

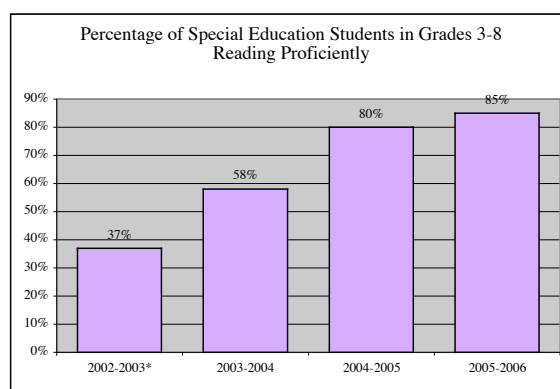
About the District:		About the Students:	
Grades:	K-12	African American:	2%
Number of Students:	9,918	Caucasian:	91%
Test(s):	TCAP	Hispanic:	6%
Reduced Price Lunch:	47%	Asian:	1%
		Other:	-
		ELL	5%



Reading Proficiency More Than Doubles Among Putnam County Special Education Students

Reading proficiency among special education students in Grades 3-8 within Putnam County Schools in Cookeville, Tennessee, jumped from 37% in 2003 to 85% in 2006. Former Director of Special Education Dr. Kathleen Airhart credits excellent teaching and two Direct Instruction programs from SRA/McGraw-Hill called *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading*.

Airhart said once *Reading Mastery* was implemented in Grades K-3 and *Corrective Reading* in Grades 4-8 in all special education classrooms district-wide during the 2003-2004 school year, reading proficiency improved and quickly surpassed statewide averages. By 2005, 80% of Putnam County students read proficiently, compared to 69% statewide that same year.



*Before *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading* began.

Airhart noted another accomplishment: Socioeconomic status had no influence on reading proficiency. In fact, 100% of special education students in one of the poorest schools in the district (Baxter Elementary School) read proficiently in 2005.

Percentage of Special Education Students in Grades 3-8 Reading Proficiently Source: TCAP

School	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Algood K-8	82	77	88
Baxter Elementary*	80	100	85
Capshaw Elementary	83	100	87
Cane Creek Elementary*	50	89	86
Jere Whitson Elementary*	25	82	75
Northeast Elementary	50	100	100
Parkview Elementary*	66	62	92
Sycamore Elementary*	33	75	75
Uffleman Elementary*	19	67	81
Avery Trace Middle School*	55	74	84
Burks Middle School*	54	60	81
Cornerstone Middle School*	52	68	88
Prescott Central Middle School*	49	80	87
Average Percentage	58	80	85

* Title I schools



“My colleagues and I attribute this tremendous success to incredibly talented educators who continue to teach these Direct Instruction programs with complete fidelity,” Airhart said. “We never would have experienced this kind of success without Dr. Michael Martin’s help (Director of Schools). He gave teachers 100% support to effectively implement the program.”

While *Corrective Reading* is proven to help readers in elementary and middle school, it is designed for anyone who struggles with reading, including teenagers and adults. That’s why Airhart introduced the program into the district’s high schools after she witnessed success in the middle schools.

Airhart was so impressed with the reading results in K–8 that she wrote her dissertation based on a study she conducted analyzing the effects of integrating *Corrective Reading* into language arts resource classes as compared to classes using the adopted textbook and state standards exclusively. The study involved 104 adolescent learning-disabled Grade 9 and 10 students at three district high schools. The goal was to determine if a specific reading intervention program like *Corrective Reading* could make a difference in reading abilities, as measured by tests of decoding, spelling, and comprehension.

“Within 15 weeks, several Grade 9 students, who had never been exposed to *Corrective Reading* until then, made three- and four-year gains,” she explained. “The most astounding results for high school students, though, were found in an attitude survey. We discovered that students in *Corrective Reading* had greatly improved attitudes toward reading. Before the program began, 34% had an overall positive response to reading. After *Corrective Reading*, 70% reported positive attitudes, while the comparison group remained at 34%.”

At the conclusion of the study, she found statistical significance in spelling and comprehension abilities among students exposed to *Corrective Reading*. In addition, greater mean gains were achieved by those same students in all decoding, spelling, and comprehension tests.

“The beauty of *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading* is both programs take students from absolutely any individual reading level to mastery,” Airhart said. “The bottom line is this: these programs really do work. Non-readers can become proficient readers, despite educational disabilities and socioeconomic status.”

About Putnam County Schools

Located in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee, Putnam County is 90 miles from Nashville. The district consists of 18 schools serving approximately 9,918 students. The student population is 91% Caucasian, 6% Hispanic, 2% African American, and 1% Asian. Forty-seven percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 5% have limited English proficiency, and 17% have learning disabilities. For more information about Putnam County Schools, visit www.putnamcountyschools.com.



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**.