



About the District:		About the Students:	
Grades:	PreK-12	African American:	2%
Number of Students:	8400	Caucasian:	72%
Test(s):	WKCE	Hispanic:	2%
Reduced Price Lunch:	68%	Asian:	23%
		Native American:	1%
		ELL	25%



ELL and Struggling Students at Wisconsin District Build Literacy Skills with Direct Instruction

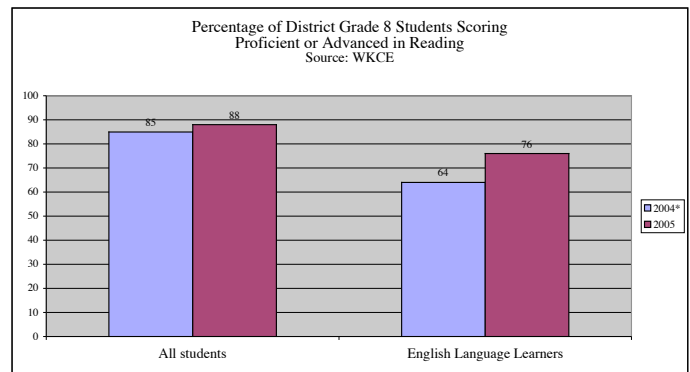
At Wausau School District in Wisconsin where roughly one quarter of the students are English Language Learners (ELL), educators have implemented several SRA reading programs to raise the bar on literacy skills.

Nell Anderson, director of bilingual, multicultural, and equity programs, said almost all ELL students are Hmong refugees from southeastern Asia. Since the Hmong language was not recorded until the late 1950s, literacy is a new concept for the culture.

“Even though we placed some of these children into Reading Recovery, we still saw phonemic awareness gaps,” she explained. “We needed something extra to bolster their literacy skills, especially as academic reading becomes more challenging in middle school. We discovered several SRA programs that provide cognitive components at every level.”

Corrective Reading began as a pilot in both of the district’s middle schools at the start of the 2005–2006 school year in Grades 6–8 with ELL students only. After only three months with the program, the percentage scoring proficient or advanced on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) improved significantly from the previous year (64% in 2004 to 76% in 2005). Therefore, other SRA programs were added district-wide to serve all struggling readers, including special education students. At the start of the 2006–2007 school year, *Reading Mastery* began in Grades 3–5, *Language for Learning* was implemented with new arrival ELL students in Grades K–12, and *Corrective Reading* was expanded to Grades 9–12.

“Our ELL population quickly builds oral language skills,” Anderson said. “However, by the time they reach middle school and high school, many are reading but not understanding. *Corrective Reading* addresses varied reading deficits by providing four levels for decoding and four for comprehension, while also re-enforcing vocabulary. Even after only three months with the program, we saw tremendous confidence and eagerness among students regarding reading, which is reflected in their improved WKCE scores.”



*Before *Corrective Reading* began.



Lisa Jindrich teaches reading at one of the district’s middle schools. She said she is amazed by her students’ progress as well. Some gained two years’ growth after only a few months of instruction.

“Last year my Grade 8 students asked if another teacher would volunteer to teach *Corrective Reading* so they could have two periods of level B-2 each day. When I asked why, they told me this was the first time they had ever really learned to read. One of those Grade 8 ELL students began the program at a Grade 3 reading equivalency. After one year, he was reading at a Grade 6 level.”

About the Wausau School District

Serving approximately 8,400 students in Pre-K–12, this district’s student population is 72% Caucasian, 23% Asian, 2% African American, 2% Hispanic, and 1% Native American. Sixty-eight percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and 25% are English Language Learners. For more information about the Wausau School District, please visit www.wausau.k12.wi.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**.