Rigorous, objective studies have found that consistent, well-designed, focused reading programs lead to replicable, positive results.

A major initiative to identify quality reading instruction was conducted between 1997 and 2000 with the work of the National Reading Panel and the National Research Council. A 2001 report, *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*, was published by the Partnership for Reading, a collaborative effort of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute for Literacy, and the U.S. Department of Education.

The report recommends the kinds of systematic, explicit instruction that are necessary for effective reading instruction:

- Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness
- Direct, systematic teaching of phonics skills
- Direct teaching and practice in developing fluency
- Direct teaching of vocabulary
- Direct teaching of comprehension strategies and skills
- Sufficient practice of reading connected text





# Direct Instruction

Direct Instruction is an explicit, intensive, teacher-directed instructional method that is based on two basic principles:

- All children can learn when taught efficiently, regardless of their learning history
- All teachers can be successful, given effective teaching materials and presentation techniques

Numerous well-respected research studies conducted across four decades show that when Direct Instruction is implemented correctly, these principles can be applied successfully in any school, in any classroom.

One of the leading Direct Instruction programs is *Reading Mastery*, a comprehensive reading curriculum for Grades K–5. *Reading Mastery* provides carefully designed, integrated instruction and incorporates practice in critical literacy skills to build student mastery and confidence.

This highly effective program offers an unparalleled level of explicit instruction, intensity, and support to accelerate learning and prevent academic failure. For thousands of teachers nationwide, *Reading Mastery* is used to make a measurable difference in student confidence and classroom achievement.

**To learn more about Direct Instruction and *Reading Mastery*, call 1-888-SRA-4543 and visit [SRAonline.com/di\\_home](http://SRAonline.com/di_home).**



Reading Mastery Signature Edition, Grades K–5

# Table of Contents

**Big Lake Elementary School; Big Lake, Alaska ..... 2**  
Success Begins Early at Alaskan Elementary School

**Milton-Freewater Unified School District 7; Milton-Freewater, Oregon ..... 4**  
Oregon District Raises ELL Reading Achievement

**Virginia Primrose Elementary School; Fontana, California ..... 6**  
Special Education Students Achieve AYP

**Elba Elementary School; Elba, Alabama ..... 8**  
Reading Scores Rise at Alabama Elementary School

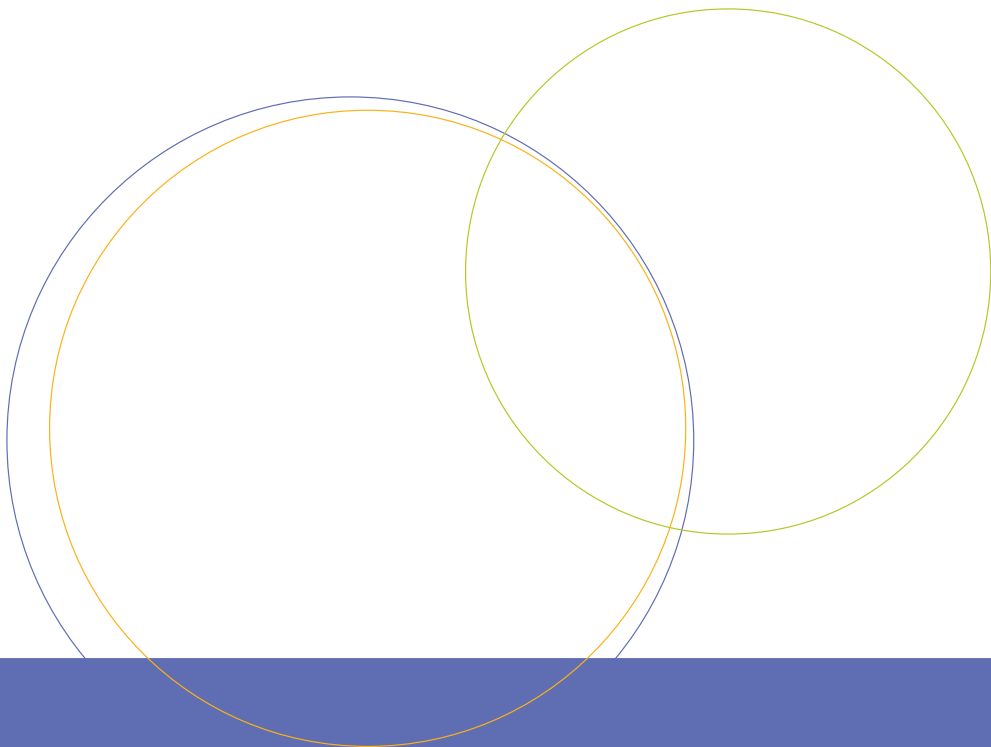
**Brunswick County Schools; Bolivia, North Carolina ..... 10**  
Title I Schools Meet All-State Reading Targets

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School; Hopkinsville, Kentucky ..... 12**  
Low-Performing School on Its Way to High-Performing

**Gering Public Schools; Gering, Nebraska ..... 14**  
Nebraska District Outscores Peers Statewide

**Tulsa Public Schools; Tulsa, Oklahoma ..... 16**  
Tulsa Students Score Record Highs in Reading

**Old West End Academy; Toledo, Ohio ..... 18**  
Students in Toledo School Score 100% on Reading Test



# Big Lake Elementary School

## Big Lake, Alaska

### Success Begins Early at Alaskan Elementary School

When educators at Big Lake Elementary School implemented *Reading Mastery* in Kindergarten and Grade 1 in 2001, they were thrilled with how early students learned to read. In fact, by the 2006-2007 school year, the majority of Kindergarten students read much higher than grade level: 73% read at or above the Grade 1 level.

Student success is most evident in the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores. In 2007, the school placed third highest in the district for Kindergarten DIBELS results. The charts on the next page show the growth from before the program was implemented to the most recent testing.

Former Curriculum Coach Allison Wall said, “Our kids are learning to read more easily at a younger age, and it’s because *Reading Mastery* gives them the solid base to move ahead.”

“Parents tell us there is a remarkable difference between reading abilities of their children going through Kindergarten now (with *Reading Mastery*) than their older children who didn’t have the opportunity to benefit from the program,” she continued.

### Title I Students Can Succeed

Scores on the Alaska Standards Based Assessment also have improved as a result of *Reading Mastery*. Students who began Kindergarten in 2004 and had been exposed to two full years of *Reading Mastery* scored well by the time they first took the state exam as third-graders: 86% scored Proficient or Advanced in reading.

As a Title I school, many students are classified as economically disadvantaged. Despite this challenge, *Reading Mastery* is helping Big Lake Elementary School reach its goals for improved reading.

### About Big Lake Elementary School

Big Lake Elementary School serves more than 300 students in Grades K–5. The student population is 70% Caucasian, 25% Native America/Alaskan Native, 3% Asian, and 2% Hispanic. Sixty-six percent of the children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information, visit [BLE.matsuk12.us](http://BLE.matsuk12.us).



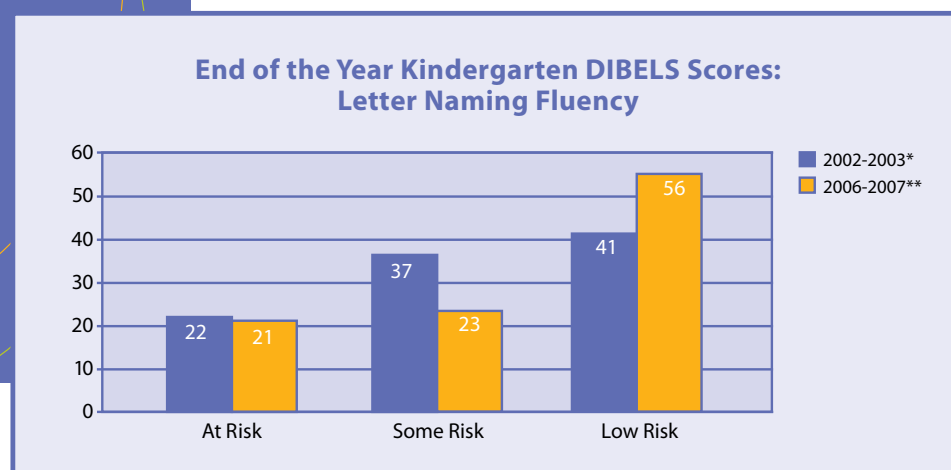
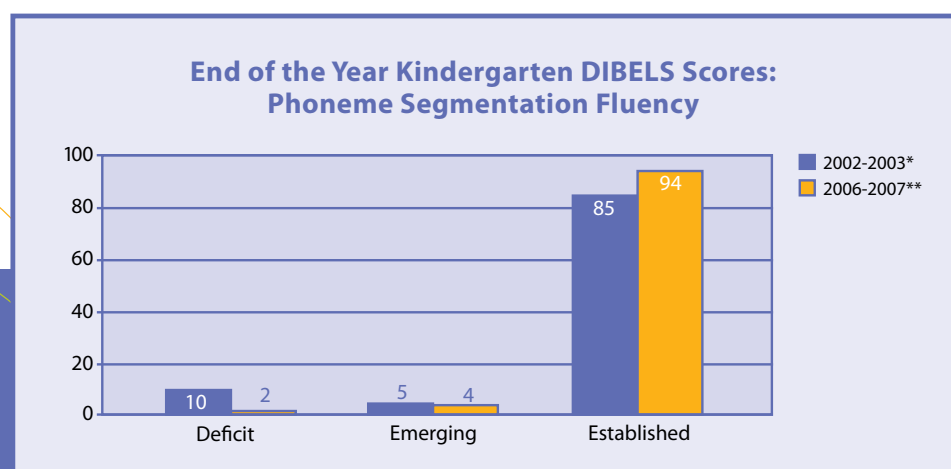
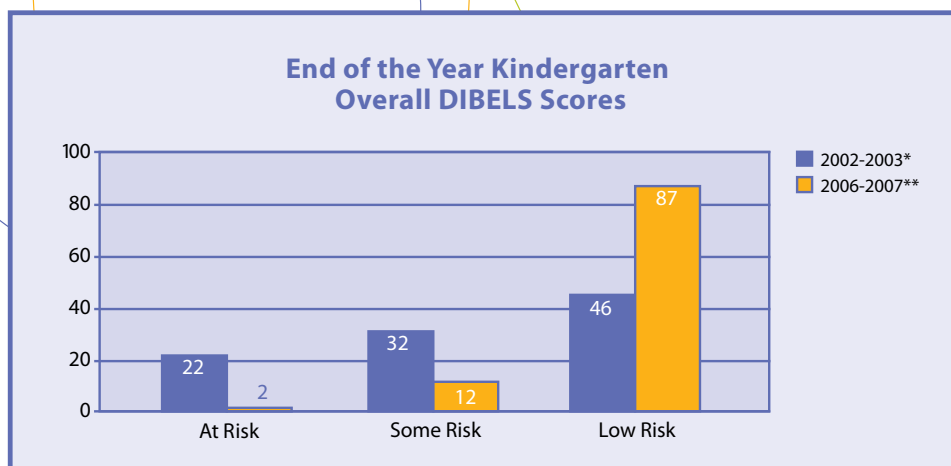
“Parents tell us there is a remarkable difference between reading abilities of their children going through Kindergarten now (with *Reading Mastery*) than their older children who didn’t have the opportunity to benefit from the program.”

— Allison Wall, Former Curriculum Coach  
Big Lake Elementary School  
Big Lake, Alaska



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\*Before Reading Mastery began.

\*\*The most recent Kindergarten scores available show the dramatic improvement in student scores with Direct Instruction.

# Milton-Freewater Unified School District 7

## Milton-Freewater, Oregon

### Oregon District Raises ELL Reading Achievement

Milton-Freewater Unified School District 7 implemented *Reading Mastery* as their core reading program in Grades K–3 at the start of the 2003-2004 school year. While success is apparent with all students, it is particularly evident with Hispanic students, the majority of whom are classified as English-language learners (ELL) when they enter school.

In the spring of 2003 before *Reading Mastery* was implemented, 66% of all Grade 3 students met the state benchmark, while 48% of ELL students met the benchmark. By spring 2007, 80% of all Grade 3 students met the new and much more challenging benchmark, and 71% of ELL students met the new benchmark.

#### Success Starts in Kindergarten

Judy Chesnut, retired district elementary principal and part-time reading coach, said “The Kindergarten program for *Reading Mastery* (Plus and Signature editions) has a strong oral language component and when matched with the reading components of the program, most of our Kindergarten students end the year reading.”

Tricia Perez, reading coach, said before *Reading Mastery* was introduced in the primary grades, approximately 15% of Grade 3 students started the year reading at Level 1.

“Now 89% of our Grade 3 students start the year at Level 3 or higher. No student who has been in our program for three years begins Grade 3 in Level 1. The continuity of this program makes all the difference in the world for our kids. Since every teacher uses *Reading Mastery*, we all speak the same instructional language as students move from one classroom to the next. The children also know expectations are the same. They are asked to respond in a certain manner and know the appropriate time to do so, which means less disruption.”

Chesnut echoed that sentiment and added, “Another reason for student success is the program’s systematic approach to reading instruction, which provides a seamless transition for students between reading groups and grades. Of course the key is having an extremely dedicated instructional staff. They are absolutely focused on creating readers.”

“Of course the key is having an extremely dedicated instructional staff. They are absolutely focused on creating readers.”

— Judy Chesnut, Retired Reading Coach  
Milton-Freewater Unified School District 7  
Milton-Freewater, Oregon



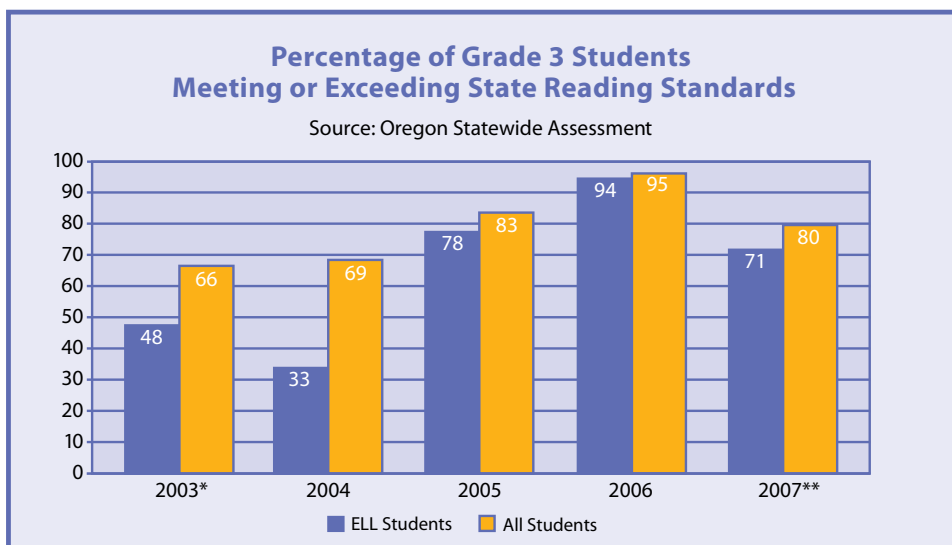
Milton-Freewater went through a major adjustment in the fall of 2007. After decades of students attending a primary and then an intermediate grade school, the two schools each became K–5 elementary schools. Changes were many, but one of the constants was the *Reading Mastery* program. Both schools chose to stay with the program and extended it to include Grades 4 and 5 students.

## About Milton-Freewater Unified School District 7

Serving approximately 2,059 students in Grades K–12, this district's student population is 49% Caucasian, 50% Hispanic, and 1% multicultural. Seventy-two percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and 58% of the Hispanic students are English-language learners. For more information about this district, visit [MiltFree.k12.or.us](http://MiltFree.k12.or.us).

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\*Before *Reading Mastery* began.

\*\* Scores declined due to staffing changes when district reorganized schools.





# Virginia Primrose Elementary School

## Fontana, California

### Special Education Students Achieve AYP

In 2004-2005, the majority of Virginia Primrose Elementary School's Grade 5 students read on a Grade 2 level. Principal Darlene Duquette introduced **Reading Mastery** in Grades K-3, and students' reading proficiency improved greatly.

Just three years later, the school was eligible for the Distinguished Elementary School of the Year Award because of improved standardized scores and because it had the highest Academic Performance Index (API) growth in the district. API is a numeric index ranging from 200-800. A school's API score is demonstrative of its students' academic achievement. In 2005 (before **Reading Mastery**), Virginia Primrose had a low API score of 208; by 2006, it rocketed up to 762.

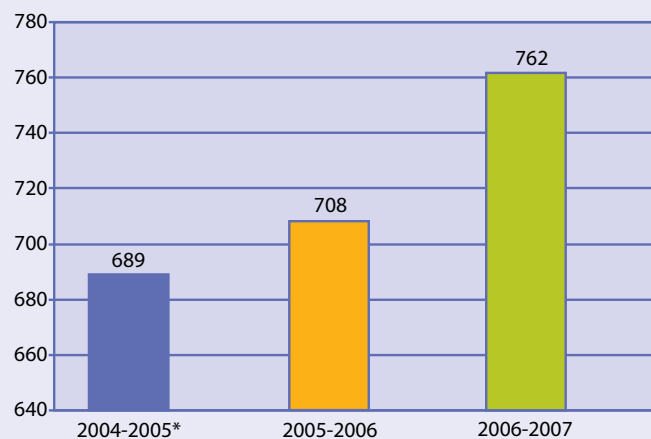
In addition, Virginia Primrose Elementary was the only school in the Fontana Unified School District in which special education students achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in both 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.

### Struggling Students Reach New Heights

All students are achieving success because they are developing skills needed to read, Duquette said. This includes special education students.

"Our special education students are improving each year on the California Standards Test (CST)," she said. "By spring of 2007, 77% moved up – from Far Below Basic to Below Basic or from Basic to Proficient. What's important is they are moving up and not staying at one level, and this is because of Direct Instruction programs such as **Reading Mastery**."

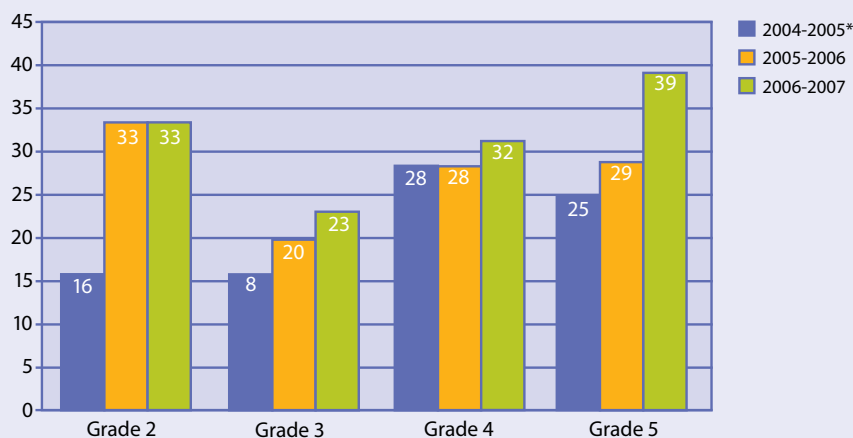
Virginia Primrose Elementary School API Scores



\*Before **Reading Mastery** began.

Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced in English Language Arts

Source: California Standards Test



\*Before **Reading Mastery** began.

Duquette said *Reading Mastery* fills in the missing links for all children. “They don’t move on until they achieve mastery. And small group instruction makes all the difference in the world. We’ve watched children’s fluency improve tremendously year after year,” she said.

That wasn’t the case before Direct Instruction began. In fact, the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in English Language Arts on the CST more than doubled in Grades 2 and 3 during the 2006-2007 school year compared to 2004-2005.

“We finally see engagement in learning in all classes,” Duquette explained. “Each time I enter a room, I see individual children progressing – not only academically but socially as well. Since we adopted *Reading Mastery*, discipline referrals have decreased by one-third. Before we began, we had 89 referrals in 2004-2005. During the first year of *Reading Mastery*, that number dropped to 30, where it hovers now. Direct Instruction makes such a huge difference for our kids, in multiple ways.”

## About Virginia Primrose Elementary School

Serving roughly 830 students in Grades Pre-K–5, this Title I school’s student population is 80% Hispanic, 9% African American, 8% Caucasian, and 3% multicultural. All students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 87% are transient, 55% are English-language learners, and 24% receive special education services. For more information, go to [Fontana.k12.ca.us/schools/Elementary/Primrose/index.stm](http://Fontana.k12.ca.us/schools/Elementary/Primrose/index.stm).

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“They don’t move on until they achieve mastery. Each program’s small group instruction makes all the difference in the world as well. We’ve watched children’s fluency improve tremendously year after year.”

— Darlene Duquette, Principal  
Virginia Primrose Elementary School  
Fontana, California



# Elba Elementary School

## Elba, Alabama

### Reading Scores Rise at Alabama Elementary School

After only one year of *Reading Mastery* in Grades K–6, students' state reading scores at this small Alabama school began to rise. A second year proved to be just as promising.

*Reading Mastery* began in fall 2005. After two years, the percentage of Grade 3 students meeting or exceeding state reading standards on the Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT) increased from 80 to 88. The Grade 4 score decreased in 2006 for two reasons: teacher turnover and a large number of incoming students who read poorly or couldn't read, according to school officials. Grade 5 students, however, increased from 71 to 83, and Grade 6 students rose from 88 to an impressive 94.

Curriculum Coordinator and Assistant Principal Gina Price said success lies in the program's strategy.

"The strategy within *Reading Mastery* is effective for both our teachers and students," she explained. "First, it helps

teachers deliver instruction in an organized, systematic manner to quiet, receptive students. We even see teachers using this Direct Instruction style in other subjects. Second, students know what is required of them and perform accordingly. Even with the daily routine, our kids don't get bored because *Reading Mastery* moves at a pace to which they're accustomed."

### Progress Monitoring Is Key

In fall 2006, a large number of new students enrolled at Elba Elementary School. Many read poorly or could not read. Principal Lakesha Brackins said *Reading Mastery* helped them a great deal through progress monitoring.

"We monitor students closely and work one-on-one with at-risk students," Brackins said. "Students are well aware of their progress, and when they hit the Benchmark level on DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), they are so proud. They immediately ask if they can tell Gina or me, and we shower them with praise."

Professional development also plays a key role in success.



"Even with the daily routine, our kids don't get bored because *Reading Mastery* moves at a pace to which they're accustomed."

—Gina Price, Assistant Principal  
Elba Elementary School  
Elba, Alabama



Professionals from Educational Resources Inc. provided the initial two-day training for faculty and now return monthly to observe each classroom for 30 minutes and provide feedback.

“Staff development helps our teachers prepare and perform their jobs exceptionally,” Brackins said. “The uniformity within **Reading Mastery** and the training we’ve received benefit all our students in the long run. We also use it with approximately 30 special education students. One fifth grader who couldn’t read the word ‘it’ when he started reads really well now,” she added.

Reading Coach Kim Gibson works directly with teachers and students at Elba Elementary School. She said **Reading Mastery** covers phonics so well in the lower grades that teachers don’t have to spend a lot of time on it in the upper grades.

## About Elba Elementary School

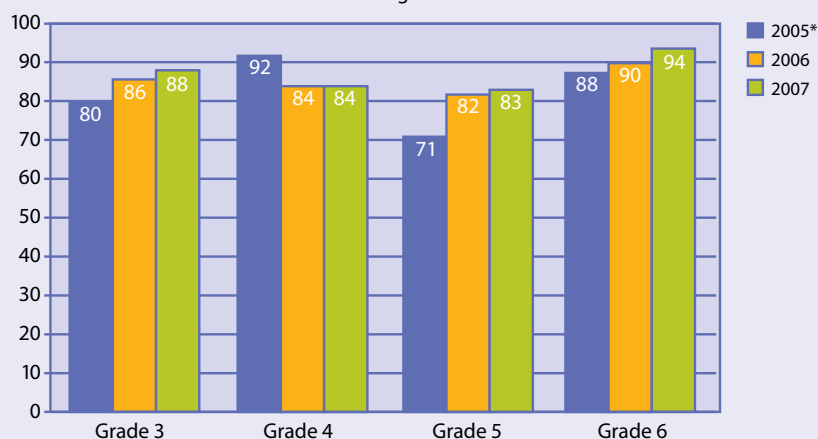
Serving approximately 470 students in Grades K–6, this Title I school’s student population is 55% Caucasian, 42% African American, and 3% Hispanic. Seventy-two percent of children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information about Elba Elementary School, visit [Elba.ecse.schoolinsites.com](http://Elba.ecse.schoolinsites.com).

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### Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding State Reading Standards

Source: Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test



\*Before *Reading Mastery* began.

# Brunswick County Schools

## Bolivia, North Carolina

### Title I Schools Meet All-State Reading Targets

Following the implementation of *Reading Mastery* as the intervention program in Kindergarten in three Title I Brunswick County elementary schools at the start of the 2004-2005 school year, each school met all reading targets for the very first time just two years later. Their overall scores on the state's End-of-Grade Test (EOG) have also improved.

*Reading Mastery* was soon expanded to Grades K-5 for intervention.

Belville Elementary, Jessie Mae Monroe Elementary, and Lincoln Elementary all had been placed in the School Improvement category during the 2003-2004 school year because they had not achieved Adequate Yearly Progress.

By 2006-2007, both Belville Elementary and Lincoln Elementary exited the School Improvement category because students had met reading goals for two straight years. Jessie Mae Monroe Elementary met all reading targets in 2006-2007 and will exit the category if they meet their reading goals again during the 2007-2008 school year.

### Need for Intervention Phases Out

Faye Nelson, director of elementary education and Title I, said *Reading Mastery* and other Direct Instruction programs have been so successful at these schools that the need for intervention is phasing out, especially among older students who have experienced the programs since Kindergarten.

"Many of these students in Grades 3-5 were complete non-readers before Direct Instruction began," she said. "These are regular education students who had struggled for years, but now they have developed the skills necessary to improve fluency and comprehension. Direct Instruction caught them up to the point where they are able to participate successfully in their regular classrooms."

Tina Child, Direct Instruction lead teacher, said Direct Instruction's explicit, systematic instruction is what makes all the difference.

"Students are placed where they need to be, and then we systematically move them through the programs," she explained. "We're amazed by the incredible rate at which children can learn, especially those below grade level."



"We're amazed by the incredible rate at which children can learn, especially those below grade level. It's all because of the explicit instruction. I've seen students experience one to two years of growth in just one school year."

— Tina Child, Direct Instruction Lead Teacher  
Brunswick County Schools  
Bolivia, North Carolina

"It's all because of the explicit instruction. I've seen students experience one to two years of growth in just one school year," Child said.

Since *Reading Mastery* has been so successful at these three schools, teachers have implemented it with at-risk students in all district elementary schools.

## About Brunswick County Schools

Serving more than 11,640 students in Grades Pre-K–12, the district's student population is 70% Caucasian, 23% African American, 6% Hispanic, and less than 1 percent each Native American and Asian. Fifty-one percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information, go to [Co.brunswick.k12.nc.us](http://Co.brunswick.k12.nc.us).

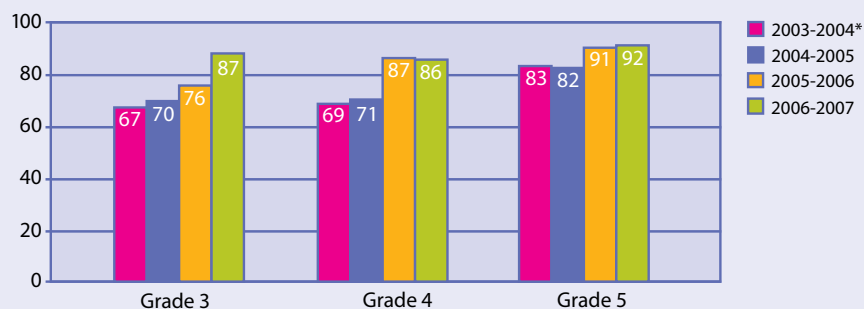
## For more information

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Brunswick County Schools was a winner of the 2008 *Pride of SRA Academic Recognition Award!* To see the district in action, visit [SRAonline.com](http://SRAonline.com) and click on the *Pride of SRA* icon.

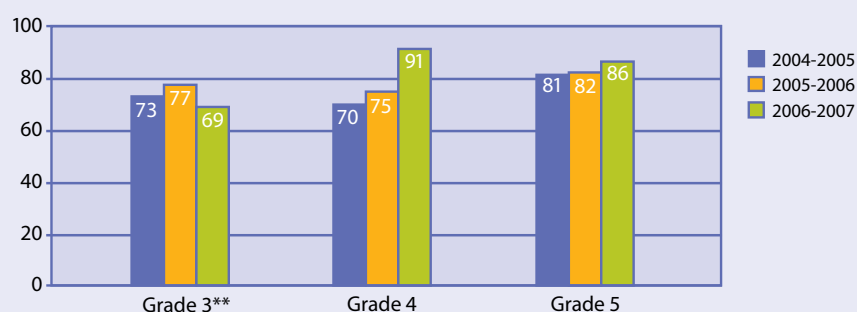
### Percentage of Belville Elementary Students Scoring At or Above Proficient in Reading

Source: End-of-Grade Test



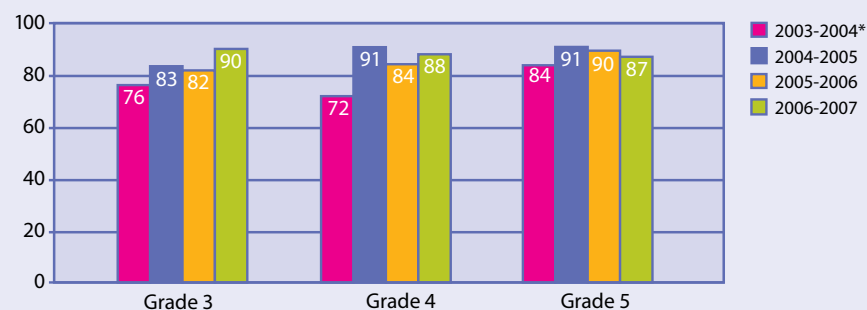
### Percentage of Lincoln Elementary Students Scoring At or Above Proficient in Reading

Source: End-of-Grade Test



### Percentage of Monroe Elementary Students Scoring At or Above Proficient in Reading

Source: End-of-Grade Test



\*Before *Reading Mastery* began.

\*\* 2007 Grade 3 scores at Lincoln Elementary decreased due to a large influx of new students.



# Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School Hopkinsville, Kentucky

## Low-Performing School on Its Way to High-Performing

Former Highland Elementary School\* – now Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary – has been home to Sarah Newman for nearly 40 years, as a student, teacher, curriculum specialist, and eventually principal. When she became principal in 2004, she and her colleagues decided their school would no longer be labeled low-performing. They implemented **Reading Mastery** in Grades K–5 in October 2005 and watched students' reading scores steadily improve on the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).

"We had gone through years of being a low-performing school," Newman explained. "Yet the staff truly believed the children were not the problem. Instead, we needed to find the right kind of curriculum to help us help our students learn to read. We found exactly what we needed in **Reading Mastery**."

Now teachers at all grades, including Pre-K in fall 2007, provide instruction from **Reading Mastery** for 90 minutes each day. "What was inconsistent before has now become universal," Newman said. "We also implemented a school-wide system for managing behavior and created a culture of high expectations in a positive learning environment built upon celebrations. Once children knew the expectations, they rose to the challenge."

"It's so very precise that there's nothing left for teachers to guess about. Our teachers know how to follow through on students' specific needs, and once students see their success, their entire outlook changes."

— Sarah Newman, Principal  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School  
Hopkinsville, Kentucky

## Low-Income Students Thrive

"Now we are on our way to becoming a high-performing school, despite the high level of poverty," Newman explained that **Reading Mastery** works particularly well with low-income children because they thrive on structure and discipline. "We love the exactness of the program," she said. "It's so very precise that there's nothing left for teachers to guess about. Our teachers know how to follow through on students' specific needs, and once students see their success, their entire outlook changes."

Other teachers see this change in attitude too. Newman said students' positive and happy outlooks have carried over into other subjects, like math and art. "Teachers notice children participating who never had before," she said. "They are finally raising their hands and participating. **Reading Mastery** gives them the self-esteem and confidence they need to be successful."



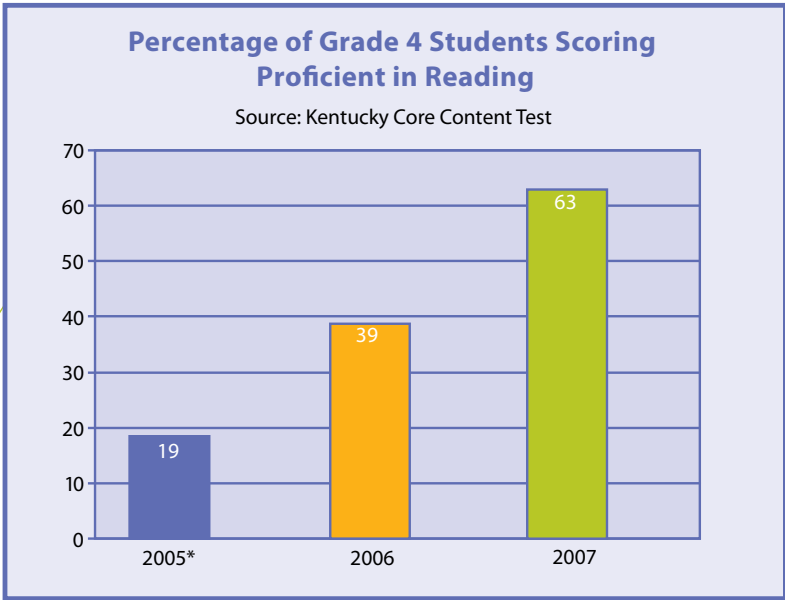
\* Highland Elementary School merged with Morningside Elementary School in 2007 to become Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School.

**About Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School**

Prior to the 2007 school year, Highland Elementary served approximately 250 students in Grades Pre-K–5. The school’s student population was 61% African American, 38% Caucasian, and 1% Hispanic. Ninety-two percent of children qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. At the start of the 2007-2008 school year, Highland merged with Morningside Elementary to form Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School. For more information, visit [Class.christian.k12.ky.us/schools/hi](http://Class.christian.k12.ky.us/schools/hi).

**For more information**

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\*Before Reading Mastery began.



# Gering Public Schools

## Gering, Nebraska

### Nebraska District Outscores Peers Statewide

Before Direct Instruction programs were implemented in Gering Public Schools in autumn 2005, all Grade 4 student groups scored below the state average in writing on the School-based, Teacher-led, Assessment and Reporting System (STARS). By 2007, all Gering Grade 4 student groups, including subgroups, outscored their peers statewide.

Andrea Boden, the district's Reading First coordinator, said all students can achieve reading and writing proficiency with effective instruction. In fact, special education referrals decreased significantly because of Direct Instruction: 80% during the first year of implementation. By the 2007-2008 school year, the number of students served by the district's K-12 special education program was 5% below the state average.


"We accomplish so much more now with Direct Instruction's exceptional curriculum compared to what we accomplished in the past with the traditional curriculum," she explained. "The programs are designed so well. Students are taught at their instructional level and reach mastery before moving ahead. Our teachers are very skilled, so they provide corrective feedback to ensure students don't practice skills incorrectly."

### Commitment to Direct Instruction Pays Off

Gering Schools implemented Direct Instruction in Grades K-3 in fall 2004. Now the programs (*Reading Mastery*, *Corrective Reading*, *Reasoning and Writing*, and *Spelling Mastery*) are used in Grades K-6. Gering was able to implement all of these Direct Instruction programs with a high degree of fidelity due to the outstanding quality and ongoing professional development provided by the National Institute for Direct Instruction.

"We saw Direct Instruction's impact right away when our youngest students finished Kindergarten reading at a Grade 1 level. In the past, they didn't reach that level until the middle of Grade 1. Now roughly 60% read on a Grade 2 level when they leave Kindergarten," Boden said.

As expected, DIBELS scores have improved a great deal as well. Each grade in the district is comprised of 150 students, and by 2007, 206 students had moved from an at-risk status for reading failure to benchmark status. All three Gering elementary schools performed above the 85th percentile, according to a report based on 2007 DIBELS data compiled and distributed by the Western Regional Reading First Technical Center.



"We accomplish so much more now with Direct Instruction's exceptional curriculum compared to what we accomplished in the past with the traditional curriculum."

— Andrea Boden, Reading First Coordinator  
Gering Public Schools  
Gering, Nebraska



Gering educators also determined students are performing at higher levels on the Terra Nova reading test as their time with Direct Instruction increases. For instance, Grade 5 students who experienced the district's language arts program for six years, three of which included Direct Instruction, actually outperformed students who had experienced Gering's language arts program for eight years, with no Direct Instruction. Those Grade 5 students posted a median scale score of 666.5 (out of 999), outperforming Grade 7 students who scored in the low 660s.

## About the Gering Public Schools

Serving nearly 2,000 students in Grades Pre-K–12, this district's student population is 70% Caucasian, 25% Hispanic, 4% Native American, and 1% African American. Forty-three percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 13% are mobile, and 10% receive special education services. For more information, visit [GeringSchools.net](http://GeringSchools.net).

## For more information

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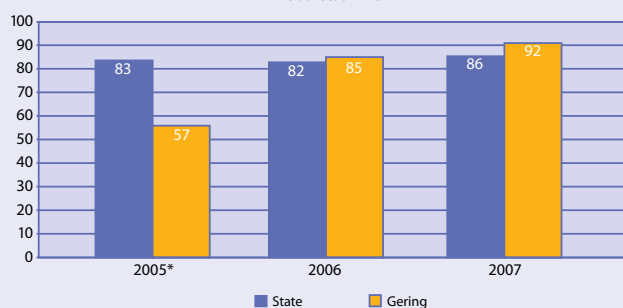
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[aboden@geringschools.net](mailto:aboden@geringschools.net)

A video, "Closing the Performance Gap: The Gering Story", can be viewed at [NIFDI.org](http://NIFDI.org).

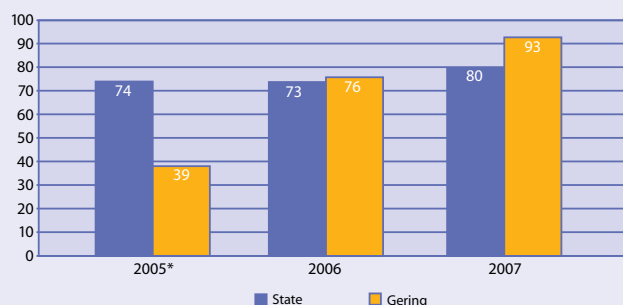
**Percentage of Grade 4 Students Scoring Proficient in Writing**

Source: STARS



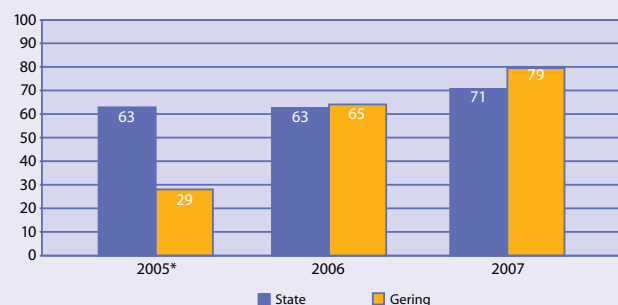
**Percentage of Grade 4 Hispanic Students Scoring Proficient in Writing**

Source: STARS



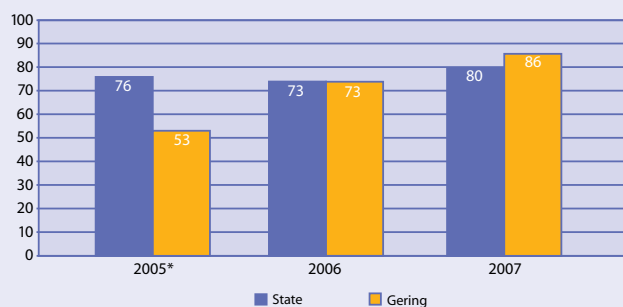
**Percentage of Grade 4 Special Education Students Scoring Proficient in Writing**

Source: STARS



**Percentage of Grade 4 Low-Income Students Scoring Proficient in Writing**

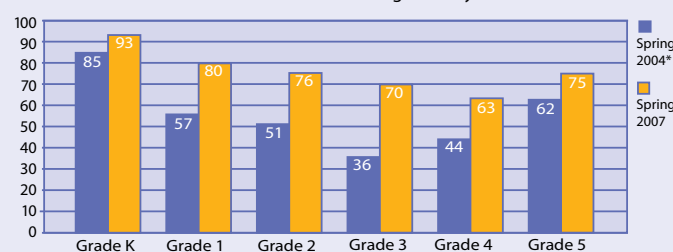
Source: STARS



**Impact of Direct Instruction Following Three Years of Implementation: Percentage Meeting Spring Benchmark**

Source: DIBELS

Kindergarten: Nonsense Word Fluency  
Grades 1-5: Oral Reading Fluency



\* Before Direct Instruction began.

# Tulsa Public Schools

## Tulsa, Oklahoma

### Tulsa Students Score Record Highs in Reading

Five Tulsa public schools are no longer on the state's improvement list, nor are they the lowest scoring schools in the district. That's because each school adopted *Reading Mastery* in Grades K–3 in spring 2004. By 2006, every single Grade 3 student at William Penn Elementary School scored Satisfactory or Advanced in reading on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test (OCCT). Students at Celia Clinton Elementary School achieved that same goal in 2007.

Reading First Grant Coordinator Lynnette Shouse said once *Reading Mastery* was in use, every school made dramatic improvements.

"There are two aspects of *Reading Mastery* that make a huge difference for our students," she said. "First, small group instruction enables our teachers to provide individualized attention. We work very hard to ensure each teacher works with only 12-14 students during the 90-minute language arts block. Second, the program is very explicit in nature. We specifically rely on the placement tests to group children at the appropriate ability level."

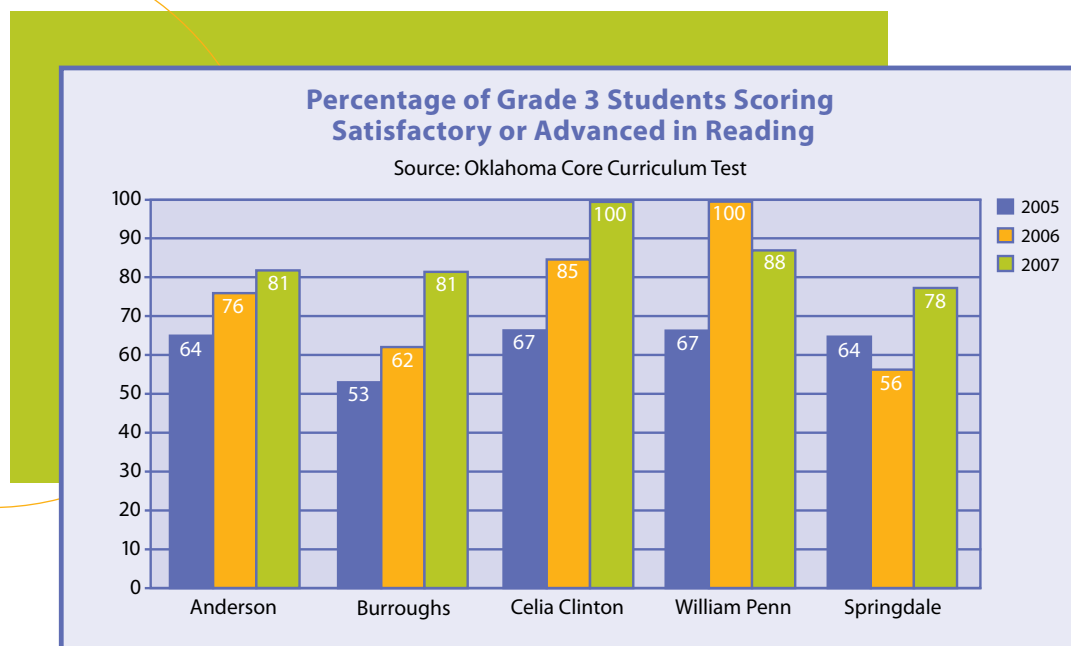
Mary Pittman is the reading coach at William Penn Elementary School. She said one reason all Grade 3 students scored Satisfactory or Advanced in reading in 2006 is because *Reading Mastery* is easy for teachers to use and is exactly what each student needs.

### Reading Mastery Works for Students And Teachers

"We have high turnover as veteran teachers retire and new teachers join us," Pittman said. "Many of the young teachers are just starting out and don't have a strong reading background yet. With *Reading Mastery*, they get up to speed quite quickly."

Pittman also said the program gives students exactly what they need to achieve. "We begin teaching children at whatever level is best for them," she explained. "We use the program's Fast Cycle to give struggling students or students with learning disabilities the skills they need to succeed."

Before *Reading Mastery*, students in Grades 1 and 2 read approximately 10 words per minute when they were assessed in January. By 2007, Grade 1 students read 30-40 words per minute and Grade 2 students read 80-90 words per minute.



*Reading Mastery* was implemented in 2004; Grade 3 students were not tested until 2005.

“Now our kids are reading on level and continue to do so throughout the primary grades. That’s because *Reading Mastery* offers great continuity between grades,” Pittman said.

### About Tulsa Public Schools

Serving more than 40,000 students, this district’s student population is 35% Caucasian, 35% African American, 19% Hispanic, 10% Native American, and 1% Asian. Sixty-four percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information, go to [TulsaSchools.org](http://TulsaSchools.org).

### For more information

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“Now our kids are reading on level and continue to do so throughout the primary grades. That’s because *Reading Mastery* offers great continuity between grades.”

— Mary Pittman, Reading Coach  
William Penn Elementary School  
Tulsa Public Schools  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



# Old West End Academy

## Toledo, Ohio

### Students in Toledo School Score 100% on Reading Test

Teachers at Old West End Academy were delighted when Grade 3 students scored 100% on the Ohio Reading Achievement Test the first time it was administered in spring 2005. Not only did students outscore the district average of 66%, but they also achieved the district's highest score. That same class scored 100% again the following year as Grade 4 students on the writing test.

Academy educators credit SRA/McGraw-Hill's Direct Instruction with student success. The Academy uses several Direct Instruction programs in Grades K–6: **Reading Mastery**, *Language for Learning*, *Language for Thinking*, and *Reasoning and Writing*. After students in Grade 5 and 6 complete **Reading Mastery**, they move on to *Open Court Reading*, another SRA program.

Tiffani Conner, principal and former Direct Instruction facilitator for Old West End Academy, said teachers have always had the expectation that their students can succeed despite the high level of those categorized as economically disadvantaged. "Failure is not an option," she said. "A lot of these children come to school with situations we would not

have imagined, yet they work hard and rise to the occasion. We instill in them the attitude necessary to succeed, and Direct Instruction guides that principle."

Grade 4 students continue to score well in reading. Eighty-nine percent passed the Ohio Reading Achievement test in 2007, compared to 65% district-wide.

### Strong Parental Involvement

Conner said the staff provides intense reading instruction and encourages parental involvement both in and out of the classroom.

"Parents sign a contract each school year that stipulates they will put academics first, support the teachers, help with homework, read to their children every night, and volunteer 10 hours each year in the building. This includes five hours in the classroom, and five in another area, such as the library or cafeteria," she said.

Parents who choose to be in the classroom weekly even help with Direct Instruction. "If parents come in on a regular basis, teachers will train them so they can participate in paired reading or fluency practice with struggling students."



"Failure is not an option. A lot of these children come to school with situations we would not have imagined, yet they work hard and rise to the occasion. We instill in them the attitude necessary to succeed, and Direct Instruction guides that principle."

— Tiffani Conner, Principal  
Old West End Academy  
Toledo, Ohio

## About Old West End Academy

Since its opening at the start of the 2001-2002 school year, Old West End Academy has expanded from Grades Pre-K-3 to Pre-K-8 and serves roughly 264 students: 96% African American, 3% Caucasian, and 1% multicultural. Sixty percent of the children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information about the school, visit [TPS.org](http://TPS.org).

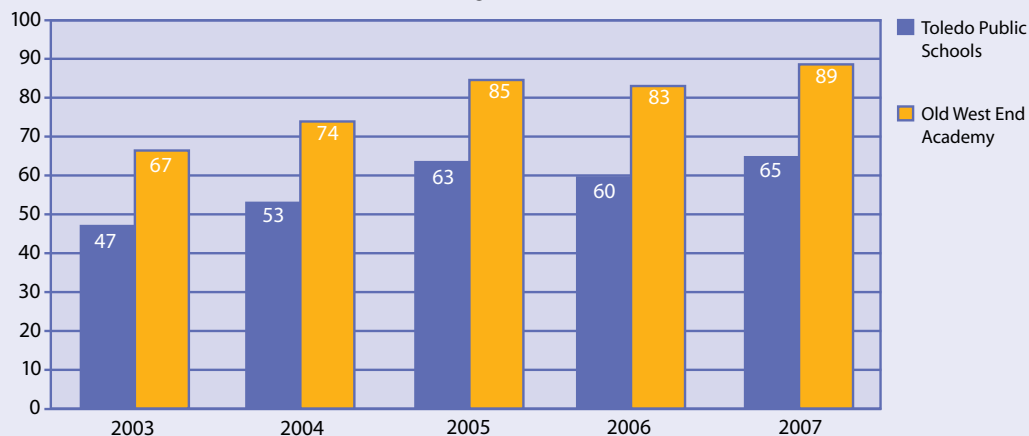
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### Percentage of Grade 4 Students Passing Reading

Source: Ohio Reading Achievement Test



Results with

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