



About the School:		About the Students:	
Grades:	K-5	Native American/	
Number of Students:	300	Alaskan Native:	25%
Test(s):	DIBELS, SBA	Caucasian:	70%
Reduced Price Lunch:	66%	Hispanic:	2%
		Asian:	3%
		ELL	-



Success Begins Early at Alaskan Elementary School With Reading Mastery

When educators at Big Lake Elementary School decided to implement a Direct Instruction program called *Reading Mastery* in Kindergarten to reach goals set by No Child Left Behind, they didn't realize students would begin to read so quickly. By the end of the 2006–2007 school year, 73% of Kindergarten students read at or above a Grade 1 level. Prior to *Reading Mastery*, the majority reached that level by the middle or end of Grade 1.

Curriculum Coach Allison Wall said student success is evident in Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores too. In 2007, the school placed third highest in the district for Kindergarten DIBELS results.

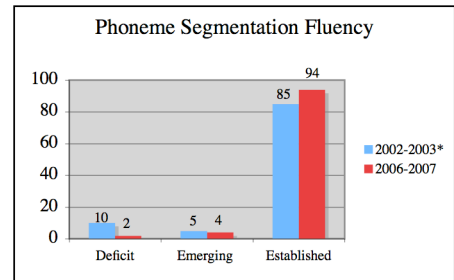
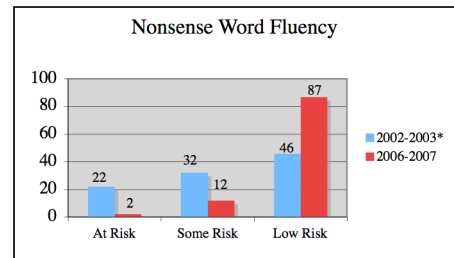
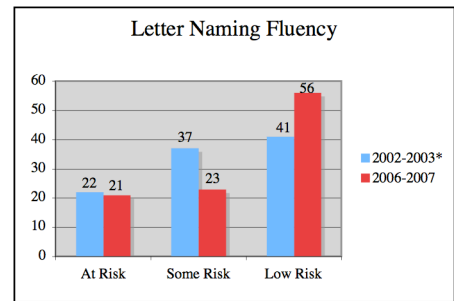
“Parents tell us there is a remarkable difference between reading abilities of their children going through Kindergarten now (with *Reading Mastery*) and their older children who didn't have the opportunity to benefit from the program,” she said.

Direct Instruction began at Big Lake Elementary School in fall 2001. Now the following programs are used: *Reading Mastery*, *Language for Learning* and *Reasoning and Writing* in Grades K–1; *Language for Writing* in Grade 2 and *Corrective Reading* in Grades 3–5 (for struggling readers only). Teachers use *Language for Learning* and *Language for Thinking* with special education students.

Wall said one of a Title I school's goals is improved reading, and Direct Instruction programs have helped Big Lake Elementary School students attain exactly that.

“We know *Reading Mastery* is the easiest way for kids to read,” she said. “Now we also know the amount of time they spend with the program is critical too.”

End of the Year Kindergarten DIBELS Scores



*Before *Reading Mastery* began.



For example, in 2006, 74% of Grade 3 students scored Proficient or Advanced in reading on the Alaska Standards Based Assessment (SBA). Those children began *Reading Mastery* during the spring of their Kindergarten year. In 2007, that percentage rose to 86. Those students started *Reading Mastery* in fall of their Kindergarten year.

“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,” Wall said.

About Big Lake Elementary School

This Title I 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, please visit www.ble.matsuk12.us.

For More Information

If you would like to learn more about success with Direct Instruction programs in your school or district, please contact us today at **1-888-SRA-4543**.