WASHINGTON READING FIRST

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT
2006–2007

Reading Evaluation Team

Dr. Theresa Deussen, Project Director
Kari Nelsestuen
Elizabeth Autio
Caitlin Scott
Ann Davis

Center for Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
Dr. Bob Rayborn, Director

September 2007

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 SW Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, Oregon 97204

www.nwrel.org

WASHINGTON READING FIRST
ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2006-2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now in its fourth year since school-level implementation began, Washington Reading First has achieved some significant successes, including

- Continued gains in the percentage of students at grade-level on the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS), particularly in cohort 1 schools
- The on-going provision of highly-rated and highly-valued professional development and technical assistance to 88 Reading First schools
- Much higher satisfaction with Reading First among schools that provide Spanish-language instruction, compared to previous years.

Some components of Reading First were already strong beginning in the first year of implementation (2003–2004) and have remained solid or even been strengthened over four years of implementation. These include the use of the core reading program with high levels of fidelity, high reliance on assessment data to group students and guide interventions, and high levels of collaboration amongst teachers. Furthermore, cohort 3 schools, though they had only one year in Reading First, looked similar in many ways to cohort 1 and 2 schools, having implemented many practices and structures in a short period of time.

Overall, there were four areas of challenge that stood out as requiring more intensive attention in the coming year:

- The instruction of English language learners
- The size of intervention groups
- Second-grade student achievement, which has not seen the rate of growth experienced at other grade levels
- Longer-term sustainability

This summary provides the major findings from the external evaluation and then makes four broad suggestions for continued development in the coming year.

Overview of the Reading First Project in Washington

Reading First is a federal initiative providing an unprecedented level of funding and focused support for the improvement of K–3 reading instruction, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that all children read at grade level by the end of third grade. In support of this goal, Reading First provides formula grants to states to support comprehensive initiatives to improve reading instruction at Reading First grantee schools.

Reading First at the federal level requires that grantee schools:

- Send their principal, coach, and K–3 staff members to professional development offerings
- Adopt and utilize an approved core reading program
- Use assessments to identify and diagnose students at risk of reading failure
- Provide appropriate reading interventions to struggling students
- Utilize an on-site reading coach to support teachers in the implementation of their core reading program and in the use of data to make instructional decisions
- Collaborate within and across grades to plan coherent delivery of reading instruction and interventions.

Washington State was awarded a Reading First grant in 2003, and began funding its first cohort of 54 grantee schools in the 2003–2004 school year. A second round of awards was made to an additional 18 schools in spring 2004. These 18 cohort 2 schools began implementation in the 2004–2005 school year. A third cohort began implementation in this past year (2006–2007), bringing the total number of Washington Reading First schools to 88, including two private schools.

Washington Reading First schools served a high proportion of students living in poverty, with the majority of students at most schools eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). They also served a high number of English language learners (ELLs); nearly half (46%) of students in Washington Reading First schools were current or former ELL students and/or came from homes where English was not their first language.

Project Achievements

Probably the most important project achievements were the continued gains in the percentage of students reading at grade level. Although schools used multiple assessments, the common assessment used across all schools and grade levels was the DIBELS. Table 1 summarizes student achievement on the DIBELS at the end of the 2006–2007 school year.

Table 1
Washington Reading First Student Outcomes, Spring 2007

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Years in Reading First	4	3	1
Number of Schools	54	18	16
Number of Students	12,652	3,205	4,525
	Percentage of Students at Benchmark on the DIBELS		
	(change from Spring 2006)		
Kindergarten	86% (+5%)*	84% (+7%)*	70%
First Grade	70% (+2%)*	70% (+10%)*	53%
Second Grade	61% (+3%)*	54% (+0%)	50%
Third Grade	63% (+3%)*	58% (+7%)*	50%

* Change was statistically significant.

In accordance with Reading First expectations, schools relied on their core reading program(s) to deliver instruction and most used them with a high degree of fidelity. Also, all schools delivered at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction to their first-, second-, and third-grade students. Most, though not all, kindergarten students also received a full 90 minutes.

The vast majority of students were taught at their instructional level, either through grouping techniques such as walk-to-read or via small group instruction supported by paraprofessionals in the reading classroom. According to teacher reports, most classrooms (over 90%) provided some sort of differentiated instruction.

Staff member collaboration continued to be high, especially at continuing (cohort 1–2) schools. In particular, teachers felt that their grade-level collaboration was a good use of their time. Nearly all the schools also had school-level Reading Leadership Teams, most of which met once a month or more. At all of these meetings, school staff members relied heavily on student assessment data to help them make both instructional and broader programmatic and scheduling decisions. Most teachers looked at data regularly—at least several times a month, and often weekly.

Within schools, the site-based reading coach usually provided a great deal of support for the use of the core reading program, collaborative planning and the collection and interpretation of data. Coaches observed instruction and provided feedback to teachers, helped to administer assessments and interpret results, and assisted with the creation and delivery of interventions. In general, teachers valued this support.

At the same time, what is typically understood as "coaching"—the collaborative work of coach and teacher to refine instruction—occurred very unevenly across schools. In some schools, coaches observed all or almost all teachers regularly while, in contrast, teachers in other schools reported infrequent observations. Teachers who were observed more frequently had more positive perceptions of their reading coach.

Outside of the individual school buildings, the implementation of Reading First was supported by professional development and technical assistance provided by the Reading First state project staff and a team of regional coordinators. As in previous years, Washington Reading First provided on-going professional development to principals, coaches, and teachers, delivering it over the course of the 2006–2007 school year in multiple ways. Again this year, both the training and technical assistance received high marks from participants for their relevance and quality.

Specifically targeted professional development and technical assistance provided to Spanish-language schools in 2006–2007 were highly valued by staff in those schools, and staff members were much more positive about Reading First than in previous years. Still, many principals of these schools continued to experience major challenges reconciling the demands of Reading First and a strong dual language program and felt that focused state support should continue in the coming year.

In general, school staff members accepted the key components (use of data, a common core program, collaborative planning) of Reading First and found them useful. Teachers gave mixed reviews of certain aspects of Reading First, but when asked about maintaining specific components, more than 80 percent of them expressed high support for continuing their use of the following:

- Reading-related professional development for teachers
- Interventions for struggling readers
- Flexible grouping of students according to instructional needs
- The core reading program
- Collaboration at grade-level meetings
- The 90-minute uninterrupted reading block
- Collaboration at the school-level (Reading Leadership Teams)
- Use of the DIBELS reading assessment.

Work with schools that provided reading instruction in Spanish as well as English was strengthened noticeably this year. In previous years, school staff members reported that they had received insufficient guidance for their Spanish-language programs, and teachers felt they needed more training in both the core program and assessments. Over the course of the year, Reading First state project staff members invested a substantial amount of time working closely with the schools and the state bilingual program to clarify how these programs fit together and to help schools design feasible programs. Reading First also hired an additional regional coordinator who could support the Spanish-language program and increased training on Spanish core programs and assessments. In interviews, coaches and principals expressed appreciation for this support, and the perceptions of teachers, as reported on surveys, improved dramatically.

Project Challenges

Despite the real improvements noted, it was still common for principals at schools that provided reading instruction in Spanish to report that they struggled with conflicts between Reading First requirements and their understanding of requirements for bilingual or ELL students. They requested additional support in this area in the coming school year.

In fact, concerns about ELL students were among the most pressing issues for Washington Reading First schools in 2007. Teachers worried about the appropriateness of materials for students who were just learning English. Nearly half of coaches expressed a need for future professional development about working with ELLs. Perhaps most significantly, nearly half of coaches and over a third of teachers reported that the philosophy or pedagogy of their school's ELL program sometimes clashed with the expectations of Reading First.

In most cases, ELL students made good gains that narrowed the gap between them and their native-speaking peers at the end of the school year. There were, nevertheless, at least 10 percent fewer first-, second-, and third-grade English language learners at benchmark, compared to native English speakers.

Another important issue for schools was how to sustain the Reading First model beyond the life of the grant. Although all cohort 1 schools received a continuation of their grants (at a reduced funding level), and cohort 2 schools have at least another year of Reading First funding, schools were already formulating plans to sustain the assessment, collaboration, grouping, instructional, and intervention procedures they have painstakingly built over the past several years. Principals, coaches, and teachers all reported on surveys that they believed key changes occurring under Reading First would remain in place even after their school no longer received grant funding.

Even as they expressed confidence, however, they noted the many challenges that they faced. Higher-than-average rates of principal, coach, and teacher turnover means that many schools need to train new people each year. Commitments from districts to hire supportive staff, and from both the state and district to provide access to introductory-level professional development, will be essential to ensuring that new staff can be provided the professional development needed to teach the core program, work with student assessment data, and provide appropriate interventions.

In general, when schools expressed concerns about sustainability, their biggest concern was the funding of the coach's position. Given the wide range of responsibilities that fall on the coach, and the enormous role many coaches play in the coordination and use of data at their schools, the loss of the coach position could, in fact, mean real reductions in collection and/or use of data. This is another area which merits attention in the coming year, particularly in work with cohort 1 schools.

Recommendations

Based on the combination of information collected from districts, principals, coaches, and teachers across all 88 Washington Reading First schools, a few issues stand out as the most pressing priorities. In Year 5, the first cohort of Reading First schools will move forward with reduced funding and the likelihood of even less funding in the following year, while cohort 2 and 3 schools continue with full funding but at very different points in their implementation. Given the variety of needs, evaluation findings suggest the follow areas of focus:

1. Prioritize the Needs of English Language Learners

This year, like last, the evaluation recommends the provision of additional training and support to schools to help them better meet the needs of their ELL students. While important strides were made during the 2006–2007 school year in support for Spanish-language programs, there was no measurable change in the level of frustration and confusion schools expressed about their work with ELLs in English.

The specific needs that emerged from multiple stakeholders at a wide-range of schools include the following:

- Training for teachers and coaches in instructional strategies to work with ELL students (for example, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) or Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) on a large scale)
- Help identifying and selecting appropriate materials
- Assistance in designing appropriate interventions for ELLs
- Technical assistance providers that understand the needs of ELL students
- Help in developing a schoolwide plan to work with ELLs, including meeting scheduling and staffing challenges (this may entail individualized technical assistance rather than a more generic training)
- Attention at the state and district level to structural contradictions between ELL and Reading First requirements, with the goal of development a common vision at the state, district and local level of how Reading First and ELL programs can work together.

2. Strengthen Interventions for Struggling Readers

Although research suggests that intervention groups for student requiring the most intensive interventions serve six students or fewer, nearly half of schools reported that at least some of their intensive intervention groups were larger. This represented an increase compared to the previous year. At the same time, the majority (79%) of second-grade students who were in need of intensive intervention at the start of the school year had not moved out of the intensive group by the end of the year.

Schools need to be aware of the research on the impact of group size. Many schools expressed frustration that staffing and other constraints made it difficult to reduce group size; for those schools, individualized technical assistance may be needed to help schools develop appropriate strategies, targeted for the specific school, to reduce the size of intensive intervention groups.

3. Investigate Second-grade Student Achievement

Gains in the percentage of students at benchmark in second grade have been slower than at other grades, especially in cohort 2 schools. Schools have also found it hard to move second-grade students out of the intensive group. This pattern deserves closer attention in 2007–2008. There are many possible explanations, including

- A misalignment of the core reading programs and the expectations of the DIBELS assessment in second grade
- The concentration of schools' resources for intervention on third-grade students at the expense of second-graders
- Overly large intervention groups that do not sufficiently address specific needs
- Pacing issues in either the second- or first-grade core programs, so that students do not cover all the material they need to in order to meet expectations.

Reading First state project staff members could conduct a "root cause" analysis to address this question, and/or work with evaluators to collect data to identify causes and possible remedies.

4. Provide Specific and Focused Support on Sustainability

In 2007–2008, cohort 1 schools that continue in Reading First will receive reduced funding. The following year, their funding will be reduced still further, and cohort 2 schools will also face a lowered level of funding. Already in 2006–2007, schools asked themselves how they would sustain their Reading First program if they did not have money to fund their reading coach position, send staff members (especially new staff) to training, and pay intervention providers.

There is no single strategy that can ensure the changes made under Reading First are sustained beyond the life of the grant. However, there are several pressing issues that can be addressed in 2007–2008. In particular, the state Reading First office can help schools address staff turnover, strategize to ensure that the vital work done by coaches does not disappear, and build enduring structures to support shared leadership. (Each of these are more fully described within the body of the report.)

These strategies may not be equally appropriate to all schools. Technical assistance in sustainability, like so many other training and assistance functions, needs to be differentiated according to school needs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Leadership and School-Level Structures

Instruction and Interventions

LIST OF FIGURES (CONTINUED)

Page

Student Assessment Results

LIST OF FIGURES (CONTINUED)

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF TABLES (continued)

Page

Leadership and School-Level Structures (continued)

Instruction and Interventions

Student Assessment Results

Acknowledgements

There were five authors who wrote sections of this report, but many other people contributed to making it possible. All of the authors would like to thank the many people who took the time to plan with us, to complete and return surveys, to answer questions, and to discuss the implementation of Reading First in Washington state with us.

Our list of people to thank begins at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), where Lexie Domaradzki, Jessica Vavrus, and Sarah Rich provided timely, thoughtful and always relevant information to guide the evaluation work. More broadly, we would like to thank the district coordinators, principals, coaches, and teachers at Reading First districts and schools across the state for their cooperation with the evaluation. No matter how many questions we throw at them, they consistently responded with patience and thoughtful answers. We especially want to thank staff at the schools that received site visits, especially the coaches who coordinated the visits and showed such hospitality.

The work of revising instruments, collecting data, organizing and analyzing data and transforming findings into an annual report involved a whole team of evaluators at NWREL, all of whom deserve thanks as well. Site visits were conducted this year by Elizabeth Autio, Ann Davis, Theresa Deussen, Randi Douglas, Kari Nelsestuen, and Angela Roccograndi. Matt Lewis oversaw the technical side of data collection, including the building and maintenance of a Web site to collect Tejas LEE data and ensuring that surveys could be scanned electronically; he was extraordinarily patient and flexible with our many requests for changes. Although Angela Roccograndi was not an author on this report this year, her data preparation and analytical work was essential and, as usual, done with great care. Makoto Hanita provided indispensable advice on methodological questions.

We also want to thank Tess Bridgman again this year for the many ways she has ensured that the evaluation ran smoothly all year long. She coordinated and oversaw the mailing of many hundreds of surveys, tracked their return, and gently nudged the schools that lagged a bit in responding. She conducted the editing and formatting of interim reports, as well as portions of the editing for this annual report; Ann Rader also stepped in and helped with the editing, which we greatly appreciate.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

Reading First is a federal initiative providing an unprecedented level of funding and focused support for the improvement of K–3 reading instruction, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that all children read at grade level by the end of third grade. This goal, in turn, supports the larger goal of the *No Child Left Behind* Act passed in 2001, that all students be able to meet state academic targets. In support of this goal, Reading First provides funds to states to support comprehensive programs to improve reading instruction at Reading First grantee schools.

Most funds that states receive under Reading First are distributed to selected Reading First districts and schools, which are eligible for the grant based on state-determined criteria (a combination of poverty level and history of low reading performance). While states vary in their plans to implement Reading First, most states' plans include many of the following expectations of grantee schools:

- Selection and implementation of core reading program materials from a list of approved research-based materials or evidence that core reading program materials have been selected on the basis of a rigorous evaluation process. In Washington, the core reading program may be in either English or Spanish.
- Selection and implementation of research-based reading interventions from a list of approved research-based materials (or, again, evidence of rigorous review of materials).
- Attendance, each year, by all K–3 staff members—as well as by the school principals and reading coaches—at the state's Summer Reading Institute.
- Hiring of a full-time reading coach to provide mentoring, coaching, training, and demonstration lessons. Some small schools utilize part-time coaches.
- Creation of a Reading Leadership Team to guide the design and implementation of a K–3 reading delivery system.
- Attendance of reading coaches, district-level coordinators, and principals at regular state-provided professional development.
- Use of approved assessments that are valid and reliable, analyses of results, and use of results to make reading improvement decisions. (In Washington, this is the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy, or DIBELS, for most students at most schools. Students who receive reading instruction in Spanish may be assessed using the Tejas LEE instead.)
- Identification of students in need of intensive reading interventions and provision of appropriate, targeted interventions in a small-group setting.

- Reporting of student assessment and demographic data to the state project staff members and to external evaluators.
- Cooperation with data collection efforts of independent evaluators, as well as state and federal Reading First administrators, and use of their feedback.

Reading First in Washington State

The state of Washington was awarded a Reading First grant in 2003, and invited subgrant applications from eligible schools districts. Eligibility was determined by the percentage of students scoring below the 50th percentile on the third-grade ITBS reading assessment and the percentage of students in poverty. Other eligibility considerations included whether or not the district and school were part of Title I school improvement or were located in an empowerment zone.

Because some components of the Reading First project required schools to make some substantial changes in both school-level and classroom-level practices, schools were required to show that they had teachers' buy-in for the initiative. When schools submitted their grant applications, at least 80 percent of teachers were expected to sign a statement indicating that they agreed and would comply with the reading improvement plan outlined in the application.

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) made awards to 54 schools in spring 2003; these cohort 1 schools began implementation in the 2003–2004 school year. A second round of awards was made to an additional 18 schools in spring 2004; cohort 2 schools began implementation in the 2004–2005 school year. A third cohort began implementation in the 2006–2007 school year. This brought the total number of Reading First schools in Washington to 88. Table 1-1, below, lists these schools by district.

Table 1-1
Washington Reading First Schools, 2006–2007

District	School	District	School
Bickleton	Bickleton	**Seattle**	African American
Brewster	Brewster		Bailey Gatzert
Bridgeport	Bridgeport		Brighton
Clover Park	Carter Lake		Concord
	Lakeview		High Point
	Southgate		Highland Park
	Tillicum		Minor , T.T.
	Tyee Park	**Soap Lake**	Soap Lake
Federal Way	Mark Twain	**Spokane**	Regal
Grandview	McClure		Sheridan
	Smith, A.H.	**Sunnyside**	Chief Kamiakin
	Thompson, Harriet		Outlook
Granger	Roosevelt		Pioneer Elementary
Highline	Beverly Park		Washington
	Bow Lake	**Tacoma**	Blix
	Hazel Valley		Boze
	Madrona		Edison
	Midway		Lister
	Mount View		Lyon, Mary
	Seahurst		McCarver
	White Center Heights		McKinley
Mabton	Artz-Fox		Roosevelt
Manson	Manson		Sheridan
Nespelem	Nespelem		Whitman
North Franklin	Basin City	**Toppenish**	Garfield
	Connell		Kirkwood
Othello	Hiawatha		Lincoln
	Lutacaga		Valley View
	Scootney Springs	**Vancouver**	Anderson, Sarah J.
Palisades	Palisades		Fruit Valley
Paterson	Paterson		Ogden, Peter S.
Prescott	Prescott		Roosevelt
	Vista Hermosa*		Walnut Grove
Queets-Clearwater	Queets-Clearwater		Washington
Quincy	George	**Wahluke**	Mattawa
	Mountain View		Saddle Mountain (3rd grade)
	Pioneer	**Wapato**	Satus
Roosevelt	Roosevelt	**Warden**	Warden
Royal	Red Rock	**White Salmon**	Whitson, Hulan L.

Table 1-1 (continued)
Washington Reading First Schools, 2006–2007

District	School	District	School
Yakima	Adams		
	Barge-Lincoln		
	Garfield		
	Hoover		
	Martin Luther King, Jr.		
	McClure		
	Ridgeview		
	Robertson		
	Roosevelt		
	St. Paul Cathedral*		

*Private schools

Both large and small schools received Washington Reading First grants. Ten percent of the schools enrolled at least 385, but no more than 484, students in kindergarten through third grade. These large schools included Washington, Pioneer, and Chief Kamiakin in the Sunnyside School District. Another 10 percent enrolled fewer than 85 students kindergarten through third grade, including Queets-Clearwater, Roosevelt in the Roosevelt School District, and George. Most schools, however, fell in between those extremes and served between 100 to 350 students in grades K–3.

Washington Reading First schools served a high proportion of students living in poverty; at all but seven schools,[1] the majority of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). They also served a high number of English language learners (ELLs); in 70 of 84 schools for whom demographic data were available, at least 20 percent of the student body were non native speakers of English, and in 31 of these schools, ELL students made up 50 percent or more of the student body.

State project staff members supported the implementation of Reading First in schools through the organization and delivery of the annual Summer Institute, as well as state meetings for district coordinators, principals, and reading coaches every one or two months through the school year. They also supported district- and school-level implementation through the work of regional coordinators. The team of 11 regional coordinators, who were assigned individually or in pairs to support specific schools, worked primarily with districts and principals.

Continuation Criteria

This year marked the fourth year of implementation for cohort 1 schools. Although Reading First grants were awarded for three years, state project staff determined that schools showing an appropriate level of student achievement criteria as well as

[1] Anderson, Bickleton, Carter Lake, Paterson, St. Pauls Cathedral, Walnut Grove, and Whitson

implementation performance would be eligible to continue receiving their Reading First support on a year-to-year basis for up to three additional years. They set the following criteria for continued funding and announced them to schools at the Summer Institute in 2005:

- To receive a fourth year of funding: at the end of the third year schools had to have 50 percent of students at benchmark on the DIBELS (and Tejas LEE, if they provided Spanish-language instruction) in three out of four grades (K–3), and one of those grades had to be third grade.
- To receive a fifth year of funding: at the end of the fourth year schools had to have 60 percent of students at benchmark on the DIBELS (and Tejas LEE, if they provided Spanish-language instruction) in three out of four grades (K–3), and one of those grades had to be third grade.

Schools not meeting the criteria were permitted to appeal the discontinuation of the grant, in hopes of receiving a one-year waiver to continue receiving Reading First support. Five cohort 1 schools did not meet criteria at the end of their third year; they filed appeals and were granted waivers in June 2006, so no cohort 1 schools were discontinued at the end of their third year.

In June 2007, 15 cohort 1 schools did not meet their new continuation criteria (60 percent of students at benchmark). Again they were offered the opportunity to appeal for a waiver (schools with a Spanish-language program automatically received waivers because of lower levels of support for the Spanish-language programs earlier in Reading First). Twelve of the 15 schools received a waiver. Two of the schools not meeting the continuation criteria—Bailey Gatzert in Seattle and Hiawatha in Othello—did not request a waiver. The third school, Artz Fox in Mabton, requested a waiver but was denied. Data from these schools are included in this year's annual report but will not be included in future years.

The Evaluation

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory has served as the external evaluator for Washington Reading First since the first year of project implementation. Each year, the evaluation has incorporated both formative and summative evaluation components to examine the following broad areas:

- Quality and utility of the statewide professional development and technical assistance provided to grant recipients
- Implementation of Reading First at the school level
- Impact of Reading First activities on desired student achievement

This year a fourth consideration became central to the evaluation: the degree to which Reading First is sustainable beyond the period of the grant.

These issues were addressed using a range of approaches and instruments which are described in Chapter 2: Evaluation Methods.

Organization of This Report

This report examines the findings from evaluation data collected during Year 4 of Washington Reading First (2006–2007 school year). A detailed description of evaluation methodology is presented in Chapter 2. The next chapter, Chapter 3, summarizes participant response to the professional development provided this year under Reading First, including that provided through coaching. This chapter also includes information about technical assistance. Chapter 4 examines leadership roles, collaboration, and use of data in schools around the state. Chapter 5 moves from the school- to the classroom-level, describing instruction and interventions. Chapter 6 addresses questions of longer-term sustainability. Assessment outcomes for the project overall are laid out in Chapter 7.[2] The final chapter, Chapter 8, summarizes overall conclusions and suggestions for the coming year.

At the beginning of each chapter, a "Highlights" section briefly identifies some of the key points in the chapter. Within the chapters are the data that led to the Highlights. At times, data are briefly summarized in text because there is too much information to include tables or graphs for every survey item. Interested readers will find complete survey frequencies in the appendices.

[2] Results for individual schools were described in an interim report provided in June 2007.

CHAPTER TWO:
EVALUATION METHODS

The evaluation of Washington Reading First examined both the implementation of the project and the student assessment outcomes. To do this, the evaluation relied on information from a variety of instruments and respondents and tried to capture the experience of a wide range of project participants.

The instruments used in the 2006–2007 evaluation included the following:

- **Spring surveys—**paper surveys of all teachers, coaches, principals from all Washington Reading First schools, as well as online surveys of the district coordinators in each district

- **Phone interviews**—conducted with 16 randomly selected cohort 1 principals.

- **In-person interviews—**during site visits to randomly selected cohort 2 and cohort 3 schools, extended, open-ended interviews with principals and coaches

- **Focus groups—**also during site visits to schools, focus groups conducted with randomly selected teachers; also, a single focus group conducted with the regional coordinators

- **Classroom observations—**during site visits, targeted observations of three reading lessons at every school selected for a site visit

- **Intervention observations**—during site visits, an observation of the provision of one intensive intervention by any regular provider

- **Student assessments—**K–3 assessment scores on the DIBELS as well as Tejas LEE assessment scores for K–1 students instructed in Spanish

Every year, the survey and interview instruments undergo a comprehensive review and revision process. The instruments used this year were similar to those used in the previous year's evaluation. We kept many survey and interview items in order to permit an analysis of change over time. They were, however, further refined in order to:

- identify redundancies and gaps in existing evaluation instruments

- gather information about new program areas that deserved attention

- address all topic areas and encompass the viewpoints of multiple stakeholders while minimizing data collection burdens on school and project staff members

This year's changes meant that the surveys and interviews tended to be somewhat shorter than in previous years.

This chapter describes each of the instruments, including major changes made, as well as selection process and/or response rates obtained and any limitations or cautions about the data collected via one of the instruments.

Spring Surveys

In spring 2007, surveys were administered to school staff members involved in Reading First. The surveys were designed to gather information on school and classroom practices, perceptions of Reading First, and its impact during the 2006–2007 school year. These surveys included:

- Principal survey (59 items)
- Reading coach survey (119 items)
- Teacher survey for staff members who taught K–3 reading during the past year (not including aides or student teachers) (117 items)
- District survey for district Reading First liaisons/coordinators, administered electronically for the first time this year (31 items)

In fall 2006, the surveys once again underwent a comprehensive review and evaluators made minor changes to the previous year's surveys based on this review process, including reducing the number of questions. The final surveys contained close-ended questions about areas related to grant implementation including assessments, use of the core program, student grouping, collaboration, professional development, beliefs and attitudes about Reading First, and sustainability. Copies of the survey instruments with the frequencies of responses are located in Appendix A. For details of any survey data reported in this document, please refer to these documents.

Coach, principal, and teacher surveys were mailed in a packet to the reading coach at each school with explicit instructions for administration. Coaches were asked to set aside time for survey completion at a staff meeting or other already reserved time. Survey instructions encouraged respondents to be candid in their answers and assured respondents' anonymity; cover sheets for each survey further explained the purpose of the survey and intended use of the data. To further encourage honest responses, respondents received confidentiality envelopes in which to seal their surveys before turning them in. Completed surveys were collected by the reading coach, who was asked to mail them back to NWREL by May 4, 2007. E-mail and telephone reminders were made to encourage schools to respond, and late surveys were accepted up through June 1, 2007. One school's surveys arrived on June 12, 2007; these were not included in analyses.

NWREL received at least some of the surveys from 85 of the 88 schools—a 97 percent response rate overall. In some instances, schools returned surveys but the packages they sent did not include surveys from all staff members. Principals were the most likely not to return their surveys; just 73 principals (82%) sent back their surveys, somewhat lower than last year's response rate of 90 percent. No principal survey was received Brighton (Seattle), Concord (Seattle), Hiawatha (Othello), High Point (Seattle), Hoover (Yakima), MLK (Yakima), Midway (Highline), Pioneer (Quincy), Red Rock (Royal), Roosevelt (Granger), Scootney Springs (Othello), and Warden (Warden). A package of surveys from Blix (Tacoma) arrived too late to be included.

Coaches from 84 schools (95% of all Washington Reading First schools) returned surveys. NWREL did not receive coach surveys from Midway (Highline), Hoover (Yakima), Scootney Springs (Othello), and although a coach survey arrived from Blix (Tacoma) was sent in, it arrived past the deadline for inclusion.

We also received surveys from 1,129 teachers from 85 schools (97% of schools). No teacher surveys were received from Midway (Highline) or Hoover (Yakima), and surveys from Blix (Tacoma) arrived too late to be included in analyses. Based on coaches' reports of how many K–3 reading teachers they had in their schools, from the schools that did respond, we had a teacher response rate of 93 percent.

The majority of teacher respondents were regular classroom teachers (84%); additional teacher respondents included language arts/reading specialists (7%), special education (4%), and ESL/bilingual teachers (3%). Regardless of position, all of these respondents are referred to as "teachers" unless otherwise noted.

This year for the first time, district surveys were conducted online. District coordinators were sent a request and link by e-mail; the link took them to a secure NWREL Web site where they were able to complete their surveys. NWREL received surveys from all district coordinators.

Telephone Interviews

In previous years, a random sample of cohort 1 schools were visited in order to interview staff members and observe implementation in the classroom. This year, only cohort 2 and 3 schools were visited, and most information from continuing cohort 1 schools was collected via surveys. In addition, the evaluation conducted phone interviews with principals from 16 of the 54 cohort 1 schools (30 percent, randomly selected, with Spanish-language schools deliberately oversampled in order to learn about their experience). Interviews occurred during May 2007 and focused primarily on sustainability. For the six schools in this group that provided reading instruction in Spanish, the interviews also asked about state support for Spanish-language programs.

Site Visits

This year, site visits were conducted only at schools still within their first three years of implementation; that is, cohort 2 and cohort 3 schools. Eighteen schools were randomly selected for visits, 10 from cohort 2 and eight from cohort 3. Day-long site visits included interviews with the principal and coach, a focus group with teachers (randomly selected), observations of three classrooms (also randomly selected), and the observation on an intensive intervention. This was very similar to the structure of the visits made over the previous two years, although interview protocols were revised to reflect program changes and data collection priorities.

A team of six evaluators conducted the site visits; each school was visited by a single team member. All evaluators had between one and five years previous experience visiting Reading First and Reading Excellence Act schools. In order to ensure understandings of the instruments and to maximize reliability, a mandatory two-day training was provided to site visitors in February 2007.

Prior to each site visit, reading coaches and/or principals were contacted to make arrangements for the visit. For each site visit, coaches were asked to schedule the interviews, focus group and observations. The format and content of each of these data collection activities is described in greater detail below.

Interviews

Interviews with both the principal and reading coach covered a similar range of topics: the roles of each, the type and perceived effectiveness of professional development they had received, their experience with technical assistance from the state, perceptions of instructional change at the school, use of assessments, changes in communication and collaboration, as well as challenges and successes of the past year. The coach interview was somewhat longer than the principal interview.

Interviews were not taped; instead, the interviewer took extensive notes during each interview. Consequently, the quotes provided in this report are not verbatim, but they do represent, to the degree possible, the actual wording of the respondents.

Interview questions were deliberately open-ended. This provided a good balance to the surveys, which pre-defined the issues for respondents and asked them to express what might be complex opinions by checking one of four or five choices. The interviews, in contrast, allowed respondents to answer by talking about the issues or concerns most relevant to them. Qualitative analyses focused on patterns found among respondents, rather than exact counts, because the open-ended nature of the questions permitted respondents to take the conversation in many different directions.

Respondents were encouraged to talk candidly about their experience with Reading First and promised confidentiality. For this reason, the responses provided are never identified by individual, school, or district.

Focus Groups

In order to obtain the perspectives of teachers at Reading First schools, focus groups were held with four randomly selected classroom teachers (usually one per grade level). Teacher focus groups asked for participant discussion on aspects of classroom instruction such as fidelity and differentiated instruction, their experience working with the reading coach, and sustainability.

Evaluators asked schools to limit the size of the focus group to four regular classroom teachers, ideally one per grade, in order to better facilitate discussion. In cases where additional teachers wished to speak with evaluators, adjustments were made to include more teachers or to talk with additional teachers at other times.

Teacher focus groups occurred in all 18 schools. There were four participants in all but four of the focus groups, where school size or an unexpected teacher absence reduced the number of teachers. Principals and reading coaches did not attend the focus groups.

Classroom Observations

In most Reading First schools, reading instruction occurred throughout the primary grades during a single 90-minute block of time during the school day; in a few schools, a K–1 reading block might be followed by a separate block for grades 2–3. This meant that in most schools, evaluators only had a total of 90 minutes in which to observe as much reading instruction as possible. For this reason, evaluators visited portions of three classes, at different grade levels, for 20 to 30 minutes each, well aware that this information would provide only a "snapshot" of the instruction that occurred at the school.

Evaluators randomly selected three of the four grades to observe at each school so approximately the same number of classes at each grade level would be observed across all the schools. Site visitors then randomly selected classrooms at those grades by telling coaches they would like to visit the classes of teachers whose name fell in a certain place in the alphabet. Coaches were informed that teachers had the right to request *not* to be observed, and that in such circumstances a different class could be substituted (such substitutions were very rare).

In total, site visitors conducted 54 classroom observations, spread fairly evenly across grades: kindergarten (26%), first grade (22%), second grade (32%), and third grade (22%). The average observation was 24 minutes in length.

During the observations, the evaluators focused on the work of the teacher and the response of the students. For example, if the teacher was working with a group of five students, and other students were working with a paraprofessional or on their own, the observation focused on the small group work of the teacher. Paraprofessionals and other adults were not explicitly observed, although their presence in the classroom was noted.

Evaluators took detailed notes in consecutive five-minute blocks, recording chronologically what the teacher did and how students responded. After the observation, evaluators used their notes to record what was being taught in each five-minute block during the observation (phonics, vocabulary, etc.), and then used a rubric to rate certain characteristics of the lesson, such as its clarity, the provision of opportunities to practice, the level of student engagement, and the level of appropriate monitoring and feedback.

Because of some concerns about inter-rater reliability (described below) in the reporting of results, ratings of observed instruction and ongoing assessment of learning were collapsed into two broad categories. Ratings between "0" and "2" were collapsed into the category "occasionally or not at all," while ratings of "3" or "4" were put into the category "yes, definitely." These broader categories then provided more reliable, if less nuanced, estimates of lesson clarity, teacher modeling, student engagement, student opportunities for practice, and teacher provision of clear and frequent feedback.

When excerpts from observation notes are included in the text as examples, student names have been changed in order to protect confidentiality.

Validity and Reliability

Researchers use the term "validity" to describe the degree to which the data being collected are an accurate measurement of the information desired. For example, a scale provides a valid measure of a person's weight if it reports the actual weight and not five pounds more or less than the person weighs. It is crucial to establish that the observation protocol records information that actually describes elements of instruction and in particular, that it describes elements of instruction that have a real impact on student achievement.

Reliability refers to the degree to which a tool measures the same thing in the same way. In the case of a scale, it means that if a person steps on a scale five times in a row, the scale always reports the same weight, rather than fluctuating. When multiple observers are in classrooms using numerical ratings to summarize some of the information about instruction, it is important to ensure that each observer rates the same lesson in the same way. It is very expensive, however, to send multiple observers out to every school visited, so the evaluation takes steps prior to the site visits to enhance reliability, that is, to make sure that all evaluators use the tool in the same way.

The creation of the observation protocol was a multi-step process designed to maximize the validity of the tool within the time and budget constraints of the evaluation. The designers began by reviewing recent literature on those elements of reading instruction that have been shown to be clearly linked to differences in student achievement (Foorman and Schatschneider 2003; Taylor et al., 2000; Snow et al., 1998). This work highlighted a few key areas: subject of the lesson, clarity of the lesson, ongoing monitoring and adjustment to student understanding, providing clear feedback to students, classroom environment, providing opportunities to practice, and student engagement.

Reliability of the observation protocol was assessed when a team of reading evaluators compiled a first draft of an observation tool and used this to visit a non-Reading First, former Reading Excellence Act school in Portland, Oregon in fall 2003. There, two or three evaluators visited the same classroom at the same time and then completed a rating form. After the visit, they carefully compared and discussed ratings, identifying items on which it was harder to achieve agreement. Preliminary inter-rater reliability was 81.3 percent (within one point of agreement). A subsequent test of reliability was conducted at an Arizona Reading First school. Teams of two evaluators conducted observations of eight lessons and rated their observations independently (inter-rater reliability was 91.2 percent within one point of agreement). Problematic items were revised, and rubrics were developed to better clarify the basis for making decisions about the ratings on each items. Additional, more informal, reliability checks have taken place at site visitor trainings.

After the actual site visits, ratings of different site visitors were compared, and some evaluators appeared to rate consistently lower or higher than others. It is difficult to know whether the differences reflected true differences in the schools or differences in site visitor rating. In order not to place excessive weight on the difference between, for example, a "1" and a "2" rating, low (0–2 point) and high (3–4 point) ratings were collapsed for the analyses presented in this report.

In addition to recording ratings, evaluators also recorded what was happening in the classroom, and these notes were used to provide the qualitative examples in the text.

Intervention Observation

The same procedure was used for intervention observations, except that any intervention provider (teacher, paraprofessional, volunteer) could be observed. A total of 16 intervention observations occurred, with an average length of 24 minutes (two scheduled observations did not take place). Observed interventions served students in the following grades, some serving students from more than one grade at a time: kindergarten (19%), first grade (38%), second grade (38%), and third grade (19%). Most interventions served intensive students (38%) or intensive and strategic students together (31%); some served only strategic students (19%) while some served only benchmark students (19%).

Site visitors asked to observe 20 minutes of an intervention during their school visit. If the observation was in a room with more than one adult providing interventions, the site visitor selected one adult to observe for the entire observation. They recorded information about the number of students and adults, time of the observations, and materials used, and took detailed notes documenting what happened. Clarifying questions were addressed to the intervention provider, as were two short questions about how that provider had been trained and whether s/he desired additional training. While it is important to note that this comparatively small sample of intervention observations is too small to claim representativeness, it is useful in its corroboration of other data.

Regional Coordinator Focus Group

In June 2007, two NWREL evaluators met with all the regional coordinators, as a group, to ask a series of questions about what training they had and what they still needed, what they were expected to do in their jobs, their relationship with schools, and how they differentiated the technical assistance they provided.

Student Assessments

DIBELS

Student progress in reading across the 88 Washington Reading First schools was monitored with the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills,* or DIBELS. DIBELS measures the progress of student reading development from kindergarten through third grade in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency.

The "benchmark" assessment is administered three times a year: fall, winter, and spring. It includes five measures—Initial Sound Fluency, Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency—for which benchmark levels have been established. Two additional measures—Retell Fluency and Word Use Fluency—are available, although there are no benchmarks for these measures. In accordance with DIBELS administration guidelines, not all measures are administered to all students at each testing period; instead, only those measures are administered that apply to skills students should be mastering at a particular period. Table 2-1 indicates which measure is administered to each grade level at each assessment period.

Table 2-1
Scheduled Administration of DIBELS Assessment Measures

Measure	Fall	Winter	Spring
Initial Sound Fluency (ISF)	K	K	--
Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	K, 1	K	K
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	1	K, 1	K, 1
Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	1	K, 1	K, 1
Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3
Retell Fluency (RTF)	2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3
Word Use Fluency (WUF)	K, 1, 2, 3	K, 1, 2, 3	K, 1, 2, 3

Collection and analysis of DIBELS data. Administration of the DIBELS assessment took place at the individual Reading First schools thee times during assessment windows set by state project staff members; these are summarized in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2
Testing Windows 2006–2007

Benchmark Testing Period	Testing Window	Date Results Due Online
Fall		
For schools starting in August	September 5 – September 18	September 27, 2006
For schools starting in September	September 18 – September 29	October 6, 2006
Winter	January 16 – January 30	February 6, 2007
Spring	May 14 – May 25	June 6, 2007

After results were collected, DIBELS scores were entered into the online DIBELS database maintained by the University of Oregon. Schools were required to complete entry of student assessment results for spring 2007 into the online database by June 6, 2007. Data included in this report were downloaded by the NWREL evaluation staff on June 7, 2007; any information that was added or changed after that point is not included in this report. The analyses in this report include only matched students, or those who had *both* fall and spring results reported *and* who were continuously enrolled. Districts reported which students were not continuously enrolled, and these records were not included in the analyses.

Reliability of DIBELS administration. In 2007, state project staff members conducted their own check on the reliability of schools' administration of the DIBELS. They sent regional coordinators (RCs) to schools they did not usually work with. The RCs randomly selected five students each in first and third grades and administered the DIBELS to them during the regular testing window. The scores obtained by the RCs were then compared to the scores that schools reported for the same students. Scores either matched exactly or school-reported scores (for example, a few points on the Oral Reading Fluency) were slightly lower than those reported by RCs. State project staff members concluded that the scores they received from schools were clean and reliable.

Calculation of DIBELS instructional recommendations. A student's raw score from each DIBELS measure places them in one of three categories: "at risk/deficit," "some risk/emerging," or "low risk/established." When multiple measures are administered, these categories are further rolled up by grade level and testing window to produce an *overall* instructional support recommendation (ISR) for each student: "intensive," "strategic," or "benchmark." These categories are defined by the assessment developers, based on the analyses of tens of thousands of student assessments. NWREL followed the guidelines of the DIBELS developers in order to combine scores and determine overall instructional recommendations.

Calculation of the statistical significance of changes in student assessment scores. The Pearson chi-square test was used to determine whether the change in percentage of students at benchmark changed significantly from last year to this year. McNemar's test (which is based on the chi-square distribution but accounts for data that are matched from one point in time to the next) was used to determine the statistical significance of changes among matched students from fall to spring of the current school year.

Coding of English language learner (ELL) status. Due to the complex way in which ELL data are reported in the DIBELS database, there have been changes in the way that this report presents data disaggregated by this variable. Schools have the option of indicating on the DIBELS Web site whether students are "current LEP" (limited English proficient), "former LEP" and/or "home language not English." The definitions of these categories do not appear to be consistent across schools and districts.

Our solution has been to create two ELL categories, a "narrow" and a "broad" one. The narrow category included only those students identified in the DIBELS database as "current LEP" students; this is consistent with federal reporting practices. The broad category included those same students, as well as students who are identified as "former LEP" and/or "home-language not English." It is important to consider the "broad" ELL category, because this includes students who entered school with little or no English but have since developed English-language skills. Excluding them from the ELL analyses would mean that the ELL group would always include only newcomers and never reflect the success schools had achieved in teaching them English.

Missing data. There was slightly more missing student demographic data in 2006–2007 than in the preceding year. As of June 2007, almost all students had demographics entered in the University of Oregon DIBELS database; information about student race/ethnicity was reported for 96.8 percent of students, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) was reported for 94.4 percent of students, and special education eligibility was reported for 93.5 percent of students. Table 2-3 summarizes missing data by type and grade level. The higher percentage of data missing in kindergarten suggests that some schools were less diligent this year about completing information for their new students, including kindergarteners. Once demographic data have been entered, they automatically remain with students in subsequent years, so higher grades had more complete data because of higher compliance last year.

Table 2-3
Missing Demographic Data, Spring 2007*

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Total Percent Missing
Race/Ethnicity	4.9%	3.1%	2.3%	2.6%	**3.2%**
FRL	11.5%	4.2%	3.4%	3.4%	**5.6%**
Special Education	11.6%	6.2%	4.4%	3.9%	**6.5%**

*Includes only matched continuously enrolled students.

In addition, 16 schools at which kindergarten and first-grade students received reading instruction in Spanish assessed with the English-language DIBELS once, at the end of the year. Thirteen of these schools submitted this data as required; data were missing from three schools (Basin City, Washington, and Valley View).

Tejas LEE

The 16 schools that provide Spanish-language reading instruction all assessed their students taught in Spanish at least three times a year using the Tejas LEE. The Tejas LEE assesses a series of phonological, phonetic, fluency, and comprehension skills in kindergarten and first-grade students. Once students reach second grade, they are assessed using the English-language DIBELS.

Collection and analysis of Tejas LEE data. Administration of the Tejas assessment took place during the same assessment windows set for the administration of the DIBELS (see Table 2-2). Training in the assessment was originally provided in September 2005, and additional training was provided this year, September 26–27, 2006.

After results were collected, Tejas LEE scores were entered into the online database created by NWREL for this purpose. In addition to results on each item of the Tejas LEE, schools also provided demographic data for their students. Complete results for spring 2007 were due by June 6, 2007. Data for the analyses reported in this report were downloaded by the NWREL evaluation staff members beginning June 7, 2007; any information that was added or changed after that point is not included in this report. Like the analyses of the DIBELS, the analyses in this report include only matched students, or those who had *both* fall and spring results reported.

Calculation of "acceptable" performance and "benchmark" status. Under Washington Reading First, schools are asked to administer all items each testing period (contrary to the assessment instructions, which permit skipping sections a student has done well on in past testing periods). The score that constitutes "acceptable" performance on different items, and the number of items on which students should demonstrate acceptable performance, changes from one testing period to the next. Depending on the number of items on which students demonstrate acceptable performance, they can be grouped into overall instructional categories, comparable to those used with the DIBELS assessment (benchmark, strategic, and intensive). While the criteria for acceptable performance on individual items were established by the University of Houston and the Texas Education Agency, the criteria for overall instructional categories were determined by Washington Reading First project staff at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Overall, instructional categories are calculated differently in each testing period, as shown in Table 2-4. Kindergarten calculations rely on two Tejas LEE sections (letter names and letter sounds) in fall; in the spring there are four additional sections (auditory syllable blending, segmentation, initial sound identification, and word recognition) included in the calculations. In grade one, three sections are used in the fall: letter sounds identification, auditory syllable blending and segmenting, and initial sound identification. One additional section is added in the winter, and *five* additional sections (shown in Table 2-4) are added to overall instructional category calculations in the spring. Fluency scores (word correct per minute) are also included in the spring in first grade.

Table 2-4
Tejas LEE Sections Included in Calculation of Overall Instructional Categories

Measure	Fall	Winter	Spring
Kindergarten			
Letter Names	X	X	X
Letter Sounds	X	X	X
Auditory Syllable Blending		X	X
Auditory Syllable Segmentation		X	X
Initial Sound Identification			X
Word Recognition			X
Grade 1			
Letter Sound Identification	X	X	X
Auditory Syllable Blending & Segmentation	X	X	X
Initial Syllable Omission			X
Final Syllable Omission			X
Initial Sound Identification	X	X	X
Auditory Sound Blending & Segmentation			X
Initial Sound Omission			X
Final Sound Omission			X
Fluency (wcpm)		X	X

Not only are students tested on more measures, but the criteria to reach the "acceptable" level for most measures increases over the year. For example, kindergarten students must identify 24 or more letters in the spring to be considered "acceptable," an increase from 17 letters in the winter and 10 letters in the fall. Acceptable fluency levels for first-grade students increase from 30 wcpm in the winter to 60 wcpm in the spring (fluency is not included in fall recommendations). As noted above, these calculations follow guidelines from the University of Houston and the Texas Education Agency.

The criteria for "acceptable" levels are presented in Table 2-5 for the measures that are part of overall benchmark calculations.

Table 2-5
Tejas LEE Criteria for Acceptable Level on Each Measure

	Minimum Number Correct for 'Acceptable'		
Measure	**Fall**	**Winter**	**Spring**
Kindergarten			
Letter Names	10	17	24
Letter Sounds	10	17	24
Auditory Syllable Blending	-	3	5
Auditory Syllable Segmentation	-	3	5
Initial Sound Identification	-	-	5
Word Recognition	-	-	8
Grade 1			
Letter Sound Identification	13	13	13
Auditory Syllable Blending & Segmentation	10	10	10
Initial Syllable Omission	-	-	3
Final Syllable Omission	-	-	3
Initial Sound Identification	5	5	5
Auditory Sound Blending & Segmentation	-	-	8
Initial Sound Omission	-	-	3
Final Sound Omission	-	-	3
Fluency (wcpm)	-	30	60

This report uses the criteria described above for analyses of spring 2007 data and to compare these data to winter and fall results, as well as to results for the 2005–2006 school year. All analyses are reported only for matched students (that is, students with both fall and spring data) and for students who were defined by their school as continuously enrolled during the 2006–2007 school year.

CHAPTER THREE:
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

HIGHLIGHTS

- Summer Institutes were held in 2006 for teachers, coaches, and principals from all schools. The institutes for cohorts 1 and 2 received high ratings from attendees. The institute for cohort 3 was less positively received, especially in regard to some of the core program training.

- Principals and coaches continued to praise the professional development they received during coach and principal meetings. With a few exceptions, the meetings were regarded as relevant and of high quality, and most attendees were pleased with the time they were given to reflect with colleagues. Cohort 1 and 2 coaches and principals were slightly less positive about their professional development, and also asked for more frequent meetings.

- The reading coach continued to be the primary vehicle for the delivery of professional development to teachers. This included helping with assessments, observing classrooms and providing feedback, and assisting with interventions.

- Some coaches observed teachers much more regularly than others. Teachers who were observed more frequently had more positive perceptions of their reading coach than those observed infrequently.

- Topics of highest demand for future professional development included interventions, coaching methods, and working with English language learners (ELLs).

- State project staff continued to receive very high praise from coaches and principals. They were viewed as extremely responsive and effective.

- With few exceptions, the 11 regional coordinators were viewed as valuable and trustworthy. They contributed to schools in a variety of ways from data analysis to classroom observations and overall encouragement.

- Schools continued to feel that Reading First did not adequately address the needs of their ELL students, who now comprise almost half of all Washington Reading First students. With the exception of a session at the Summer Institutes, state-provided trainings did not focus on ELL issues.

- Trainings and technical assistance increased for Spanish-language schools. In response, school staff members (especially coaches and Spanish-language teachers) were more positive than in previous years about the potential

compatibility of Reading First and high-quality Spanish-language instruction. However, many principals continued to see major challenges for Spanish-language schools and felt more state support was required.

CHAPTER THREE:
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Under Reading First, schools received professional development and technical assistance in multiple ways. State project staff members, regional coordinators and private consultants provided statewide training to principals, coaches, and teachers through Summer Institutes and bimonthly meetings. At the building level, coaches and principals received training through their work with their regional coordinators and hired private consultants, publisher representatives, and, sometimes, district staff. Teachers also received training from these same sources; in addition, and most commonly, they received assistance from their coach.

This chapter reports on the delivery, relevance, and reception of Reading First professional development provided at the 2006 Summer Institutes and during the 2006–2007 school year. It also describes technical assistance from the state, especially regional coordinators.

Professional Development

2006 Summer Reading First Institutes

The 2006 Summer Institutes were a key component of state-sponsored professional development, attended by most principals (88%), coaches (94%), teachers (75%), and district representatives (78%). Cohort 1 and 2 schools could attend one of two three-day institutes (offered in SeaTac or Yakima) which had similar, but not identical agendas. Most sessions for cohorts 1 and 2 focused on instruction and interventions (e.g., the five components, templates, Spanish reading instruction, LETRS), plus a leadership training on pacing.

Cohort 3 schools attended one four-day institute in SeaTac. On the first day, teachers and paraeducators were trained on active participation while principals, coaches, and district coordinators attended a session about DIBELS. This was followed by a day of "Five Essential Components" facilitated by Anita Archer and two days of core program training.

The summer institutes for cohorts 1 and 2 received high ratings from teachers in terms of relevance, quality, and usefulness (Figure 3-1). Many coaches and principals echoed these findings in interviews, giving specific praise to Lexie Domaradzki's presentation on pacing and the workshop with Anita Archer. However, over half of teachers felt the information was review.

Ratings for the Summer Institute for cohort 3 were not as positive,[1] about one in three teachers did not agree (or were neutral in their response) that the institute was relevant, useful, or consisted of high-quality presentations. Qualitative data regarding the institute also leaned toward the negative; some coaches and principals said the core program training was "not new" and "too basic," especially for schools who were already using their core program. Other cohort 3 participants complained that some core program trainers were not familiar with Reading First.

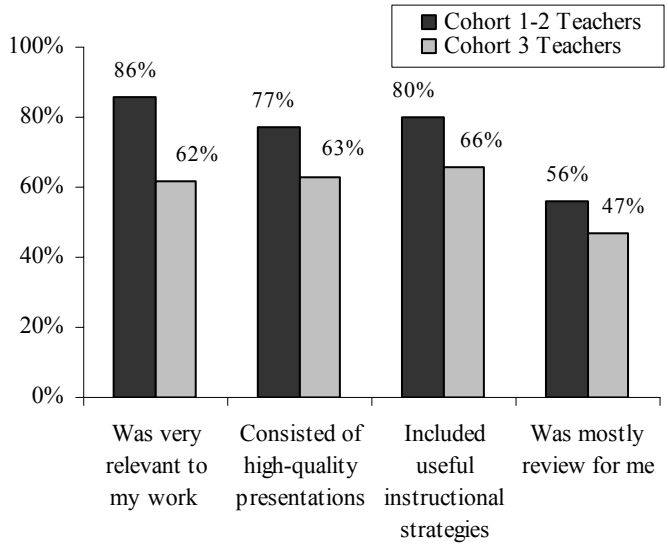


Figure 3-1. Teachers' Perceptions of the 2006 Summer Reading First Institute

Across institutes, many interviewed principals said they appreciated the time to "bond" as a staff. The majority, but certainly not all teachers (58%) also agreed that they had adequate time to reflect with colleagues at the institutes.

> *At the Summer Institute, our staff had good discussions that helped promote staff cohesiveness and we received other useful information that we could use back at our school. (Principal)*

Professional Development for Principals and Coaches

Most professional development for coaches and principals was delivered through bimonthly meetings. In order to differentiate professional development, separate meetings were usually held for cohort 3 on topics such as coaching, data analysis, and interventions. Cohort 1 and 2 meetings included information about interventions,

[1] In this chapter, all differences described between cohorts' survey responses are statistically significant ($p \leq .01$) level unless otherwise noted. When these differences are not statistically significant, survey results from across the three cohorts are reported.

Response to Intervention (RTI), sustainability, and vocabulary. A list of professional development meetings for coaches and principals is provided in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1
State-Provided Professional Development for Coaches and Principals

	When	What
Cohort 3	June 20-22, 2006	CORE Leadership Training
	Sept. 26-27, 2006	Tejas LEE Training*
	Oct. 25, 2006	Coaching, Data Analysis
	Nov. 14, 2006	Fluency, Interventions
	Dec. 13, 2006	Interventions
	Feb. 13, 2007	Vocabulary, Progress Monitoring
	Mar. 20, 2007	LETRS training
	Apr. 19, 2007	Anita Archer on Vocabulary
Cohorts 1 & 2	Sept. 26-27, 2006	Tejas LEE Training*
	Oct. 24, 2006	Intervention Presentation by Madrona Elementary
	Dec. 12, 2006	RTI, presented by State Special ED & RTI Administrators
	Feb. 12, 2007	Sustainability Workshop
	Apr. 19, 2007	Anita Archer on Vocabulary

* Optional or only relevant to some schools.

Overall, feedback about coach and principal meetings was positive; it was common to hear principals and coaches say that *all* of their meetings were useful. The noted exceptions were the topics of RTI (viewed by some as "dry" with "poor presenters") sustainability (viewed by some as "targeted to districts" and/or "too obvious"), and DIBELS at the Summer Institute ("too basic"). Each of the other meetings, from leadership to vocabulary, received at least some praise for their usefulness.

> *I have felt that Reading First has provided very, very strong professional development. The state project staff have targeted trainings toward the feedback they get from us. They are very conscientious about reading our evaluations after meetings and planning upcoming meetings from that. (Principal)*

Survey results also showed high ratings for the relevance and quality of principal and coach meetings (Table 3-2). Feedback about coach and principal professional development was more mixed in terms of differentiation and information review. As shown in Table 3-2, just under two-thirds of principals (60%) and coaches (55%) agreed that the meetings were sufficiently differentiated to meet various levels of experience. In addition, one in three principals (29%) and coaches (31%) felt the meetings were review. These findings may be related to comments during interviews that some topics, such as DIBELS and sustainability, were "too much for beginners" or "things we had already thought about."

Table 3-2
Perceptions of Coaches' and Principals' Meetings

The professional development that I received at the coach and principal meetings…	Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing	
	Principals	Coaches
Was very relevant to my work.	95	91
Consisted of high-quality presentations.	78	80
Was differentiated (tailored) to meet the needs of different groups, based on their level of pre-existing expertise.	60	55
Was mostly review for me.	29	31

Of particular note, the majority of respondents also agreed that they had adequate time to reflect with colleagues; a belief that has steadily risen each year (Figure 3-2). One principal specifically appreciated that the sessions for sharing had been moved to the beginning, rather than the end, of the agenda. Another principal agreed, although added that the sharing "felt rushed."

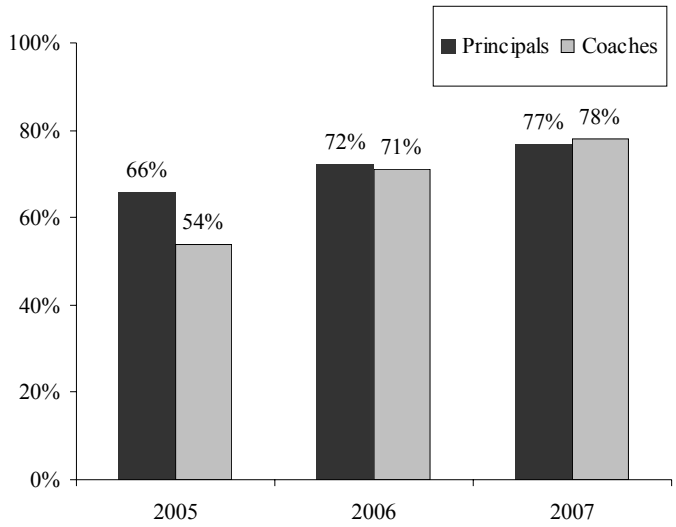


Figure 3-2. Adequacy of Reflection Time During Professional Development

Principal training in instructional leadership. In the Reading First model, principals are asked to move beyond their role of building manager to become "instructional leaders." This requires that principals understand what effective reading instruction looks like and that they spend ample time observing reading instruction and examining student outcome data. They should use these combined sources of information to provide feedback to teachers and make decisions about professional development and reading resources.

Overall, interviewed principals felt the state had met their needs as instructional leaders, describing their professional development as "extremely helpful," "an 8 on a scale of 1–10" and "worthwhile." A small group of principals from cohorts 1 and 2 were more negative, noting a decline in quality from past years or specific needs that had not been met (e.g., alignment with ELL and leadership).

While principals were positive about the quality of training, there was a decrease in the percentage of principals who were pleased with the amount of training (from 79% in 2006 to 69% in 2007) they received in instructional leadership. Those principals, mostly from cohorts 1 and 2, wished they had received more training (Figure 3-3).

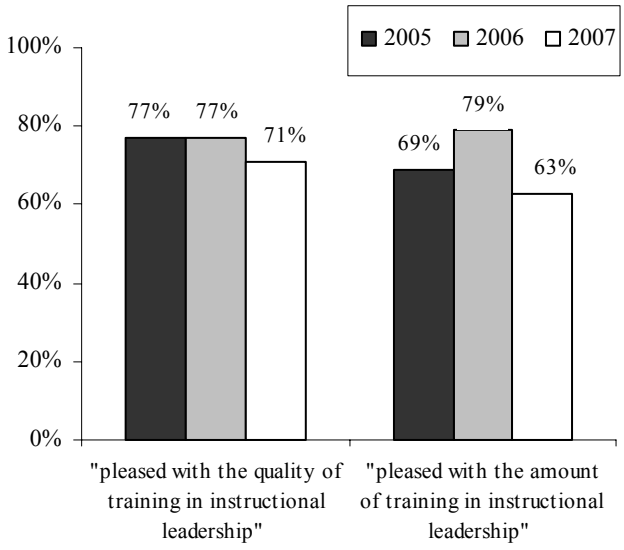


Figure 3-3. Principals' Perceptions of Training in Instructional Leadership

Additional data collected from principals shows that 58 percent of principals believed the meetings had provided them with useful training in observing teachers and providing feedback, a smaller percentage (37%) felt they had provided them with tools for working with resistant teachers.

Coach training in coaching methods. The training of coaches specifically in coaching methods is particularly important as coaches are the primary mechanism for the delivery of professional development to hundreds of teachers at Reading First schools.

Similar to principals, the majority of coaches (75%) were pleased with the quality of training in coaching methods, but fewer (59%) were pleased with the amount. Those who were not pleased (true across cohorts) wanted more training.

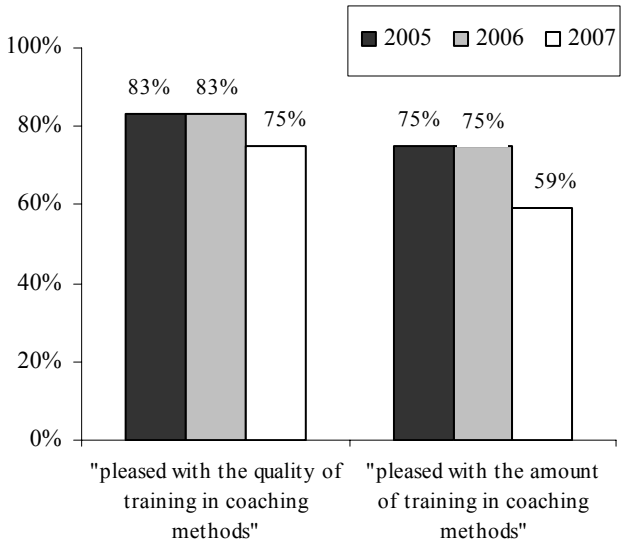


Figure 3-4. Coaches' Perceptions of Training in Coaching Methods

There were some differences in satisfaction of state training by cohort. All interviewed cohort 3 coaches were very positive about their professional development from the state in 2006–2007.

> *It is a great umbrella they have with everything working together. Everything is pretty much laid out. (Cohort 3 coach)*

> *The leadership understands our needs and does a great job identifying trainings for those needs. (Cohort 3 coach)*

While coaches from cohort 1 and 2 were also pleased overall, some noted a "decline in quality" from previous years. Others noted that their trainings included "redundant information" or, on the opposite end of the spectrum, needed to "revisit topics" and "get more practical information."

> *It was a mistake on the part of the state to think that all of the topics were covered. There is always more training I can use. (Coach)*

Additional data show that 57 percent of coaches believed the meetings had provided coaches with useful training in coaching methods. One in four coaches (24%) felt they had received tools for working with resistant teachers (a 14 percentage point drop from last year).

Professional Development for Teachers

The major state-sponsored training for teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school staff members was the Summer Institute. Most Reading First professional development for teachers occurred at the school and/or district level, through training provided by publisher representatives or other external consultants, peer coaching, or work with the reading coach. Schools were also able to take a few teachers to some of the statewide training provided to coaches and principals. Overall, half of teachers (53%) agreed that the Reading First professional development was sustained and intensive. About two-thirds (65%) agreed that it focused on what was happening in the classroom.

Professional development from publisher representatives, contracted experts, and other sources. According to coaches, publishers provided professional development to half of cohort 3 schools (50%) and one-fourth of cohort 1 and 2 schools (23%). As described in the first section of this chapter, cohort 3 Summer Institute training from core program publishers received some negative reviews. Overall, feedback on publisher-provided training was also mixed; 48 percent of coaches rated publisher training usually or always helpful, with the remainder of coaches characterizing it as sometimes (37%), rarely (11%), or never (4%) helpful.

Coaches were more positive about training from "contracted experts/trainers" which could have included a variety of local, state, or national consultants contracting on a wide array of topics related to reading. Half of schools (46%) received this type of support and, of those, 78 percent found the services usually or always helpful.

Peer observations can also be considered professional development since they provide teachers with an opportunity to observe and learn from others' instructional strategies. The occurrence of peer observations remained about the same from last year; 44 percent of teachers had never participated in peer observations, 27 percent had both observed another teacher and been observed themselves, and 29 percent had done one or the other. Most teachers involved in peer observations said it had happened once or a few times a year.

Professional development from coaches. In the Reading First model, a key aspect of the reading coach role is to provide professional development to the teachers, often by relaying and disseminating information learned from state training sessions and research. In fact, the role of the coach as professional developer is so important that the federal guidelines for Reading First require the use of coaches "who provide feedback as instructional strategies are put into practice" in state Reading First plans (U.S. Department of Education 2002). Reading coaches are expected to spend the majority of their time modeling lessons, observing in classrooms, and providing teachers with constructive feedback that will help improve their instruction.

Since the 2005-2006 evaluation report, there was little change in the supports teachers reported receiving from their reading coach or their ratings of helpfulness. A strong majority of teachers reported that their coach helped with assessments, observed their

classroom and provided feedback, and assisted with interventions. The majority also rated these supports as usually or always helpful. Demonstration lessons were less common and received lower helpfulness ratings (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3
Teachers' Perceptions of Support from Their Coach

	Percentage of Teachers Who Received This Support	Percentage of Teachers Who Found It Usually or Always Helpful*
Assistance from the coach in interpreting assessment results	94	80
Observed by coach during the reading block	95	**
Assistance from the coach in providing quality interventions	93	75
Assistance from the coach in monitoring the effectiveness of interventions	89	74
Assistance from the coach in administering and scoring student assessments	82	83
Received feedback on instruction from coach after classroom observation	82	72
Demonstration lessons provided by the reading coach	68	47

* Rated by only those respondents who received the support
**Item not asked in this way

While the table above suggests that almost all teachers (95%) were observed by their reading coach at least once, the frequency of observations varied a great deal. In 2006–2007, 59 percent of teachers were observed at least monthly by their reading coach; no change from the previous two years. The remaining teachers were observed less frequently: once or a few times a year (35%) or never (5%). Feedback after observations was far less frequent, with 23 percent of teachers receiving feedback at least monthly. Another 56 percent received it once or a few times a year and 20 percent never received feedback (Figure 3-5).

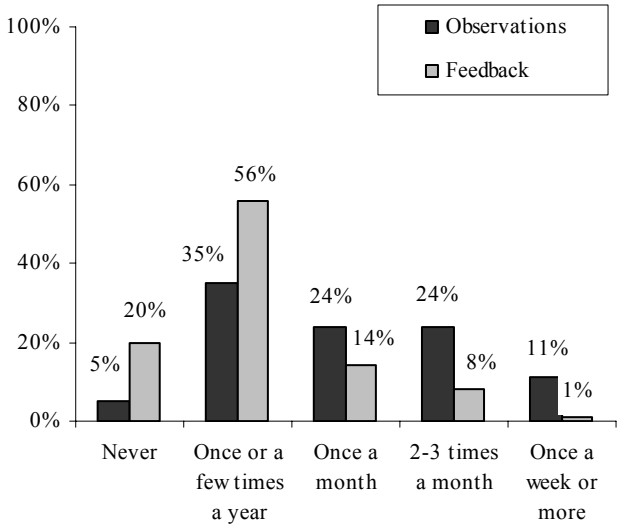


Figure 3-5. Frequency of Coach Observations of and Feedback to Teachers

While some of the variation in frequency occurred within schools (some teachers observed more regularly than others), there was also great variation among schools; some coaches observed more than others. For example, in about one in three schools (34%), the coach observed all or almost all teachers regularly. In a contrasting group (27% of schools), few or no teachers were observed regularly. These percentages are displayed in Table 3-4.

Table 3-4
Proportion of Teachers Regularly Observed

Proportion of teachers in the school regularly* observed	Percentage of Schools
All or almost all teachers (at least 80%)	34
Many teachers (60-79%)	16
Some teachers (40-69%)	23
Few or no teachers (less than 40%)	27

*Regularly defined as at least monthly

What might explain the many schools where not all teachers were observed regularly? Survey and interview data revealed four possible explanations:

1. Barriers to classroom observations existed.
2. Coaches selected certain teachers to work with.
3. Coaches focused on other job responsibilities.
4. Coaches were uncomfortable observing.

Barriers to classroom observations. Some coaches described barriers which included resistance from teachers, union contracts, and large staff size. In regard to school size, however, teachers from large schools were almost equally as likely to be observed regularly as their peers in the smallest schools (60% compared to 63% were observed monthly).

Selection of teachers to work with. While a few coaches said they worked with all teachers equally, usually they described working with some teachers more than others. Often, they chose teachers based on need identified in their prior observations or student assessment data. Other coaches said they worked most often with teachers who were "open to coaching," "most receptive and positive," and "asked for help." This pattern played out in survey data as well; teachers with high buy-in to Reading First[2] were more likely to be observed regularly than teachers with lower buy-in (64% compared to 55% were observed at least monthly).

Coaches focused on other job responsibilities. According to coaches and teachers, other coaching tasks often took them away from classrooms. These included data analysis and testing, interventions, attending trainings, and organizing materials. The ways in which coaches used their time are described in detail in Chapter 4.

Coaches uncomfortable observing. While the majority of coaches (74%) agreed that they were comfortable observing teachers and providing feedback, one in four either disagreed (13%) or were neutral (13%) in their response. A common request from coaches for more professional development was in "coaching methods" and providing feedback after observations.

While some teachers were satisfied with the amount of time their coach spent in the classroom, others were not. Specifically, 40 percent of teachers who were observed infrequently said they wanted more frequent visits by their coach (compared to 26 percent of teachers who were observed at least monthly).

Another related finding was that teachers who were observed more frequently by coaches were more positive about their reading coach. As shown in Table 3-5 below, regularly observed teachers were more likely to view their coach as knowledgeable and their ally, and more likely to report that their coach helped them become more reflective and increased their understanding of how children learn.

[2] As measured by the item, "I strongly support the instructional changes occurring under Reading First."

Table 3-5
Teachers' Perceptions of Coaches by Frequency of Observation

	Percentage of Teachers Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing	
	Teachers who were not observed regularly*	**Teachers who were observed regularly***
Coach is knowledgeable resource about reading research and practice	72	86
Coach is ally, even when providing critical feedback	68	85
Coach has helped me become more reflective	45	73
Coach has increased understanding of how children learn to read	36	60

*"Regularly" defined as at least monthly observations by the coach

In almost all visited schools, teachers felt their coach had made a difference, although the degree to which they felt their coaches actually changed their teaching practice varied. Many teachers pointed to specific skills the coach helped them develop (e.g., think-pair-share, template strategies, pacing, phoneme segmentation). Others called their coach a "good sounding board" and "another set of eyes."

Teachers from a handful of visited schools were less positive about their coach (even describing the coach as "unfair" and "avoidant") or felt their coach, while an asset in many regards, had not directly affected their instruction.

Future Professional Development Needs

To help gauge past and future professional development offerings, principals, coaches, and teachers were asked about areas in which they would like additional training.

Training needs identified by principals. By far, the most frequent request from principals was even more time to learn from each other. Principals requested both a "free exchange" of topics that interested them as well as sharing specifics, especially about scheduling.

Other principals had training requests that were specific to their school contexts such as how to deal with unions, parents, or a school board opposed to Reading First. Curricula for ELL students, leadership, interventions, and cultural diversity were also mentioned as areas for future training.

Training needs identified by coaches. Five topic areas for future professional development for coaches stood out in survey and interview data: interventions, working with resistance, feedback, coaching, and working with ELLs. A larger percentage of cohort 3 coaches requested these areas than their colleagues in cohort 1 and 2 (Table 3-6).

Table 3-6
Areas of Interest for Coaches' Future Professional Development

	Percentage of Coaches	
	Cohorts 1 and 2	**Cohort 3**
Intervention programs	53	81
Working with resistance	38	69
Providing constructive feedback	46	63
Coaching methods	31	63
Working with ELLs	47	63

Note: Differences between cohorts are not statistically significant.

While these topics have all been addressed to at least some degree in past trainings, coaches wanted more information:

> *In the midst of all the talk about interventions, there has been no discussion of what to do when it doesn't work. (Cohort 1 coach)*

> *The LETRs training has been great, but we should have received more. (Cohort 3 coach)*

Smaller percentages of coaches requested training in lesson modeling, differentiating instruction, classroom observations, meeting facilitation, and using assessment results. Some interviewed coaches requested additional time to visit other buildings or share specific information, such as schedules, with other coaches.

Training needs identified by teachers. The topic areas that the most teachers identified as important for future professional development were:

- Interventions
- Comprehension
- Working with ELL students
- Differentiated instruction
- Student engagement

There were few notable differences between cohorts; cohort 3 teachers were slightly more likely to request training in phonemic awareness, phonics, and interventions.

Technical Assistance

The Washington Reading First state project staff includes:

- A *project administrator* responsible for setting the direction of Reading First, providing training, and representing Reading First in state reading improvement efforts.

- An *assistant administrator* who provides technical support to districts and schools, oversees budget and grant management, guidance, and eligibility, and represents Reading First in state reading improvement efforts.

- A *professional development coordinator* who coordinates the summer institute, secondary goal work, and also monitors subgrantees for implementation compliance.

These state project staff members received high praise from all interviewed principals, who described them as "totally responsive," "excellent," "on top of things," and "connected to the schools." Additionally, 77 percent of surveyed principals and 88 percent of coaches agreed that the state was responsive to their school's needs. The project administrator was often singled out as a "strong, effective leader."

> *I couldn't ask for more. It is not often that you have a state person that knows everyone by name and that you can call or e-mail and get an immediate response. Lexie knows her stuff and is able to convey that knowledge. She is very supportive of schools regardless of where you are. She sees our level and never lets that cloud her support. But she always has high standards for what we are expected to do. (Principal)*

The state staff also includes 11 *regional coordinators* (RCs) whose overall charge is to visit schools to provide technical assistance. Their work and schools' responses to their services are described in detail below.

Regional Coordinators

Among their many responsibilities, the state expected RCs to:

- Analyze data for and with school teams
- Provide feedback on classroom instruction
- Celebrate growth
- Identify changes that need to be made

Underneath all of their work was a theory of action to identify what was expected in a school, identify the root cause of problems or issues, and then provide targeted support. In other words, RCs were to provide differentiated technical assistance that took into account school context and needs. Most of the 11 regional coordinators (RCs) served

nine or 10 schools each; some individually and others in teams. Their time was spent providing professional development and traveling to work with their individual schools.

In 2006–2007, the RCs met as a team with state project staff six times. These meetings provided opportunities to discuss their work and make sure everyone was on the same page. RCs also had opportunities to attend trainings that were most relevant to their needs, such as training on LETRS, Tejas LEE, comprehension, GLAD strategies, and Reading Mastery. Overall, RCs were pleased with these differentiated options and suggested similarly differentiated topics for next year (e.g., direct instruction, support for Spanish readers, RTI, and sustainability).

Visits to Schools. In 2006–2007, all Reading First schools received technical assistance site visits from RCs. Most cohort 2 and cohort 3 schools (75%) were visited five times or more during the year, as were 30 percent of cohort 1 schools. Other schools received fewer visits.

Regardless of the number of visits, most coaches were satisfied with the amount they saw their Rc; only seven percent wanted fewer visits and nine percent wanted more visits; these schools were almost all in cohort 1.

With very few exceptions, coaches and principals had high praise for their RCs. The majority of surveyed principals and coaches agreed that their support was valuable, they were trusted, and that RCs understood the school and its culture (Table 3-7). These results were almost identical to the prior year (data not shown in table).

Table 3-7
Principals' and Coaches' Perceptions of Regional Coordinators

	Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing	
	Principals	**Coaches**
The regional coordinator's support and input has been extremely valuable.	87	88
I trust our regional coordinator with any information—good or bad—about our reading program.	82	87
Our regional coordinator understands our school, our programs, and culture, and takes that into account when making recommendations.	82	78

Positive feedback on the survey was echoed in coach interview data; the majority of coaches described their RC(s) in positive ways such as "really supportive," "helpful," and "instrumental to change." Coaches said RCs had helped them work with data, modeled instruction, provided materials, visited classrooms, and strengthened their progress monitoring systems this year. In several schools they also helped bring resistant teachers on board, or supported the coach in her dealings with those teachers. To many coaches, the RC was also their cheerleader.

They have been extremely helpful. They have been extremely encouraging to me when I felt discouraged because it has been tough going around here. They point out the positives and do a splendid job of not being judgmental but being supportive. (Coach)

Our RC's expertise is pinpoint sharp and her backup support is excellent. During her visits, she summarizes where we are, guides my work, and provides staff inservice. (Coach)

The few coaches who did not characterize their RC as supportive explained a clash in personalities, lack of people skills, or a tone that was overly harsh.

They weren't as positive and supportive this year…they were brutal about our results. (Coach)

While supportive of coaches and principals, there were mixed opinions among interviewed coaches about how teachers viewed the RCs. Some said they had a positive relationship with the staff, were "respected," and that staff "valued their opinions." Some added that, although support was positive, there was still a feeling of "top-down" relationships and perceptions of the RC as the "authority."

The teachers are impressed with her knowledge and work ethic and her willingness to share and be helpful. Although I wouldn't say that they would embrace her because she still represents a monitoring figure. (Coach)

A few coaches felt their teachers were still distrustful of the RCs, because they felt intimidated or saw them in a monitoring, rather than supportive, role. One coach noted that she didn't mind the somewhat intimidating tone since "there is some needed tension in order to have accountability."

From the RCs' perspective, it was their role to provide "friendly support" from an "objective point of view" and "teach schools about the process of moving forward." In a few instances, they said they played more of a "mediator" role between, for example, principal and coach or district and school. They did not see themselves as grant monitors.

Support for English Language Learners and Spanish-language Schools

ELL students comprise between one-third and one-half of all Washington Reading First students, depending on the definition used.[3] For the past three years, the challenge of serving ELL students has been highlighted by the evaluation. In 2006, the evaluation found that while addressing ELL issues had gotten "better," it was still "not enough." In addition, many schools still felt under-prepared to make good decisions about the

[3] Using matched student demographics from 2006–2007 DIBELS data, 34 percent of students were classified as ELL using the "narrow" definition while 46 percent were classified as ELL using the "broad" definition.

instructional needs of ELL students. The 2006 evaluation report further found that schools with Spanish-language programs had received far less professional development and technical assistance than had the English-language programs.

In response in 2006–2007, the state Reading First office offered an optional summer institute session called "Components of Effective Reading Instruction for English Language Learners." Further, in support of the Spanish-language schools, they invested a great deal of time, in collaboration with the state Migrant/Bilingual office, visiting Spanish-language schools and provided individualized technical assistance and support. This included:

- Addition of a new Spanish-speaking regional coordinator to the staff, bringing the total to two (six of the coordinators worked with Spanish-language schools in some capacity)

- Inclusion at the summer institute of a session specifically on K–1 Spanish reading instruction and a separate training on the Tejas LEE assessment

- Encouragement for collaboration among Spanish-language schools

Through their regional coordinators and other state support, schools received guidance in the delivery of dual language instruction and support for developing plans for their Spanish-language programs and students' transition into English-language instruction.

School perceptions of ELL support. One in three principals (33%) and coaches (33%) agreed that Reading First professional development from the state did a good job of addressing ELL issues (see Table 3-8). This represents a decrease of 12 percentage points from last year among coaches and no change among principals. There was a slight increase from 2006 (five percentage points to 37%) in the percentage of teachers who felt the Summer Institute had done a good job of addressing ELL issues.

Table 3-8
Perceptions of Coverage of ELL Issues in Professional Development

	Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing (Percentage Change From 2006)		
	Principals	**Coaches**	**Teachers**
The Reading First professional development that I received from the state this year did a good job of addressing ELL issues.	33 (0)	33 (-12)	--
The Reading First Summer Institute did a good job of addressing ELL issues.	--	--	37 (+5)

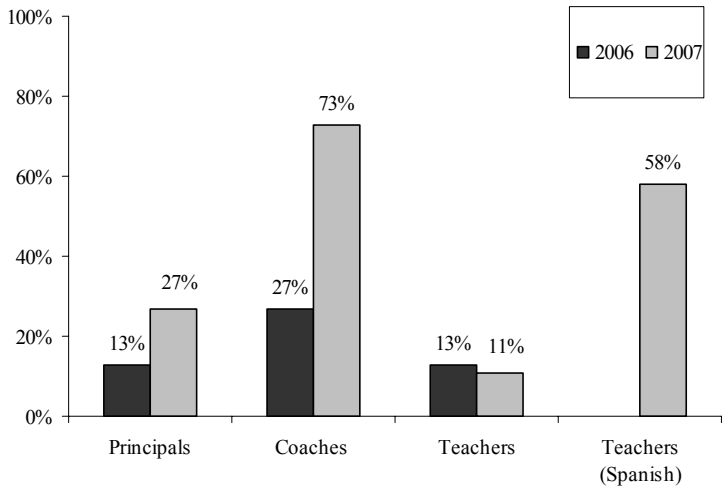
Beyond the summer institute, additional coverage of ELL issues in state-provided professional development (e.g., coach and principal meetings) was minimal. A few schools mentioned receiving program recommendations (*Language for Learning*) or that

ELL issues were mentioned at state meetings. Overall, professional development on ELL issues was a top request from coaches and teachers; it was also requested by some district coordinators and principals.

> *I'd like more practical strategies for teaching ELL students…the group that is just treading water. (Coach)*

School perceptions of Spanish-language support. Spanish-language schools comprise 18 percent of the Reading First schools in Washington and are mostly located on the eastern side of the state. These 16 schools provide a portion of their reading instruction and test in Spanish. Some of these schools instruct students only in Spanish, while others use both English and Spanish languages to teach students their core curriculum. This section reports data collected from these schools only.

When asked about support from the state, responses varied; coaches were much more positive than principals and principals were more positive than teachers that state support for the Spanish-language program was sufficient this year (Figure 3-6). In fact, the majority of principals (60%) actively disagreed with this statement. However, when only the 64 teachers who taught in Spanish were analyzed, the responses were more positive with 58 percent reporting that state project staff provided sufficient support for the Spanish language program.



Note: Includes only Spanish-language schools.

Figure 3-6. State Support for Spanish-language Schools

Feedback about regional coordinator support to Spanish-language schools was positive. Not only did Spanish-language schools receive more visits from their RC than English-only schools, they were also more positive about the helpfulness and understanding of

their regional coordinator (Figure 3-7). RCs themselves described the importance of "knowing about the diversity of the children" in all schools.

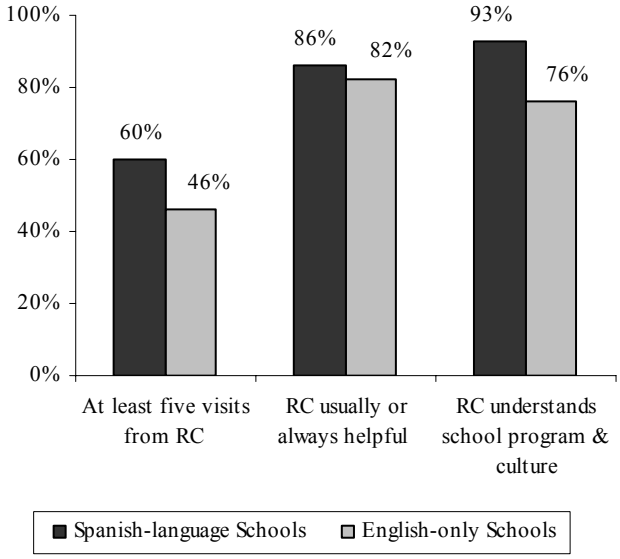
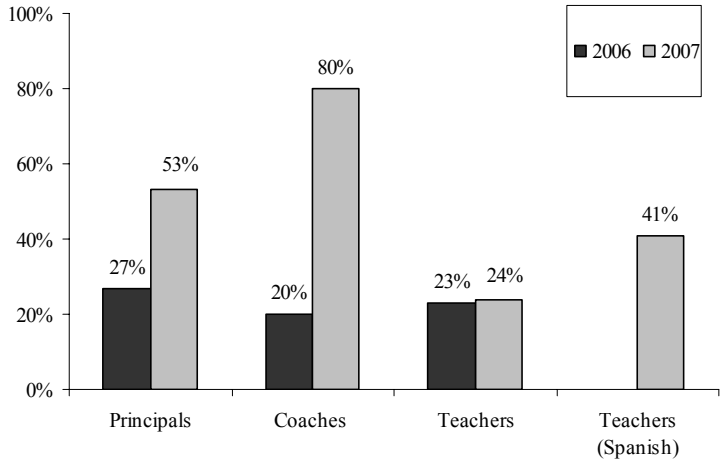


Figure 3-7. Regional Coordinators' Support for Spanish-language Schools

Finally, principals, coaches, and teachers were also asked about the compatibility of Reading First and Spanish-language instruction. While support increased from 2006 among all respondents, the same pattern held, with coaches indicating the most agreement (80%), followed by principals (53%), and teachers (24%) (Figure 3-8). Coaches and principals were also more positive about compatibility this year compared to last. This could possibly be due to having more focused assistance from state staff and regional coordinators. Again, when only the 64 teachers who taught in Spanish were analyzed, the responses were more positive: 41 percent agreed Reading First was compatible with a high-quality Spanish-language program. On the other hand, the majority of teachers in this same subgroup (64%) continued to feel that the philosophy or pedagogy of their ELL instruction clashed with Reading First (data not shown in figure).



"Reading First is compatible with delivering a high-quality Spanish-language program."

Note: Includes only Spanish-language schools.

Figure 3-8. Compatibility of Reading First and Spanish-language Programs

Overall, survey data indicates that state support provided to Spanish-language schools was better received, at least by coaches and teachers instructing in Spanish, than support provided to all schools for ELLs. This was further corroborated by interview data. In spring 2007, when coaches were asked whether they had received support from the state to work with ELL students effectively, coaches in Spanish-language schools provided detailed descriptions of their interactions with the state Reading First and Migrant/Bilingual directors. On the other hand, almost two-thirds of coaches from non-Spanish-language schools said the state had done "nothing, really" to help with the challenges schools faced in meeting the needs of ELL students.

CHAPTER FOUR:
LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL-LEVEL STRUCTURES

HIGHLIGHTS

- Most district coordinators were satisfied with state support and expectations for their role. Many, however, had other duties in their district and worked more hours on Reading First than were actually allocated to the program.

- Most principals and coaches agreed that their district provided good support for Reading First, although according to principals, a small percentage of districts had other educational initiatives that did not align well with Reading First. In interviews, principals described a number of varied reasons for these contradictions, which were often around issues of how to educate English language learners. Changes in district leadership also accounted for some of the challenges.

- Principal turnover at Reading First schools was high, so that almost a quarter of principals at Reading First schools were new to their schools. Many of these new principals in Reading First schools were also new to the profession.

- Most principals strongly supported Reading First and many were actively involved in grant activities, although their level of involvement (e.g., attending meetings, observing classrooms) varied across schools. Principals regularly used reading data to inform decisions, although fewer principals reported that they "always" used data compared to last year.

- Principals felt one of their major responsibilities was to ensure fidelity to the grant and reading program. They used classroom walk-throughs as one means to examine fidelity. Although they felt walk-throughs were important for several reasons, many principals continued to report difficulty finding time for observations and the majority of teachers were observed by their principal less than once a month.

- Over the past two years, a growing percentage of reading coaches reported that their role was well defined and well understood by teachers. Coaches, however, continued to spend long hours completing their duties. This year the percentage of coaches reporting they worked more than 50 hours per week increased.

- The ways in which coaches spent their time changed little from the previous year. On average, the largest percentage of their time went to data and assessment, the second largest percentage went to coaching teachers, and the smallest went to coordinating and/or delivering interventions.

- Most data from coaches, principals, and teachers pointed toward strong collaboration at Reading First schools, although collaboration was higher among cohort 1 and 2 teachers than it was among cohort 3 teachers. This collaboration was evident in both RLT meeting and grade-level meetings.

- Reading First continued to have strong buy-in from principals and coaches. Buy-in from teachers was moderate. Coaches reported that at times teacher resistance hindered program implementation, but many had strategies for approaching resistant teachers.

- Teachers continued to report using data in multiple ways and even more frequently than in the past. Coaches and principals continued to say assessments were well administered and that they were accurate indications of student achievement. Teachers remained more skeptical of the value of DIBELS as a measure of student achievement.

- In Spanish-language schools, the percentage of principals, coaches, and teachers who found the Tejas LEE a useful assessment increased compared to last year.

- Nearly all schools (89 percent or more) met state expectations for regular progress-monitoring of benchmark (monthly), strategic, and intensive students (biweekly).

CHAPTER FOUR:
LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL-LEVEL STRUCTURES

School and district leaders are responsible for developing structures and systems that encourage collaboration and assist individuals in implementing change. In Reading First schools in Washington, these leaders include district coordinators, principals, and coaches. This chapter examines the roles of these leaders by first looking at what they perceived the state's expectations were for their work and how well they believed they were able to meet these expectations. Second, the chapter discusses the state expectations for teams within Reading First schools, especially the Reading Leadership Team and grade-level teams and how these teams met these expectations. The chapter concludes with an examination of evidence of the use of assessment data.

Districts and District Coordinators

In 2006–2007, Washington had 88 Reading First schools in 32 districts. Those districts varied greatly, both in the number of elementary schools they had, and the proportion of those schools involved in Reading First. Some districts had just one elementary school, while the largest included 63 elementary schools. In many districts (21 out of 32), all elementary schools were part of Reading First, but in the other 11 districts, participation in Reading First ranged from four to 75 percent of schools. These differences probably contributed to the differences in what district coordinators did, how much support districts provided to their Reading First schools, and the degree to which Reading First influenced non-Reading First schools in the same district.

The District Coordinator

Each district was required by the grant to designate a district coordinator, who was supposed to participate in Reading First meetings and trainings and work to support the implementation of the grant in their district. For all but one district coordinator, this responsibility was just one of many; 31 of them reported having a role in the district beyond being the district's Reading First coordinator. Their other roles varied greatly, but those most frequently were principal (22%) and superintendent (13%).

Because most coordinators also played other roles in their districts, only part of their work week was allotted to Reading First; the average was 23 percent of their time. Although the average percentage of time coordinators said *actually* spent on Reading First was close to that (25%), 47 percent of coordinators said they spent more time on Reading First than was allocated.

One responsibility that took a substantial portion of time was participation in Reading First professional development and meetings. As Table 4-1 indicates, most district coordinators attended the Summer Institute, as well as at least some district coordinator and/or coach and principal meetings. (All district coordinators attended something, even

if they did not attend everything.) They also met with the regional coordinators assigned to schools in their district; in fact, this latter activity was most likely to be rated as "usually" or "always" useful to them.

Table 4-1
District Coordinators' Attendance of Reading First Trainings

	Percentage of District Coordinators Attending Activities				Percentage Reporting Activities Usually or Always Useful
	Did not attend	Once	2-3 times	4 + times	
2006 Summer Institute	22	78			71
Meetings with Reading First regional coordinator(s) for our district	3	7	28	62	90
Statewide coach & principal meetings	9	3	44	14	78
State meetings for district coordinators	14	17	55	14	66

According to most district coordinators, state expectations for their participation in Reading First were clear (88%) and reasonable (97%). All (100%) agreed the state had done a good job of communicating necessary information regarding Reading First to district coordinators.

In addition, almost all district coordinators (93%) said the state Reading First project staff members were responsive to their district's needs. One district coordinator described this state responsiveness by saying:

> *The state is doing a wonderful job. We have been very pleased and have no suggestions for additional support. (District coordinator)*

About a third of district coordinators, in fact, said no changes to state support for Reading First districts were needed. About a fifth wanted more support from the state in sustaining Reading First after their grants ended. Others wanted more support for English language learners (ELLs).

Sufficiency of Supports Provided by the District

Just as most district coordinators participated in Reading First activities, and were satisfied with their interactions with the state, most also reported providing certain core kinds of support to schools. For example, all district coordinators reported providing grant management and monitoring grant implementation. More than 90 percent also reported:

- Analyzing student reading assessment data (94%)
- Providing technical assistance to support school change (94%)
- Supporting the core reading program (94%)
- Supporting intervention programs (94%)

- Assisting with proposal writing (91%)
- Providing professional development that is aligned with Reading First (91%)

A smaller percentage of coaches (60%) reported that their school had received technical assistance from their district Reading First coordinator.

There was a call for better alignment of district and Reading First initiatives among some principals (22%) and coaches (25%). Some district coordinators (29%) also agreed that misalignment was a problem in their districts. Also, 16 percent of principals reported that they had received conflicting messages from their regional coordinator and their district coordinator.

Despite these challenges in some districts, overall most principals (80%) agreed that the district provided sufficient support for Reading First. One of them, in a district the principal characterized as "very supportive," explained:

> *The district very much buys into the results of what Reading First has produced in the schools. The district is now deciding to mandate parts of the Reading First grant in all the schools. The district also played a role in figuring out how to bring training to the school, and it purchased core program materials for grades 4-5. (Principal)*

In interviews, principals who said the district support was not sufficient gave a variety of explanations. A couple said the district could be more supportive of the school in dealing with union or teacher-led resistance to Reading First. Others said recent changes in district leadership or in district funding made it more difficult for districts to support Reading First schools.

Influence of Reading First in Non-Reading First Schools

According to district coordinators, Reading First had an influence on district policy to non-Reading First elementary schools. Among all 11 districts that had any non-Reading First schools, some elements of Reading First were implemented districtwide.[1] The three elements most commonly implemented across the district were:

- A 90-minute reading block (73%)
- Use of DIBELS for benchmark assessments three times a year (54%)
- Provision of ongoing, high-quality professional development in reading (46%)

The two elements that the lowest percentage of district coordinators reported implementing districtwide were:

- Systematic monitoring of student progress (27%)
- Employment of a K–3 reading coach (27%)

[1]Data were not collected, however, to indicate whether these components were already in place before the district began participating in Reading First.

Principals in Reading First

Principals in Reading First schools are expected to serve as instructional leaders by being knowledgeable about reading and school change, observing classrooms frequently and providing teachers with useful feedback, and using data to inform decisions and make sure teachers do the same. They are also expected to model a high level of support for Reading First. Interviews asked principals to describe the expectations in their own words. While these interviews did not produce an exhaustive list of principal duties, they highlighted roles that principals believed were important. While principals mentioned many responsibilities, this section is organized around the three which were most frequently mentioned:

- **Actively support** the Reading First initiative and efforts of teachers and coaches.
- **Ensure fidelity** of implementation.
- **Use data** to make decisions and make sure teachers and coaches do too.

Many principals from which these data were drawn were experienced educators. The average number of years of experience as a principal was eight, although years experience ranged from 0 to 21, and 11 percent of principals were new to the profession. Almost one-quarter (24%) were new to their school this year.

Actively support Reading First. There was almost universal support for Reading First among principals. Almost all principals (89%) strongly supported the instructional changes under Reading First and just 18 percent believed the grant put excessive emphasis on their involvement in instructional matters. Although most believed their involvement was reasonable in an ideal world, they also felt the demands were very high. One principal said the state expected principals "to be everywhere all the time and know it all." The principal continued:

> *Sometimes I feel like that. Their expectations of me are that I am in the classroom, I know what's going on, I am able to be a support to teachers and the kids, I understand what we are doing and why, I know what data says, I am a leader in there making that happen--getting teachers on board who are a little reluctant, keeping those going who have hit the wall. (Principal)*

The high demands meant that not all principals felt they were able to fulfill the expectations of the grant. Teacher observations were especially difficult to complete, as reported last year.

> *The most difficult thing for me because of the size of school is spending enough quality time in classrooms. It's a big frustration for me. It's an area where I need to be better but that means leaving something else undone. (Principal)*

Several principals added that their attendance at Reading First meetings sometimes suffered. This was true in survey data: half of principals (46%) always attended RLT meetings, while an additional 30 percent usually attended, and the remaining 24 percent

attending less frequently. There were mixed reports from teachers of how often principals attended grade-level meetings, from usually/always (27%) to seldom or never (34%).

In interviews, many principals said that being supportive of Reading First meant being a "cheerleader" in the school. Most teachers (85%) saw their principal as a visible advocate for reading.

Ensure fidelity. Interviewed principals felt that one of their main duties was to ensure fidelity to the grant and program, making sure materials and assessments were used correctly. Interviewed principals felt that their classroom walk-throughs were a helpful way to ensure fidelity, hold teachers accountable, and show teachers support. Most also agreed that walk-throughs should receive priority.

> *Walk-throughs inform me about what is going on, whether the teachers are implementing the curriculum, whether they are implementing new things, or whether they just doing the same old things. (Principal)*

> *Walk-throughs and progress monitoring conversations are my highest priority. I schedule it into my work before anything else because if they're not taking place, I am losing my ability to be supportive. (Principal)*

Despite their belief that walk-throughs were important, principals continued to say that they had difficulty finding time for observations and many teachers reported being observed infrequently. The percentages of teachers reporting principals observed (39%) and provided feedback (23%) at least once a month has remained steady over the past three years as seen in Figure 4-1.

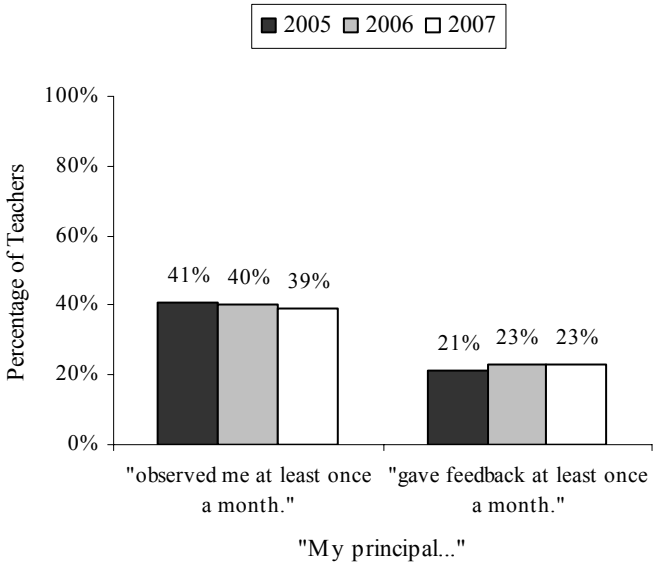


Figure 4-1. Teachers' Report on Frequency of Principal Observation and Feedback

While most teachers (95%) were observed at least once, fewer received feedback at least once (80%) and the majority of feedback and observations happened only once or a few times a year. When they did provide feedback, 58 percent of teachers considered it usually or always helpful.

When observations were infrequent, it was not due to a discomfort observing. Virtually all principals (98%) said they were comfortable observing and providing constructive feedback. In addition, many said there were tools available for them to use during walk-throughs; about half said they used tools such as checklists. Principals who did not use a tool for observation and feedback frequently said they did not do so because they believed this would cause morale problems for teachers.

Most teachers in focus groups expressed a high level of comfort with principal observation and feedback during walk-throughs. In contrast, one group said they walk-throughs were ineffective because the principal never gave feedback. Another group reported that the principal brought so many visitors to the walk-through that the activity was disruptive.

Use data. Reading First emphasizes the use of data at all levels of decision-making. Principals saw the use of data as one of their primary roles in Reading First. One principal described how this meant knowing, "what the data say and what we are going to do about what the data say."

Survey data suggest that principals regularly ("usually" or "always") used data to communicate with teachers, make decisions about grouping and interventions, and study schoolwide trends. However, as shown in Table 4-2, there were decreases from 2006 in the percentage of principals who said the "always" used data to communicate to teachers about their students and/or their instruction.

Table 4-2
Principals' Use of Reading Assessment Data

I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	Percentage of Principals			
	Rarely/Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always (Change from 2006)
Communicating with teachers about their students	--	23	43	34 (-18)
Communicating with teachers about their instruction	1	29	42	28 (-14)
Making decisions about student grouping	2	6	24	70 (+1)
Matching students to the appropriate interventions	--	7	27	66 (-7)
Looking at school-wide (K-3) trends	3	8	20	69 (-9)
Meeting with parents	15	21	53	12 (-8)

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Coaches in Reading First

Like principals, coaches are important instructional leaders in Reading First schools. Coaches support teachers and promote effective instruction by modeling effective lessons, observing teachers and providing constructive feedback, assisting with professional development, and serving as a resource manager for school staff members. Data regarding how coaches provide professional development are reported in Chapter 3: Professional Development and Technical Assistance. This section describes the background and expectations of coaches as well as how coaches fulfill those expectations.

Most coaches in Reading First schools (89%) were employed full time. Four of the nine schools that had part-time coaches also employed a second coach. Overall, coaches were experienced teachers, with an average of 17 years of teaching experience, although a small group (12%) had fewer than five years of experience. Almost all (95%) had advanced degrees, usually reading certificates and/or Master's degrees.

Coaches had an average of four years of coaching experience, although this ranged from one to 20 years. The average number of years experience coaching in the coaches' current schools was slightly lower: three years on average. More cohort 3 coaches (63%) were new to coaching compared to coaches in cohorts 1 and 2 (14%).

Expectations of Coaches and Work Load

When asked in interviews what the state expected of them, most coaches described multiple state expectations and responsibilities. For example, one coach said:

> *The state expects me to be the cheerleader and provide staff development for good teacher practices. I should know the core program and assist the teachers in delivery of that curriculum. They expect me to do progress monitoring in the timelines they established. They expect integrity in adhering to guidelines of DIBELS protocols. They expect the three benchmark windows to be taken care of and data entered in a timely manner. Then there are a lot of embedded expectations like getting teachers on board, working with the principal, and going to all of the meetings.*

These multiple expectations translated into long working hours for many coaches. The average number of hours worked per week remained about the same as 2006 (49 hours), but more coaches reported working longer hours. Specifically, 48 percent reported working more than 50 hours a week, a 17 percentage point increase from 2006.

During their working hours, coaches said their primary roles were to:

- Analyze data and promote data use for instructional grouping and/or interventions
- Coach (observe teachers, monitor fidelity, mentor teachers, and provide professional development)

Analyze data and promote data use. Coach responses to survey questions revealed, again this year, that across schools, most of them used data for a wide variety of purposes (Table 4-3). There was a drop in the percentage of coaches who reported that they "always" use data to communicate with teachers about students or to make decisions about grouping, but otherwise, the percentages changed little from 2006. When the categories of "usually" and "always" were combined, most coaches reported they used data for most of the activities listed, with a few exceptions:

- Communicating with teachers about their instruction (31 percent did this only "sometimes")
- Modifying lessons from the core program (30 percent did this "sometimes" or less often)
- Meeting with parents (31 percent did this "sometimes" or less often)

Table 4-3
Coaches' Use of Reading Assessment Data

I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	Percentage of Coaches			
	Rarely/Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always (Change from 2006)
Communicating with teachers about their students	0	4	43	54 (-13)
Communicating with teachers about their instruction	0	31	38	31 (-2)
Making decisions about student grouping	0	10	22	68 (-8)
Modifying lessons from the core program	5	25	37	33 (+1)
Identifying which students need interventions	0	0	14	86 (-4)
Matching students to the appropriate interventions	1	4	26	70 (-4)
Monitoring student progress in interventions	0	1	29	70 (-3)
Helping teachers tailor instruction to individual student needs (i.e., differentiated instruction)	1	17	41	41 (+4)
Looking at schoolwide (K-3) trends	1	5	21	73 (-1)
Meeting with parents	13	18	31	39 (+7)

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Coaching (observing, monitoring, mentoring, and providing professional development). The role of the coach in the provision of professional development to teachers is covered more thoroughly in Chapter 3 (Professional Development). That chapter described great variety in the frequency of coach observations. For example, over one-quarter of coaches visited teachers fairly infrequently. In addition to the implications for teachers, infrequent observations probably affected coaches' ability to monitor program fidelity.

The differences in observation frequency is part of a larger picture of how differently coaches spent their time on various responsibilities. Survey data revealed that, on average, coaches spent a great deal of time on both coaching and data-related work. Specifically, one-quarter of their time (25%) was spent on coaching while 31 percent of their time was spent on data and assessment activities (Table 4-4). The remaining 43 percent of their time went to interventions (16%) and other duties (27%). In comparison with 2006, this year (2007) coaches spent slightly more time on coaching and interventions and slightly less time on data and assessment and on other activities.[2]

Table 4-4
Percentage of Time Spent on Coaching Tasks

	2005-2006	2006-2007
One-on-one coaching (K-3)	15	19
Group coaching (K-3)	5	6
Coaching out-of-grade	1	0
Subtotal: Coaching	**21**	**25**
Administering/coordinating assessments	9	10
Managing data (entering, charting)	22	11
Using/interpreting data	5	10
Subtotal: Data & Assessment	**36**	**31**
Planning interventions	6	10
Providing interventions directly	3	6
Subtotal: Interventions	**9**	**16**
Planning for/attending meetings	13	7
Attending professional development	5	4
Paperwork	11	10
Unrelated (subbing, bus duty, etc.)	4	6
Subtotal: Other	**33**	**27**

Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

[2] While these general trends help build an overall picture of how coaches in Washington Reading First work, they also obscure the variation among coaches; some coaches spend most of their time working directly with teachers, while others let "managerial" tasks (paperwork and meetings) take up a substantial portion of their time (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson & Autio, 2007).

Even though they reported working long hours, some coaches interviewed said they had difficulty fulfilling all of their responsibilities and tasks related to data, interventions, or observations fell off their plate. In a typical response, one coach said,

> *I feel like I'm juggling all these balls. I can't let any one go to keep it going, but new balls keep getting added in that I have to get into the air. (Coach)*

Although some coaches described additional responsibilities required by their school or district such as bus duty or substitute teaching, they were rarely mentioned as large obstacles to completing their coaching work.

Despite the many demands on them, coaches did say that the clarity of their role has improved over time, as shown in Figure 4-2. Specifically, 89 percent of coaches said their role as a reading coach was clearly defined, and 85 percent said teachers at their school understood the role of the reading coach.

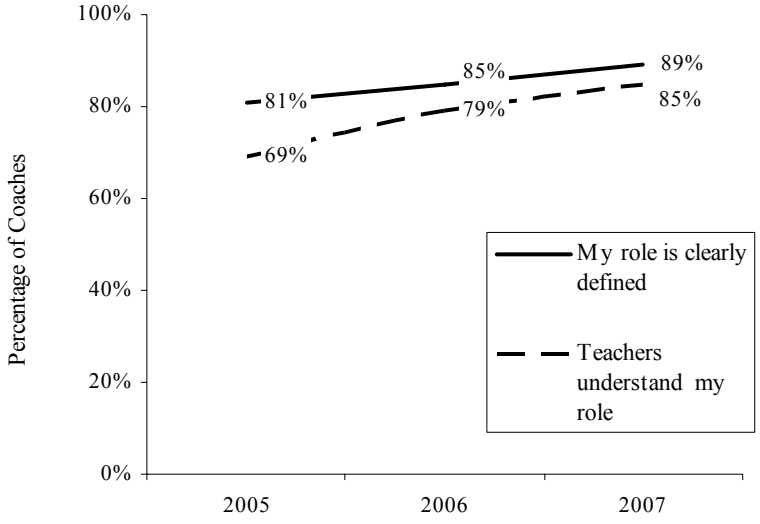


Figure 4-2. Coaches' and Teachers' Perceptions of Coach Roles

Collaborative Leadership

While the coach and principal are important leaders in Reading First schools, they are also charged with creating a collaborative culture in which teachers and principals share decision making. Reading Leadership Team (RLT) meetings and grade-level meetings can facilitate this collaboration. Informal communication throughout the school day can also increase shared ownership of Reading First. This section explores the collaborative culture at Reading First schools and how RLT meetings and grade-level meetings support collaboration.

Collaborative Culture

Most principals (83%) and coaches (90%) agreed that participating in Reading First helped their school develop a more collaborative culture. Many teachers also agreed, although this was more true of teachers at cohort 1–2 schools (72%) than of teachers in cohort 3 (58%).[3]

Reading Leadership Team

Each school was expected to have a RLT, which should include at least the coach, principal, and a teacher representative from each grade, K–3. Teams were expected to meet at least monthly.

Similar to last year, most schools did have RLTs and met the state requirements for team membership. According to coaches, all but three schools had RLTs, and most of these met monthly (78%). In schools with teams, membership included the coach (100% of schools), principal (97%), and, in three-fourths (72%) of teams, a teacher from each grade, K–3. More than one-third of teams included teachers from grades 4–6, special education teachers, ELL teachers, and Title I teachers.

In order to function well, RLTs are expected to rely on data, plan specifically and collaboratively, and be integrally involved in the implementation of the grant. Data suggested that this vision was met in some but not all schools.

- Most RLTs **relied on data**; 88 percent of teachers[4] said they talked about school-wide data at RLT meetings.

- Some RLTs **planned specifically and collaboratively**. Some teachers reported their RLT made decisions about instruction within or across grades (61%), instruction for specific students (45%), and material purchases (42%).

- Some RLTs were **integrally involved in grant implementation,** though not all were described in this way. Some teachers (63%) reported their schools had a visible and effective RLT, and some coaches (51%) said their school would not run effectively without the RLT.

[3] In this chapter, all differences describes between cohorts' survey responses are statistically significant ($p \leq .01$) level unless otherwise noted. When these differences are not statistically significant, survey results from across the cohorts are reported.

[4] Teacher responses to RLT questions included only teachers who were members of the RLT.

Teams from cohort 1 and 2 spent more time talking about data, planning special events, and planning for sustainability than those in cohort 3.

Interview data was similar in that some coaches described RLTs that fulfilled Reading First's vision of the ideal team while some did not. A coach from a cohort 2 school described an RLT that contained many aspects of the ideal team but that had room for improvement.

> *The RLT has met every month since the start of school. It's well-organized. We looked at Reading First expectations for the first six months of implementation to make sure we did all the systems, then we looked at the next six months to make sure we were on the right track. Data has become an important part of the team but needs to improve. (Coach)*

In schools where the RLT did not meet the state's vision, there were sometimes explanations. For example, several principals said that their schools had recently been identified for improvement under NCLB and that RLT meetings had begun to focus on school improvement issues rather than on Reading First.

Despite some mixed reactions, many principals (83%), coaches (77%), and teacher-members (72%) agreed that the meetings were a good use of their time.

Grade-level Meetings

Like RLT meetings, grade-level meetings promote collaboration by giving teachers who teach the same grade the opportunity to discuss teaching and learning. Most teachers (83%) reported grade-level meetings fulfilled this purpose. Furthermore, as shown in Table 4-5, most teachers found all participant comments welcome (84%), and many reported the meetings were a good use of their time (73%). The results were similar to last year.

Table 4-5
Teachers' Perception of Grade-level Meetings

At my school's grade-level reading meetings…	Percentage of Teachers Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing	
	2006 (n=949)	2007 (n=1129)
We discuss the issues of teaching and learning that the participants identify as important.	77	83
All participant comments and viewpoints are welcomed.	82	84
We discuss the reasons for doing things, not just the requirements.	85	78
Regularly attending grade-level meeting is a good use of my time.	68	73

Reading First does not have a set requirement for the frequency of grade-level meetings, but 93 percent of teachers reported they met at least monthly. Some of these meetings included principals and coaches as well as teachers: 58 percent of teachers said coaches usually or always attended these meetings, and 26 percent said principals usually or always attended.

The majority of coaches interviewed viewed themselves as facilitators or guides during grade-level meetings. These coaches typically gathered materials for the meetings and set the agenda for the discussion of reading instruction.

Several coaches, however, noted that they did not attend grade-level meetings unless they knew reading was going to be discussed, and several added that their role varied by grade-level, based on what the coach perceived the grade-level needed. One coach described the coach's role as follows:

> *It varies based on the team. Some teams I facilitate. Others I step back and let them lead the way and interject as needed. Some teams I take notes, and others do their own minutes. Some do own agendas, for one team I do both. It depends on their level of functioning. (Coach)*

In addition to coach's roles as facilitators or guides, many teachers in focus groups said that grade-level meetings provided coaches and principals a place to listen to discussion and evaluate how well teachers were implementing Reading First.

Principals' attendance at grade-level meetings was less common, but most principals (87%) did agree that that attending—at least some of the time—was a good use of their time. As one principal explained:

> *The grade-level meetings are my key to understanding how individual kids are doing and if what is being provided is working. Our school-wide efforts to provide interventions require these conversations; we have to talk with the core reading teacher and the interventionist about each student. That's how we figure out what is working or not and how to fix things before it's too late. (Principal)*

Buy-In

Effective leaders within a reform effort can inspire participants to "buy into" the program and believe in what they are doing. All leaders of reforms also typically struggle with resistance to change. This section of the report addresses the degree to which principals, coaches, and teachers bought into Reading First and the degree to which principals and coaches perceived teachers' resistance to be a challenge.

As in previous years, data indicate that coaches and principals supported Reading First more than teachers. For example, the vast majority of coaches (98%) reported strongly supporting Reading First. Most principals (89%), though less than last year, agreed they

strongly supported the program. Teacher support was similar to last year with 51 percent of teachers saying they support the program as shown in Figure 4-3.

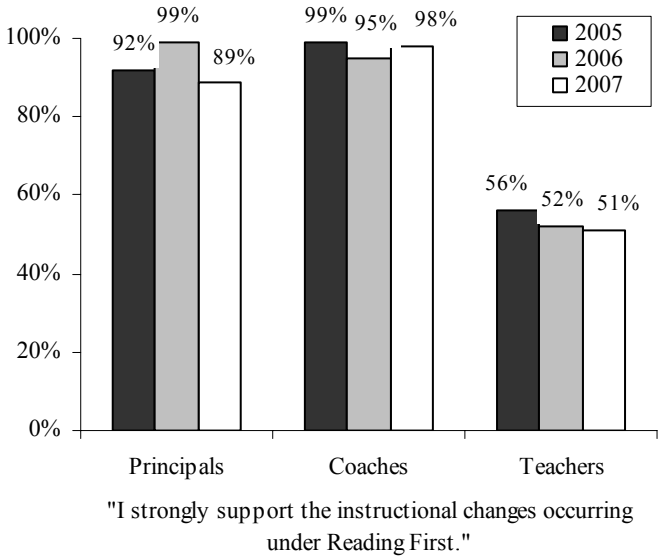


Figure 4-3. Perception of Instructional Changes Under Reading First

Similarly, virtually all principals and coaches (99%) said they were pleased their school had a Reading First grant, while 65% of teachers agreed. Some teacher reservations about Reading First had to do with philosophical or pedagogical objections to Reading First: 24 percent of teachers reporting having these objections, while a much smaller percentage of principals (3%) and coaches (2%) had objections.

At times lack of buy-in caused difficulty within the program: 25 percent of principals and 31 percent of coaches said overcoming teacher resistance was a challenge. In addition, 16 percent of coaches said teacher resistance was a reason all eligible students did not get interventions as required by Reading First.

Interviews with principals and coaches supported survey findings. About half of coaches and principals described teachers buy-in in their school as high and half described it as mixed or medium. Coaches who described buy-in as high typically attributed buy-in to results. In a typical comment, one said,

> *Teachers see the charts and bar graphs, and they like to see those visuals rise. (Coach)*

Reasons given by principals and coaches for lack of buy-in varied a great deal. Several principals and coaches said some teachers in their school simply did not want to change their instructional methods. Several principals said they believed some teachers were philosophically opposed to Reading First. In several schools, principals and teachers noted that resistance was concentrated in particular grade levels.

In their interviews, coaches also noted a variety of ways of dealing effectively with resistance. Almost two-thirds said working to build trusting, positive relationships with resistant teachers helped move these teachers toward acceptance of Reading First. For example, one coach said,

> *If you give people lots of positives whenever you can and try to reinforce whatever you see is going really great, then when you say, maybe you should change this, they may not be really happy but they'll do it. It is just about dealing with people so that you bring out the positive qualities. You want to have something in the bank, so when you have to make a withdrawal, there is some good will there. (Coach)*

In addition, about a fourth of coaches reported that sharing data with resistant teachers often helped those teachers see the positive effects of Reading First and/or the negative effects of not implementing the program with fidelity. Finally, in schools where coaches described high teacher resistance or particularly uncooperative individuals, several noted they turned the problem over to the principal or regional coordinator.

Use of Assessment Data

At the federal level, Reading First emphasizes the use of assessment data, not only to determine the longer-term impact of the program, but also to make key decisions about instruction. This emphasis is, if anything, even stronger in Washington, where the state provided guidance to schools in the use of data to conduct "root cause analyses" and make appropriate program adjustments.

In 2006–2007, Washington Reading First schools not only conducted the required benchmark assessments three times a year, but nearly all schools also conducted very regular progress monitoring, using the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS) and other assessments. All three cohorts reported organized systems for collecting, analyzing and interpreting data. This section of the report describes the use of assessment data in Washington Reading First schools in 2006–2007.

Administration of Assessments

Schools used a variety of assessments to screen students for reading difficulties, diagnose the nature of problems, and to monitor student progress. The DIBELS was the most widely used measure for all three purposes, as it has been in previous years. Assessments included in schools' core programs were also used by more than half of schools for these purposes. In addition, more than half of coaches also reported their schools used Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE) Multiple Assessments for screening (51%) and diagnosis (70%). Teacher-developed assessments were used by fewer that a third of schools, according to coaches. In addition, schools providing Spanish-language instruction used the Tejas LEE to assess their Spanish-speaking students.

Benchmark assessments were administered by teams that varied from school to school. The coach was usually a team member (84%), with frequent support from paraprofessionals (51%) and specialists (22%). Classroom teachers rarely participated in the administration of benchmark assessments.

Progress-monitoring assessments, however, were administered by teachers in over two-thirds of schools. In addition, coaches (61%), paraprofessionals (64%), and specialists (29%) often played a role in progress monitoring.

Schools also met Reading First's requirement that student progress be monitored frequently. According to coaches:

- 92 percent of schools monitored benchmark students at least every four weeks
- 89 percent of schools monitored strategic students at least every two weeks
- 99 percent of schools monitored intensive students at least every two weeks

Most schools also had well-organized systems for administering, analyzing, and sharing DIBELS results, according to coaches and teachers. Like last year, fewer coaches and teachers reported data disaggregated by key demographic variables. Although cohort 3 schools were in their first year of implementation, a higher percentage of cohort 3 teachers had seen data disaggregated and felt that school data systems were organized (Table 4-6).

Table 4-6
Organized Data Systems in Reading First Schools

	Coaches	Teachers (All Cohorts)	Teachers (Cohorts 1 & 2)	Teachers (Cohort 3 Only)
Our school has an organized system for administering the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments.	98	92	92	92*
Our school has an organized system for analyzing and sharing the results of the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments with teachers.	97	87	84	88
Our school has an organized system for reviewing reading assessment data that have been disaggregated by key demographic variables.**	33	43	38	45

* Cohort differences not significant.
**Teachers item read, "I have seen our school's reading assessment data disaggregated (split up) by key demographic variable."

Interviews affirmed these findings that Reading First schools were using data frequently and using it collaboratively. All but one coach in a very small school described their systems for collecting and analyzing data as a team effort. In a typical response, one coach said:

> *I feel supported when I reflect on our data with all of the staff and we talk about the bigger picture. (Coach)*

The majority of coaches also said that using data was one of the state's primary expectations of coaches and that most grade-level teams spent time examining data.

Accuracy of Assessment Results

In previous years, there were some concerns that the use of DIBELS outcomes to determine schools' eligibility for continued Reading First funding created an incentive for schools to "cheat," that is, to report inflated student test scores. In order to assess the accuracy of the DIBELS scores reported, this year state project staff initiated a DIBELS re-check process. During the winter assessment window, regional coordinators visited one school in each district; schools not normally assigned to them, and readministered the assessment to a sample of first- and third-grade students. Between five and seven randomly selected students were tested at each grade level. The regional coordinators then sent the results to state project staff, which compared these results, student by student, to those entered on line by the schools. State project staff members reported no evidence of score inflation; on the contrary, in the few instances in which scores were not the same, it was the first set of scores, those reported by the school, that were lower. State project staff attributes the discrepancy to the fact that the retest by regional coordinators constituted a "warm read" of the assessment passage, so a few students scored higher when tested the second time.

Additional evidence that the DIBELS is administered accurately came from coach interviews. Only a few coaches had concerns about administration (usually about one particular person); the majority felt the DIBELS was administered accurately. In cases of concern, coaches usually said they retrained the person. For example, one coach said,

> *I think DIBELS is done well, but we're human. I needed to have a serious meeting with one person and then do some follow-up, but otherwise there may be just occasional and little human errors. (Coach)*

While few concerns were reported with administration, teachers remained skeptical about the validity and accuracy of DIBELS. Similar to previous years, 49 percent of teachers believed DIBELS was a valid accurate indicator of student reading ability and more than half (57%) said Reading First over-emphasized the importance of using DIBELS results. In contrast, almost all coaches (93%) and many principals (79%) agreed that DIBELS was valid and accurate.

In addition to DIBELS, Washington Reading First schools with Spanish-language programs were asked to administer the Tejas LEE in the fall, winter, and spring and to record the scores in a separate database. The state made efforts to provide additional support for schools using the Tejas LEE this year, and these appear to have paid off. The percentage of principals, coaches, and teachers agreeing the Tejas LEE was a useful tool for assessing Spanish-language students increased greatly, compared to the year before (Table 4-7).

Table 4-7
Principal, Coach, and Teacher Perceptions of Assessments in Spanish-Language Schools

	Percentage* Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing	
	2006	**2007**
"The Tejas LEE has been a useful tool for assessing our Spanish-language students this year."		
Principals (n=15)	53	73
Coaches (n=15)	56	80
Teachers (2006 n=269; 2007 n=227)	38	70
"Assessing all students, including those who are in the Spanish-language program, using the English DIBELS provides us with a valuable "big picture" of how our school is doing in reading."		
Principals (n=15)	40	60
Coaches (n=15)	67	60
Teachers (2006 n=269, 2007 n=233)	34	54

* Includes only principals, coaches, and teachers from schools with Spanish language programs.

In addition, this year more principals and teachers agreed that assessing all students, including those who are in the Spanish-language program using the English DIBELS provided a valuable "big picture" of how their school is going in reading. Coaches' responses remained about the same for this item.

About two-thirds of coaches surveyed reported that their school teams administering the Tejas LEE thoroughly understood the administration and scoring of the assessment. This was similar to last year's finding.

Teachers' Use of Results

As in previous years, the percentage of teachers reporting they looked at reading assessment data frequently were large, with the majority (96%) saying they look at these data at least once a month. The frequency with which teachers looking at data stayed

about the same from 2006 with most teachers looking at data weekly (53%) or at least monthly (another 43%).

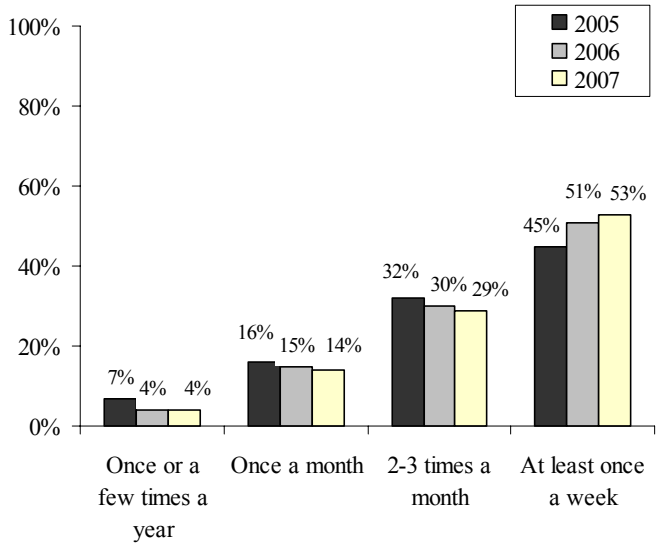


Figure 4-4. Frequency of Reading Assessment Use by Teachers

The percentages of teachers reporting using data for particular purposes were similarly high and have increased in the last two years. Specifically, most teachers said they "usually" or "always" used data in a variety of situations and most categories increased from 2006, as shown in Table 4-9.

Table 4-9
Teachers' Use of Reading Assessment Data

I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	Percentage Responding "Usually or "Always" 2007	Percentage Change from 2006
Identifying which students need interventions	94	--
Communicating with colleagues about reading instruction and student needs	85	+3
Monitoring student progress in interventions	87	+5
Matching students to the appropriate interventions	86	+7
Grouping students into small instructional groups within my classroom	79	+13
Looking at schoolwide (K-3) trends	71	+8
Meeting with parents	67	+6
Modifying lessons from the core program	60	+6

Note: Between 1 and 12 percent of teachers reported "I don't do that" for each item. Those respondents were not included in the analyses for either year.

CHAPTER FIVE:
INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

- All schools delivered at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction to their first-, second- and third-grade students. Most, though not all, kindergarten students also received a full 90 minutes (only 60 minutes were required for half-day kindergarten).

- Schools relied on their core reading program(s) to deliver instruction and used them, overall, with a high degree of fidelity.

- The vast majority of students were taught at their instructional level, either through grouping techniques such as walk-to-read or via small group instruction supported by paraprofessionals in the reading classroom. Although nearly all teachers provided some differentiated instruction, many wished they had the resources and support to differentiate still further. And, in a minority of classrooms—about six percent—there appeared to be little or no differentiation.

- Instruction of English language learners, who make up as much as 46 percent of students at Reading First schools, continued to be a major concern. While Spanish-language schools were more positive than in previous years, for schools that teach their ELL students in English only, there was no real change in what they said about how Reading First met the needs of their ELL students. Concerns centered on matching materials to the needs of students, improving teacher skills and knowledge, and meshing ELL and Reading First policies at the state level.

- Although instruction covered all five essential components of reading instruction, phonics instruction appeared to receive substantially more time and attention than the other four components.

- Observers witnessed an increase in the percentage of lessons demonstrating clarity, opportunities for student practice, and strong student engagement. However, in about 15 percent of classrooms, there was a high proportion of students who were off task (the same percentage observed the previous year).

- Interventions were well-established at 82 percent of cohort 1 and 2 schools, serving large numbers of students and generally receiving high ratings from observers. However, at a few continuing schools, they occurred irregularly or did not begin until very late in the school year.

- Most cohort 3 schools were providing some sort of interventions, typically to certain pockets of students or grade levels.

- Many schools faced staffing challenges that made it difficult to meet all struggling students' needs. The percentage of schools with more than six students in their intensive intervention groups increased compared to last year.

CHAPTER FIVE:
INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTIONS

Nearly all coaches (90%) and most teachers (76%) believed that reading instruction in their schools had improved under Reading First (see Table 5-1). In general, this held across groups, although teachers in cohort 3 schools were somewhat less likely to agree. Also, contrary to popular beliefs about Reading First, new teachers were much less likely to agree with this statement, while the most experienced teachers voiced the highest level of agreement.

Table 5-1
Perceptions that Instruction Has Improved

"I believe that reading instruction at my school has improved noticeably this year."	**n**	**Percentage Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing**
All Coaches	83	90
All Teachers	1036	76
Teachers in Schools with Spanish-language Programs	237	75
Teachers Who Teach in Spanish	53	74
Teachers in Cohort 1-2 Schools	802	79
Teachers in Cohort 3 Schools	234	68*
Teachers in their First Year of Teaching	81	47*
Teachers Working 2-5 Years	214	71
Teachers Working 6-10 Years	213	78
Teachers Working 11 or More Years	477	83*

* Difference is statistically significant.

Perceptions tell only a part of the story about instruction, however. Instruction in the Washington Reading First classroom should ideally:

- Be delivered during an uninterrupted **90 minute reading block**
- Use a **core reading program** based on scientific research on reading
- Cover the **five essential components of reading**
- Be **differentiated** and delivered at **student's instructional level**
- Meet the needs of **English language learners**
- Consist of **clear** lessons with **scaffolded instruction**
- Provide clear and meaningful **feedback to students**
- Demonstrate strong and consistent **classroom management** and encourage **high student engagement**

Furthermore, for students who need additional support in reading, the school should offer interventions that should be delivered in small groups and targeted to students' specific needs.

In order to look more closely at what happens at the classroom level, this chapter examines the evidence to determine the degree to which schools are fulfilling the Reading First expectations for instruction.

The 90-Minute Reading Block

In all Washington Reading First schools, students in grades 1–3 all received at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction. In about one-fifth of schools, the reading block for grades 1–3 was even longer—between 99 and 150 minutes.

This was not the case, however, for all kindergarten students. In 19 percent of cohort 1–2 schools and 27 percent of cohort 3 schools, kindergarten reading blocks were fewer than 90 minutes (Table 5-2). Schools that only had half-day kindergarten were permitted to have a 60-minute, rather than a 90-minute, reading block, and 10 schools reported having 60-minute blocks in kindergarten. Three schools, however, provided fewer than 60 minutes of reading instruction for their kindergarten students.

Table 5-2
Delivery of 90 Minutes or More of Reading Instruction, by Cohort

Cohorts 1-2	**Percentage of Schools Delivering 90 Minutes of Reading Instruction**			
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
	n=50*	**n=69**	**n=69**	**n=68**
Kindergarten	50	82	83	81
Grades 1-3	73	100	98	100
Cohort 3				**n=16**
Kindergarten	--	--	--	73
Grades 1-3	--	--	--	100

* 2004 data includes cohort 1 only.

Nearly all new and continuing schools reported that the reading blocks for their first- through third-grade students was uninterrupted. The kindergarten reading block was more likely to be broken up; 18 percent of continuing schools and 29 percent of new schools reported interrupted blocks in kindergarten.

Most teachers continued to report that the reading block was strictly dedicated to reading. On surveys, 72 percent said that they *never* used this time to work on non-reading instruction or other tasks. Only a few (6%) reported that they used the reading block for other tasks once a month or more. (These results were unchanged from 2006.) Observers witnessed interruptions to the reading block in just four (7%) of the classes they visited.

The Core Reading Program

Schools used their core program(s) almost exclusively, with most teachers closely following the scope and sequence written into the program. To the degree that schools deviated from what was written into the core program, it was often in order to tighten certain components (for example, by using the templates or lesson maps).

Early in 2006, OSPI conducted a review of comprehensive instructional materials and identified four English-language and two Spanish-language core programs for use in Washington Reading First schools. Cohort 3 schools were required to adopt from this new list. Cohort 1–2 schools could continued to use approved materials they had previously selected from the Reading First Comprehensive Reading Program Menu released in 2002 (see Table 5-3).

Table 5-3
Core Reading Programs for Cohorts 1, 2, and 3

Language	Reviewed in 2002 and Approved for use in Cohort 1-2 schools	Reviewed in 2006 and Approved for use in Cohort 3 schools
English	• Harcourt, *Trophies* • Houghton Mifflin, *Nation's Choice* • SRA/McGraw-Hill, *Open Court* • Success for All • Reading Mastery Plus (K-1 only) • Voyager (K-1 only) • Read Well • Macmillan Reading	• Harcourt, *Trophies* • Houghton Mifflin, *Houghton Mifflin Reading* • SRA/McGraw-Hill, *Open Court* • Pearson Scott Foresman, *Reading Street*
Spanish	• Harcourt, *Trofeos* • Houghton Mifflin, *Lectura* • McGraw-Hill, *Lectura* • Scott Foresman, *Lectura* • Success for All (Spanish)	• Harcourt, *Trofeos* • SRA/McGraw-Hill, *Foro abierto para la lectura*

In all cohorts of Reading First schools, satisfaction with the core reading program remained high across schools. Most coaches (91%) and principals (82%) agreed with the statement that "I am very satisfied with the core reading program we are using at our school," as did more than two-thirds of teachers (71%). As Figure 5-1 illustrates, these figures were slightly but not dramatically changed from past years.

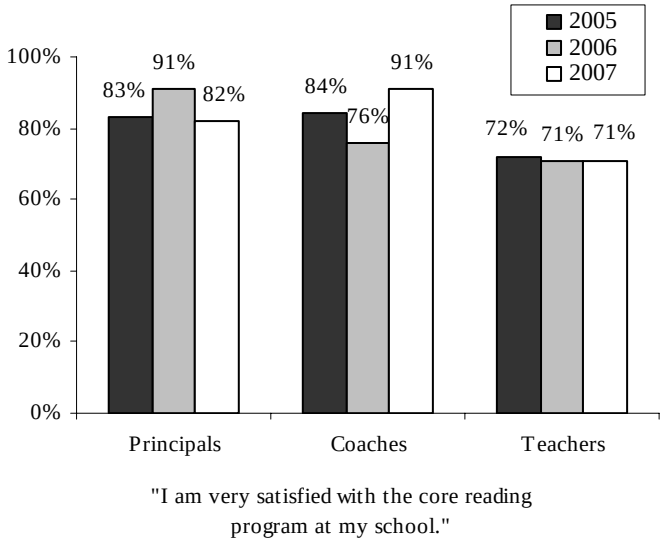


Figure 5-1. Satisfaction with Core Reading Program

Teacher satisfaction with the core program varied substantially from school to school. At 25 schools (30%), there were no teachers who expressed dissatisfaction with the core reading program. On the other hand, at four schools (6%), more than 30 percent of teachers expressed dissatisfaction. Many other schools had a few dissatisfied teachers.

Fidelity to the Core Reading Program

Regardless of satisfaction, teachers taught from the core program, and, overall, they did so with a high degree of fidelity. In general, using the core program "with fidelity" meant that teachers were to follow the scope and sequence of the program as it was designed. This presented challenges, since all core programs contained more materials than could fit into a 90-minute reading block. In 2005–2006, lesson maps were introduced to guide teachers in prioritizing what was most important to teach and when to teach it. Most schools also added templates—generic instructional routines designed to make the core program more explicit by standardizing procedures such as responses, signaling, pacing, and corrections. While these represented modifications to the original program, their use still constituted "fidelity."

Coaches clearly understood fidelity in the same terms as state project staff members. Most coaches, when asked how they understood the word, described fidelity as "using the curriculum in the way it was designed, written, laid out and presented." In a few schools, coaches said that fidelity meant to use the core program as it was designed, but also to pull in additional things when appropriate. They cited examples such as the templates to "make the core program even more explicit" or "pulling in additional strategies and tools that you see the kids need."

Coaches also tended to report that teachers used the core program with high levels of fidelity. This was true even in cohort 3 schools, where the use of the core program was something new. Coaches in those schools estimated that 95 percent of teachers used the core with good fidelity (the range was 85–100 percent). Some coaches acknowledged that pacing was weaker at particular grades, or that a few teachers had not adopted the templates or a couple of teachers had simply refused to make changes. Occasionally, a new coach expressed their own uncertainty about complete fidelity:

> *Fidelity is high, all the teachers are doing it. I'm really impressed. But some teachers want to use a little of the old book room from when we had whole language, and in my heart, I can't see anything wrong with that. (Coach)*

Coaches' reports that teachers stuck to the core program were supported by teachers, nearly all of whom (93%) reported using the core program on a regular basis (Figure 5-2). These reports were bolstered by the observations of site visitors who witnessed the core program being used in all randomly selected classrooms they visited. They also saw the teachers' manual for the core program out and open in 62 percent of the classrooms.

Half of teachers (50%) reported that they regularly used the precise language from the teachers' manual and almost half (45%) reported regularly using the templates. These rates were the same both for teachers in continuing and new Reading First schools. Site visitors observed templates used in more than half (53%) of phonics lessons, an increase over the previous year, when observers witnessed the use of templates in about a quarter of phonics lessons. Although it is possible that this change was simply a function of the classrooms that happened to be selected, the data suggest that the use of templates was more widespread this year.

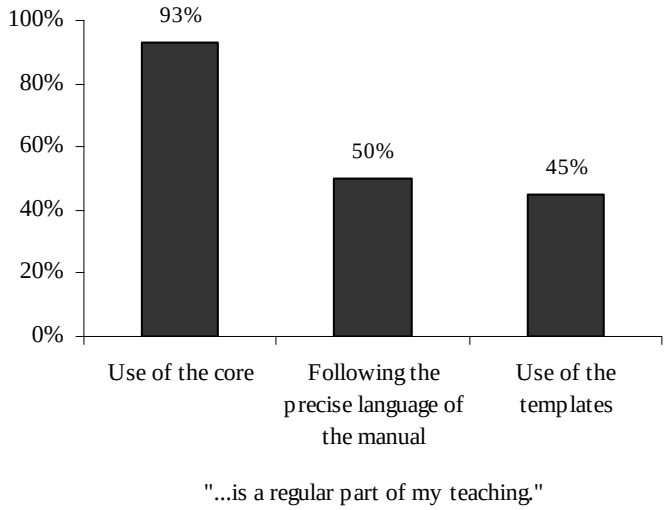


Figure 5-2. Teachers' Reported Use of the Core Program

Differentiated Instruction (Delivery at Instructional Level)

At the state level, Washington Reading First emphasized that students should receive their 90 minutes of reading instruction at their *instructional* level (which is not necessarily the same as their grade level). According to almost all coaches (94%), schools embraced this approach and most instruction during the 90 minutes was at students' instructional level; other data support this finding. However, in a few classrooms—about six percent—there appeared to be little or no differentiation.

Differentiated instruction can only occur when schools have regular and reliable information from assessments about what students already know and what they need. As reported in Chapter 4, Washington Reading First schools had well-developed systems for regular benchmark and progress monitoring assessments. Teachers often mentioned in focus groups that the availability of good data enhanced their ability to differentiate instruction.

> *It is easier to differentiate when you can target skills that you know kids need help with, based on their assessment results. (Teachers)*

> *At our school, using data, student needs are identified, then action plans are developed that outline strategies to address student reading needs. (Teachers)*

There are several ways in which schools ensured delivery was at students' instructional level: grouping, use of small group work, and use of paraprofessionals. Each of these are discussed in further detail below, within the context of homogeneous versus heterogeneous classrooms.

Homogeneous Classrooms

Schools often used data to group students into (fairly) homogeneous groups at similar levels and with similar needs. About two-thirds of teachers (66%) reported that they taught such homogeneous reading groups.

Usually, the creation of homogeneous groups took place by having students "walk-to-read" (WTR), that is to move to another classroom to work with a teacher and group at their own level during the reading block. The WTR approach was very widely used in Washington Reading First. Nearly three-quarters of coaches (71%) reported their schools use it in all or nearly all classes, another 23 percent reported it was used in some classes, and only 6 percent of coaches said their schools did not use it at all.

> *In 35 years of teaching, this is the first time that I see we have really reached the point where we are meeting the kids' needs. WTR helps differentiation within grades, and for a few students, the WTR across grade levels is very helpful for meeting their needs. (Teacher, cohort 2)*

Heterogeneous Classrooms

The remaining third of teachers (34%) reported teaching a heterogeneous group during the reading block. In these classrooms, the delivery of differentiated instruction during the reading block had to occur via small group instruction, facilitated by support from paraprofessionals. This was true for 74 percent of these classrooms, in which teachers reported that paraprofessionals were invaluable supports that helped them provide differentiated reading instruction. Echoing this finding, 77 percent of teachers with heterogeneous reading groups reported that differentiated instruction was "regularly" or "sometimes" a part of their teaching.

> *We are providing sufficient differentiation which is facilitated by smaller group sizes, due to paras in the 90-minute block. (Teacher)*

In the other 26 percent of heterogeneous classrooms, teachers did not have regular paraprofessional support. Most of these classrooms were medium to large, comprised of 16 to 27 students. It is, therefore, not clear how students received at-level instruction. In a related finding, a quarter (23%) of teachers of heterogeneous classrooms said they provided occasional or no differentiated instruction.

In combination, these data indicate that in roughly a quarter of heterogeneous classrooms—or *six percent of all classrooms*— there was little or no differentiation. More than half of these classrooms were from cohort 1 schools. Correspondingly, in a similar percentage of classroom observations (7%), observers noted that students were bored or restless because the material was clearly too easy for them (i.e., perhaps not at their instructional level).

Challenges to Full Differentiation

Even when there were structures and process in place to provide differentiation, many teachers felt they could do more if given the right resources. They cited a few obstacles that prevented them from doing more, most commonly:

- Overly large group sizes
- Young students who did not work well independently
- Pressures around fidelity and pacing that they felt meant they should ignore student needs in favor of "sticking to the program"

While coaches felt confident in their school's ability to use data to group students, but other factors prevented them from providing the level of differentiation they wanted to offer. The most common concern was finding sufficient staffing to cover as many small groups as needed:

> *We do pretty well with grouping. But groups are always larger than you want them to be. It's really just numbers—we could always use more staff! But as far as skill levels, it's been easy to get them placed in the appropriate group. (Coach)*

When differentiation didn't work well, according to teachers and coaches, it was most often students with particular needs that they felt were inadequately served: the strongest readers, who needed to go faster, the very low readers, students in special education, and English language learners.

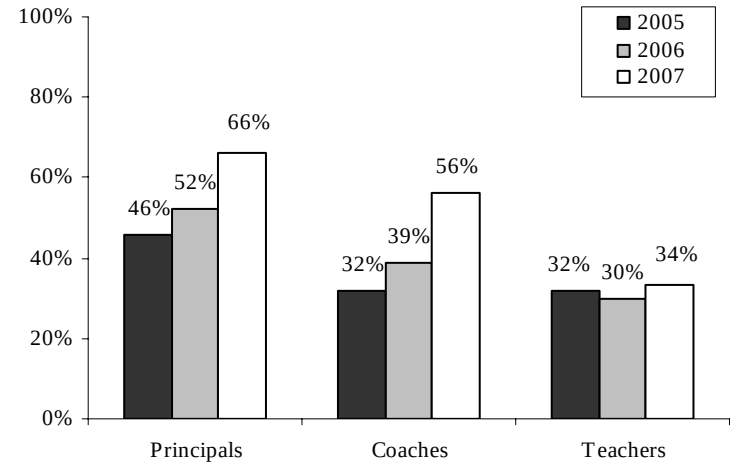
English Language Learners

The need for differentiated instruction may be greatest in schools that serve students for whom English is not their first language. A third (34%) of all students in Washington Reading First schools were classified as current English Language Learners (ELLs). Including all students who speak another language at home, even if they weren't currently classified as ELLs, brought the percentage up to 46 percent.

In 70 of 84 schools for whom demographic data are available, at least 20 percent of the student body was English Language Learners (ELLs); in 31 of these schools, ELL students made up 50 percent or more of the student body. The predominant first-language was Spanish, although some schools, especially on the western side of the state, had multiple native languages spoken by their student body. Thus, this is an issue which touched nearly all Washington Reading First schools.

Meeting the Needs of ELL Students

Overall, belief that Reading First was meeting the needs of ELL students was not overwhelmingly high (Figure 5-3). Although principals and coaches were more likely to agree compared to the last two years, teachers' perceptions changed little, with only one-third (34%) agreeing.



"Our Reading First program is doing an excellent job of meeting the needs of our ELL students."

Note: Includes only schools with at least 20% ELLs.

Figure 5-3. Perceptions that ELL Student Needs Are Met

Schools' dissatisfaction with the way Reading First served ELL students generally related to three concerns that showed up both in survey and interview data:

- Inadequate ELL materials
- Lack of teacher knowledge and skills to meet the needs of ELL students
- Contradictions between Reading First and ELL programs at the policy level

Materials for ELL instruction. Many schools were extremely concerned about the lack of adequate and appropriate materials for working with ELL students, particularly as related to building vocabulary and comprehension. Coaches cited the inadequacy of the core program materials on their own and were frustrated by the lack of a set ELL curriculum. Some described plugging ELL students into intensive groups using their core program, an arrangement that was not beneficial to the students as they lacked the background knowledge and vocabulary needed to be successful and their needs differed widely from struggling native English speakers.

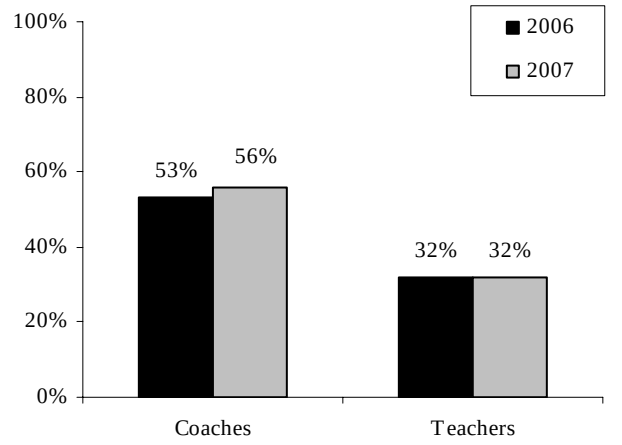
> *We are almost 30 percent ELL, but have no materials for working with them except what is provided in the Houghton Mifflin extra manual. (Coach)*

> *The primary challenge with ELL students is vocabulary. Reading skills don't translate to comprehension without vocabulary, and we will pay later. A second issue is lack of prior experience, which also prevents comprehension in many curriculum topics and areas. (Coach)*

Another concern about materials was a shortage of ELL assessments to help assess student knowledge, including but not limited to materials for Tejas LEE testing.

Concern about lack of materials also spilled over into supplemental and intervention programs. Students with low English who are literate in their own language had different issues and needs than struggling native English speakers; coaches did not always feel that the interventions available at their school recognized this disconnect. For example, ELL students might inappropriately be placed in intensive interventions that focus on phonics skills that they already had in their native language, rather than building vocabulary and background knowledge.

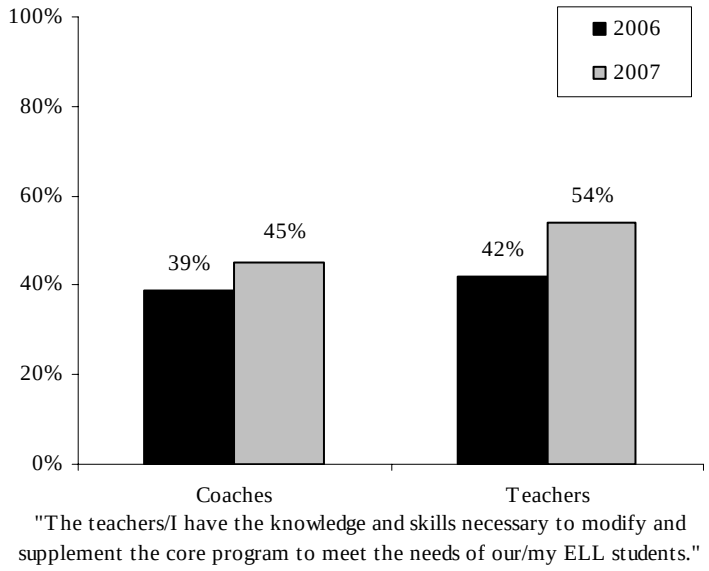
Survey data reinforced these findings; one-half of coaches and two-thirds of teachers did not feel their school used supplemental and intervention materials that were well-matched to the needs of ELL students (see Figure 5-4). Moreover, these data had remained unchanged since the previous year.



Note: Includes only schools with at least 20% ELLs.

Figure 5-4. Perceptions of Supplemental and Intervention Materials for ELL Students

Teacher skills and knowledge. Compared to last year, more teachers this year felt they had the knowledge and skills necessary to modify the core program to work with ELL students; some coaches agreed with them (see Figure 5-5). Still, almost half of teachers (46%) did not feel they had the necessary skills and knowledge.



Note: Includes only schools with at least 20% ELLs.

Figure 5-5. Perceptions of Teachers' Skills and Knowledge to Meet the Needs of ELL Students

In interviews, schools echoed these mixed sentiments. The availability of an adequate number of bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals was important; when schools had these resources, they appreciated them, and when they didn't, they expressed frustration. At one west side school with a very high ELL population, the coach said, "teachers are in the habit of working with ELL students, it's not new." On the other hand, the most commonly cited ELL need was training for teachers in ELL strategies.

Reading First and ELL policy. Over the past year, collaborative work between the state Reading First and the state Migrant/Bilingual office resulted in greater technical assistance and state guidance to the 16 schools that serve at least some of their ELLs by providing Spanish-language reading instruction. For schools that teach their ELL students in English only, however, there were no real changes in what principals, coaches, and teachers said about how Reading First was working in their schools compared to a year ago. Adequately serving ELL students continued to be one of the greatest challenges confronting Reading First schools, and many continued to feel that Reading First did not mesh well with their ELL program. These challenges and other findings are discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 3: Professional Development and Technical Assistance.

Instruction in the "Five Essential Components"

In its influential report, the National Reading Panel (2000) identified five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. While these five components did not represent everything students needed to know, they were both essential and had sufficient research behind them to inform professional development for teachers. The five components have since become a central focus of Reading First, providing a way for schools to think about the different types of knowledge and skills that students need in order to read successfully.

Although observers saw instruction in all five components, some components received substantially more attention than did others. For example, evaluators saw phonics instruction in three-quarters of the lessons they observed and comprehension instruction in nearly half of the lessons (see Figure 5-6).

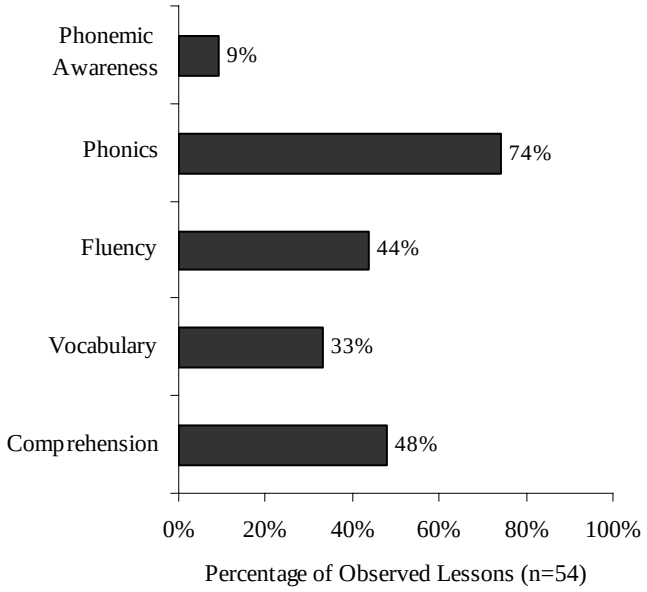


Figure 5-6. The Five Components in Observed Lessons[1]

Phonemic Awareness. Findings about the quality and prevalence of instruction in phonemic awareness have remained fairly consistent over the past four years. For the most part, it has consisted of explicit, engaging lessons directed at students in kindergarten and first grade and makes good use of the activities and structures provided in the core reading program. In spring 2007, site visitors again observed clear, engaging

[1] The percentage of lessons including the five components totals over 100 percent because observers could record more than one area of focus during each time period they observed. It is important to note that observers were in classrooms for just over 20 minutes and did not observe the entire reading block; therefore these percentages do not necessarily represent the total amount of time devoted to each of the five components over the entire lesson.

instruction in phonemic awareness targeted primarily to kindergarten and, to a lesser degree, first-grade students.

One concern about the instruction of phonemic awareness is the possibility that teachers are directing too much time and attention to this. According to the National Reading Panel, most students require no more than 20 hours of phonemic awareness instruction, usually in kindergarten or the beginning of first grade. Many teachers, however, believed that phonemic awareness instruction was a very important part of reading instruction throughout the grades. For example, in the first year of Washington Reading First, more than a third (37%) of third-grade teachers reported that their students required "a lot" of instruction in phonemic awareness. Four years later, 52 percent of third-grade teachers said that phonemic awareness activities were a regular part of their teaching. Devoting large amounts of time and energy to this area, particularly for students who are already readers, is probably not a good use of classroom time. Observers, who visited schools late in the school year, did not see an overemphasis on phonemic awareness, but regional coordinators might check for this during their visits earlier in the year.

Phonics. Observers saw phonics instruction in the classroom far more often than any other of the five components. While this pattern was observable since the first year of Reading First in Washington (when 51 percent of observed lessons included phonics), it has grown stronger over the years. This year (2006–2007), phonics instruction represented 74 percent of observed lessons. Unlike some previous years, it was not as heavily concentrated in kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, but was also observed in more than 40 percent of second- and third-grade classrooms. At that level, it was more common for lessons to address more advanced topics, including multi-syllabic words and complex spelling patterns.

Most phonics lessons involved students reading words, phrases, or connected text. But, perhaps because of the high stakes attached to student outcomes measured by the DIBELS, and because the DIBELS assesses the reading of nonsense words, nearly a third of teachers (29%) reported that practice reading nonsense words was a 'regular part' of their teaching. Another 22 percent said it was 'sometimes' part of their teaching. If the assessment is supposed to represent students' first encounters with unknown words, the regular practice of nonsense word reading could reduce the efficacy of DIBELS as a tool to identify students who struggle to decode.

Fluency. Over the past several years, there has been a slight increase in the degree to which observers have seen teachers provide systematic instruction in fluency and/or explicitly model fluent reading. Still, most of the lessons related to fluency over the years have consisted oral reading practice and/or fluency assessments (often practice assessments).

Fluency *practice* for students continued to be more common than teacher-led instruction. On surveys, most teachers (82%) reported that oral reading fluency practice was a regular part of their teaching in the 90-minute block. During observations, site visitors often saw

fluency practice, especially choral reading, but only in a small proportion of these lessons did teachers even tangentially discuss or model expressive reading.

Fluency *assessment* continues to be a significant piece of the work in fluency. For example, 61 percent of teachers reported that timed fluency assessments during the reading block were a "regular part" of their instruction, while an additional 19 percent said it was "sometimes" part of their instruction. Fluency timings were a very common sight during classroom observations, showing up in about 70 percent of lessons that included any fluency work.

Vocabulary. In general, over the course of Reading First, teachers have become more informed about research-based practices in vocabulary instruction and more likely to use them in the classroom.

The first year of Reading First (2003–2004), there was little evidence of strong vocabulary instruction, and vocabulary was identified as one of the key professional development needs amongst teachers. In the second year, vocabulary received more attention in professional development, and site visitors saw clearer vocabulary lessons and more instances of strong instruction than the year before. In the third year, although coaches reported on surveys that they saw more good vocabulary instructional practices than they had the year before, evaluators observed very little vocabulary instruction and what they did observe seldom included the strong instructional practices recommended in research on vocabulary instruction.

In 2007, evaluators witnessed vocabulary instruction more than twice as often as the year before (overall, in 33 percent of lessons). Teachers also reported regularly using research-based strategies for vocabulary instruction. A subset of teachers (16%), across all three cohorts of schools, reported however that they did not know, for example, what "tier two" vocabulary words were.

Comprehension. Over several years, the evaluation has noted that although comprehension receives a significant portion of instructional time (48 percent of observed lessons in 2007), work on comprehension remained at a fairly low level. In the past, comprehension consisted largely of simple recall questions to students, rather than ask questions that encourage a higher level of thinking.

Observation data suggest that there have been improvements in the provision of strong comprehension instruction this year. In the first year of Washington Reading First, most work on comprehension consisted of teachers asking students to answer very simple recall questions. In subsequent years, teachers have increasingly incorporated questions requiring higher-order thinking skills; by 2007, observers witnessed this in 46 percent of comprehension lessons they saw.

Data suggest that other research-based comprehension practices have become more widespread, as well. Observers also saw common use of look-back citations (27 percent of comprehension lessons) and identification of the main idea (15%). Other strategies occasionally seen included text-to-text connections, summarizing, predictions, and activation of background knowledge. Over two-thirds of teachers (71%) reported that providing relevant background knowledge was routine in their classroom.

However, the documented use of certain strategies does not comment on their quality and appropriateness. Observers noted that this varied widely. In some classrooms, observers said the teacher "did a beautiful job" with comprehension lessons, "using questions to make it meaningful." In others, observers saw teachers asking questions that were too difficult for students to answer and not providing needed clarification for ELL students.

> *It is easy to teach ELL students phonics, and they can do well, but vocabulary and comprehension are both huge challenges. The higher the grade level, the further behind the students are in comprehension. (Coach)*

Other Classroom Characteristics

Clear Lessons and Scaffolded Instruction. Between 2004 and 2006, site visitors saw little change in the percentage of observed lessons that were definitely clear throughout the lesson; in all three years, about two-thirds of lessons were rated highly in lesson clarity. In 2007, this percentage increased to 81 percent (Figures 5-7).

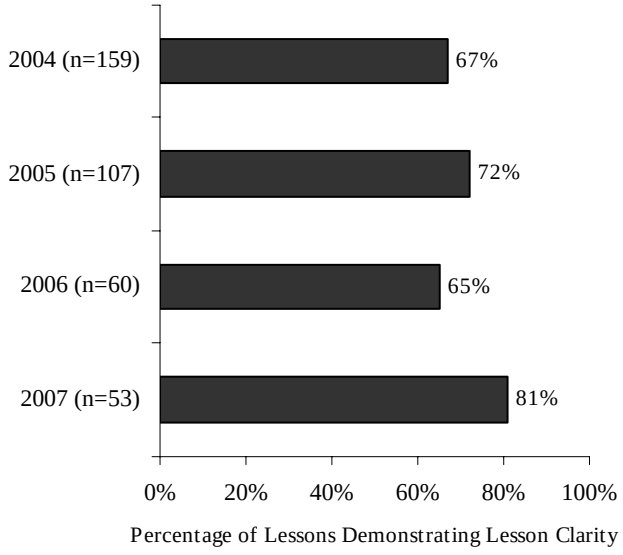


Figure 5-7. Clarity of Observed Lessons, 2004–2007

Many core reading programs (such as Read Well) build in a high level of direct instruction from the teacher, including scripted modeling. For some of the other core programs, the Reading First templates increased the explicitness of instruction and provided structures for teacher modeling. By first modeling a task for students, then doing it with them, and then gradually withdrawing so that students took on the task themselves, teachers scaffold student learning. Alternatively, they could use guided questions to help direct students toward a correct answer, and over time reduce the degree of guidance. Explicit modeling has been emphasized in many professional development workshops since the first year of Reading First implementation. Still, site visitors did not expect to witness explicit modeling in every classroom, since students often practice already familiar routines and do not require modeling of every activity every day.

In observations conducted in spring 2007, observers witnessed modeling in almost half (43%), an increase from the year before. Much of this modeling revolved around the use of templates. Nearly two-thirds of coaches (64%) reported that "most" or "all" teachers in their school regularly modeled, while most other coaches said that at least some of the teachers in their school modeled.

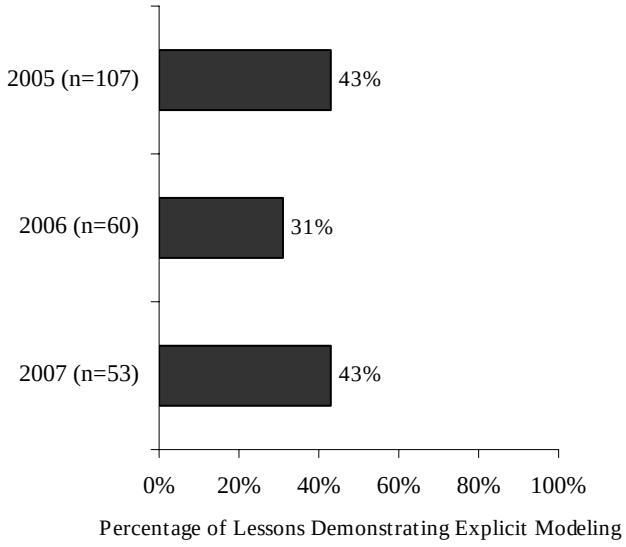


Figure 5-8. Modeling in Observed Lessons, 2005–2007

The use of effective questioning to help students figure out answers was observed in about a third (36%) of observed lessons this year, less than in previous years (Figure 5-9). Coaches reported that this was a practice they tended to see more regularly than observers did. More than half of them (61%) saw most or all teachers regularly doing this. Thus, overall it appears that scaffolded instruction is a regular component of many, but certainly not all, Washington Reading First classrooms.

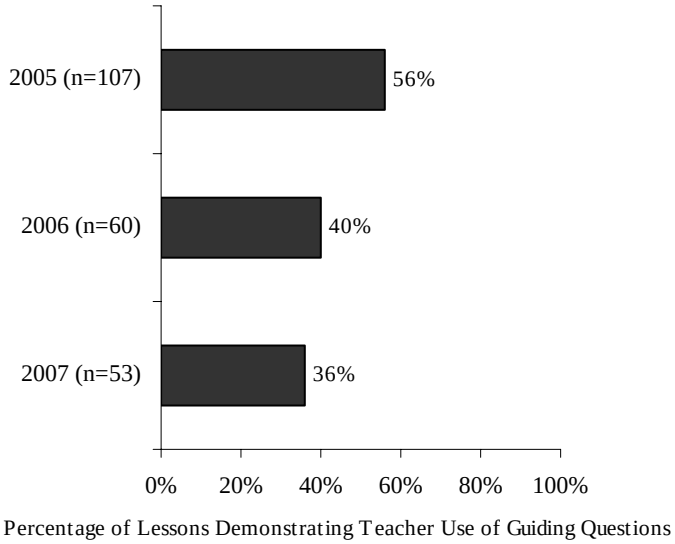


Figure 5-9. Guiding Questions in Observed Lessons, 2005–2007

Monitoring Understanding and Provision of Direct Feedback. In the Reading First classroom, teachers are expected to monitor how well students understand the material they are working with and make on-the-spot judgments about whether students need more practice or are ready to move to something else. They also need to address misunderstandings right away and replace them with correct information.

Overall, the percentage of lessons clearly demonstrating teacher monitoring was similar in 2007 to what was observed in 2004. In the two intervening years, observers had noted both higher and lower levels of teacher monitoring (Figure 5-10).

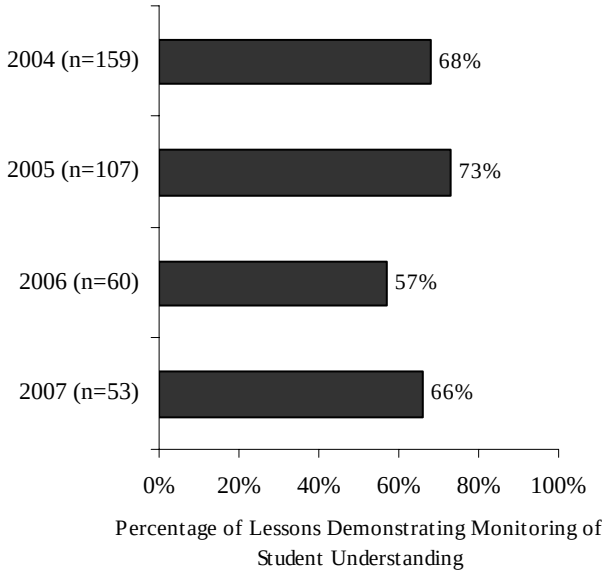


Figure 5-10. Monitoring of Student Understanding in Observed Lessons, 2004–2007

Although measured quite differently, coaches' perceptions of how closely teachers monitor student understanding during instruction meshed with site visitors' observations. Few coaches (13%) reported that they saw all the teachers in their school monitoring student understanding, though many more (59%) said "most" teachers did this. This left 31 percent of coaches, however, who felt that "some" or "very few" teachers regularly monitored their students' understanding.

Closely link to monitoring is the provision of clear, direct, and frequent feedback, so that students know when they made an error and get that error corrected, so they do not repeat it. Observers witnessed this in about two-thirds (66%) of lessons (Figure 5-11).

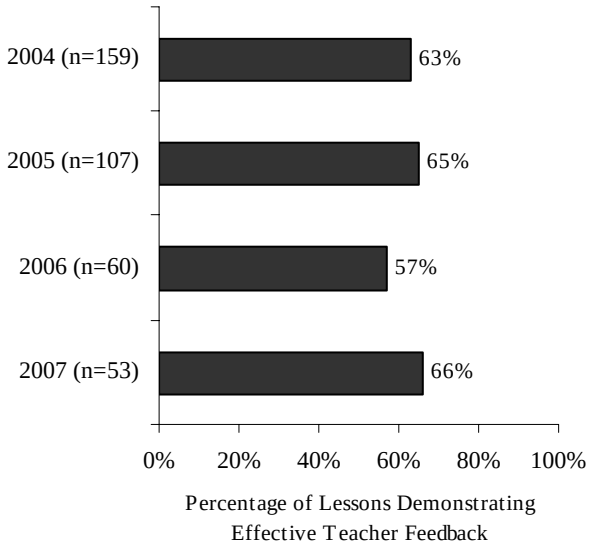


Figure 5-11. Teachers' Provision of Direct Feedback in Observed Lessons, 2004–2007

Few coaches (7%) reported that all teachers regularly provided this type of feedback. Again, many more (61%) reported that "most" teachers in their school did this, and almost a third (31%) said "some" or "very few" did this regularly. Most teachers (75%) felt that immediate correction of student errors was a regular part of their teaching.

Thus, in at least a third of schools, coaches reported that they did not regularly see teachers monitoring student learning and providing corrective feedback as needed; many more coaches saw this as problematic in at least some teachers' classrooms. This is very similar to coaches' reports from a year ago in 2006. In order to truly provide at-level instruction to students, rather than simply to move students through the curriculum, monitoring and feedback are topics deserving additional attention, either through group professional development to teachers, or by ensuring that coaches know how to help teachers make appropriate in-class adjustments.

Strong classroom management and student engagement. Overall, coaches and site visitors agreed that most teachers use effective classroom management to help keep students on-task and engaged in their reading instruction and provided ample opportunities for student practice. This year, like last year, there were classroom management problems in a subset of approximately 15 percent of observed lessons. Similarly, while most teachers used routines to ensure quick transitions and maximize time on reading, time was lost by very slow or complicated transitions or directions in a few (about 9–10%) of classrooms.

Overall in 2007, observers saw strong student engagement in about three-quarters of classrooms, an increase over the previous year (Figure 5-12); this was true in both new and continuing Reading First schools.

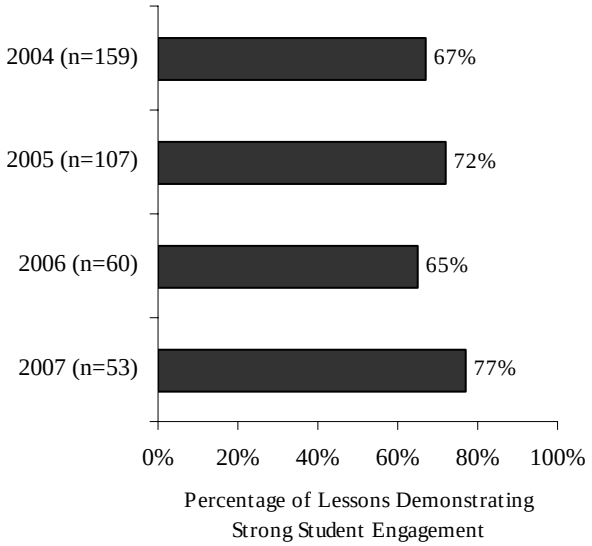


Figure 5-12. Student Engagement in Observed Lessons, 2004–2007

Observers also saw adequate opportunities for student practice in about three-quarters of classrooms, again an increase over the previous year (Figure 5-13). These opportunities included ample occasions to practice the lesson in a meaningful manner, involving two or three different types of practice (individual, partner, or group).

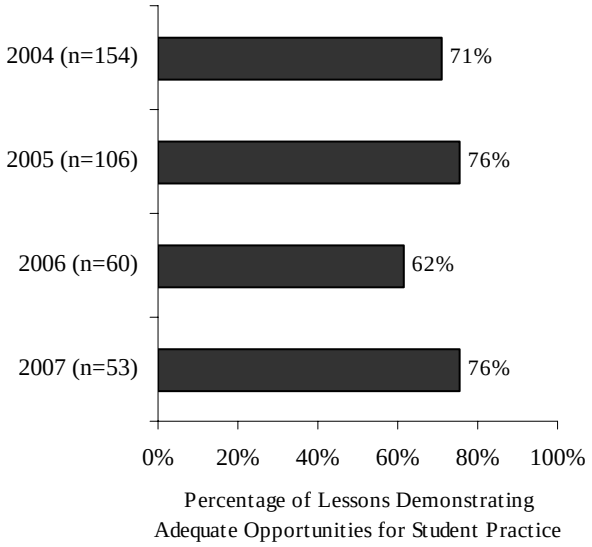


Figure 5-13. Opportunities for Student Practice in Observed Lessons, 2004–2007

However, in 2007, site visitors noted that in about 15 percent of classrooms there was a high percentage (25 percent or more) of off-task students. This was exactly the same percentage noted by observers in 2006. Coaches also reported that classroom management was a problem in a subset of classrooms; usually they said classroom management was a problem in only a few classrooms, but in a few schools (9%), coaches reported problems with disruptive student behavior in "most" classrooms.

Even when behavior does not interfere with student engagement, classroom routines can either promote or hinder full engagement. For example, the practice of "round robin" reading (in which students take turns reading aloud according to the order in which they are seated) makes it easy for students to disengage until it is their turn to read. While this practice is discouraged under Reading First and for the most part is not used, observers witnessed it in five percent of observed lessons, the same percentage as in 2006.

An organized classroom with routines for efficient and orderly transitions contributes both to enhanced student engagement and increased time to focus on reading. While three-quarters of coaches (76%) reported that "most" or "all" of the teachers in their schools provided quick transitions, in a quarter of schools (24%), coaches did not routinely see this. Site visitors, who obtained only a quick snapshot of classroom routines, saw inefficient transitions that took time away from lessons in nine percent of the lessons they observed this year, down somewhat from 13 percent in 2006.

Interventions

Interventions are a critical part of Reading First, providing additional, targeted, small group instruction for those students who need more than the core reading program in order to read at grade level.

Last year's evaluation (2005–2006) found that intervention structures were in place and systems were running more smoothly than in prior years. That report recommended that the state enhance the quality of interventions by reducing the large size of many groups and addressing the uneven training of intervention providers. In 2006–2007, many schools were pleased with their intervention systems, saying they "worked great," and evaluator ratings of observed interventions were high. However, some challenges remained. In particular, large group sizes become more common and intervention systems were incompletely implemented at a few continuing schools that were expected to have interventions firmly in place.

Perceptions of interventions in 2007 revealed mixed feelings regarding their efficacy (see Figure 5-14). While there were slight increases in the percentage of teachers and coaches who felt that their school was doing an excellent job of providing interventions to all students who needed them, the proportion of principals believing the same decreased. Significant differences between cohorts emerged only for coaches; cohort 3 coaches were much less likely to agree (37%) than cohort 1 and 2 coaches (76%).

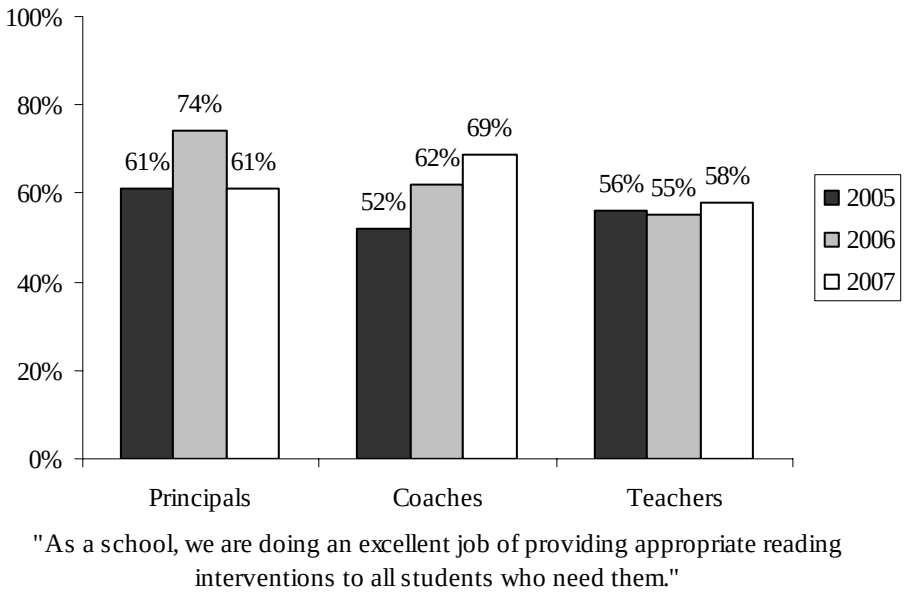


Figure 5-14. Perception of Interventions

This section will explore these findings in greater detail—including who received interventions, who provided them, and the successes and challenges to meeting the needs of all students in this area.

Establishment of Intervention Programs

Survey data from cohort 1 and 2 schools suggest that interventions were well established in 82 percent of schools. Visits to a subset of cohort 2 schools in spring 2007, reinforced this finding; coaches said that compared to the previous year, their implementation was more consistent and more students were served as a result. However, at a handful of schools, interventions were not fully implemented. For example, at one school interventions had just started in March 2007. In another, the intervention scheduled to be observed on the day of the site visit did not occur, much to the coach's surprise; the teacher who was supposed to provide them was busy preparing for art class. In a third example, interventions were simply an extension of the 90-minute block; four days a week teachers retain the same group of students for an added 30 minutes, but grouping and delivery remained the same.

In comparison, about 69 percent of cohort 3 schools had functioning intervention systems by spring 2007. Visits to a subset of cohort 3 schools showed that most schools were providing some sort of interventions in the spring, usually to certain pockets of students or grade-levels. These systems were in the process of being set up; several said they just started providing interventions as recently as the day before the site visit.

Students Served

Table 5-4 shows the number of students served in interventions, as reported by the coach. Among cohort 1 and 2 schools, 41 percent of all students received "intensive" interventions (defined as outside the reading block, at least two hours per week for at least six weeks) during the 2006–2007 school year.[2] Another 26 percent of students received "less intensive" interventions. These figures are similar to the previous year.

Among cohort 3 schools, in their first year of implementation, intensive interventions were no less common, reaching 39 percent of students. Less intensive interventions were reportedly provided to a smaller proportion of students, 14 percent.

Table 5-4
Number of Students Receiving Interventions

Cohorts 1 & 2	**Number (Percentage) of Student Receiving Interventions According to Coach Report**		
	2004-2005	**2005-2006**	**2006-2007**
Intensive interventions	8,102 (43% of students)	8,620 (45%)	7,263 (41%)
Less intensive interventions	3,413 (18% of students)	4,538 (24%)	4,551 (26%)
Cohort 3			**2006-2007**
Intensive interventions			1,977 (39%)
Less intensive interventions			682 (14%)

Despite the high numbers of students receiving interventions by these counts, many coaches indicated that they were not able to provide interventions to all students who needed them (see Table 5-5). Across cohorts, only 38 or 39 percent of schools provided interventions to all eligible students. However, most cohort 1 and 2 schools (77%) were able to meet the needs of at least 80 percent of eligible students. This figure was substantially lower for cohort 3 schools (38%), likely reflecting these schools' earlier phase of implementation.

[2] These percentages are calculated using the total number of students in Washington Reading First with fall DIBELS scores.

Table 5-5
Proportion of Eligible Students Receiving Interventions

	Percentage of Schools According to Coach Report	
	Cohorts 1 & 2	**Cohort 3**
All eligible students receive interventions	39	38
At least 80% of eligible students receive interventions	77	38

Among those schools where fewer than 100 percent of students received interventions, the primary obstacles cited were insufficient staffing (74%), student transportation/bussing (28%) and lack of training for providers to provide the needed intervention (24%). Another concern that emerged during interviews was scheduling. Many schools lamented the difficulty of finding time for interventions, of competing with other pull-outs or students missing content instruction. Similar findings were reported last year.

Understanding that there are often limited resources to provide interventions, evaluators asked how schools made decisions about whom to serve first. There were two common responses. The first was to start with those just below the cut-off for benchmark, and to a lesser extent, just below the cut-off for strategic. Some coaches said this approach garnered support for the intervention program by showing teachers interventions worked:

> *We looked at our data and chose kids on the cusp between benchmark and strategic. And those we'd like to move from intensive to strategic. I want teachers to be able to see that we can push our students. (Coach)*

> *The 'hanging fruit' kids, the hot list kids, is what we work on. (Coach)*

The second common response was that all struggling students—intensive and strategic—received interventions. Coaches said they wanted to reach everyone; some added that scheduling was easier when all students participated in interventions at the same time. At a few schools, this applied to benchmark students as well, whom schools said could still use reinforcement or enrichment. Evaluators did, in fact, witness interventions being delivered to benchmark students during observations. Some teachers were unhappy about this situation, which they said was a result of scheduling challenges rather than student needs.

In some schools, the number of students requiring interventions was too large to permit the provision of interventions via pull-outs. Instead, these schools instituted a "walk-to-intervention" approach that included all students. Students reading at or above grade level might participate in enrichment activities, students just barely at benchmark could review and practice to ensure they stayed at benchmark, and strategic and intensive students could work in smaller groups on their particular needs. The existence of this approach probably increased the reported number of students receiving interventions.

Intervention Group Size

Research suggests that interventions are most effective when delivered to small groups (6 students or fewer), and that interventions for the most intensive students should be even smaller (Pikulski 1994; Torgesen 2004). The 2005–2006 evaluation found that while the majority of intensive interventions in Washington Reading First schools were delivered to groups of six or fewer students, a substantial proportion were delivered to much larger groups. Many schools expressed frustration that staffing and other constraints made it difficult to reduce group size; the evaluation therefore recommended that regional coordinators work with schools to develop school-specific strategies to address the issue.

However, data suggest that large intensive intervention groups were even *more* common in 2006–2007. The proportion of coaches reporting that the at least some intensive groups included more than six students increased from 35 to 43 percent (Figure 5-15, below). Some schools reported that intervention providers might work with as many as 20 students at one time. Site visitor observations of interventions at schools revealed an even less sunny view; only 38 percent of observed interventions were delivered to groups of fewer than six students.[3] These findings raise questions about the degree of differentiation that could be provided in these larger groups.

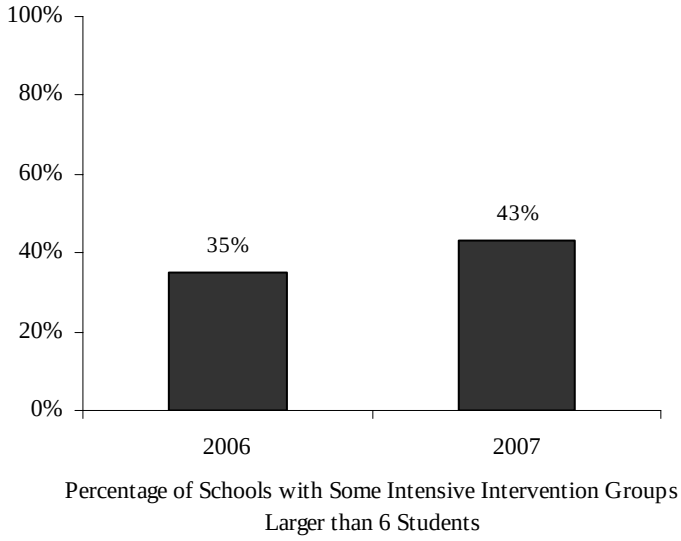


Figure 5-15. Schools with Overly Large Intensive Intervention Groups

[3] Some schools used Reading Mastery during interventions. This program says it can be used in groups of 8-10 students, and schools were encouraged to follow program guidelines. This may account for a portion of the larger group sizes, but cannot explain the intervention groups with more than 10 students.

Providers and Training

A school's ability to provide effective, targeted interventions is directly linked to the availability of an adequate number of well-trained intervention providers. As shown in Figure 5-16, interventions were provided largely by a mix of paraprofessionals (93% of schools), K–3 teachers (71%) and specialists (64%). This constellation was much the same as last year and also conformed to what evaluators witnessed in intervention observations. (Numbers in Figure 5-16 sum to over 100% because schools used several different types of staff to provide interventions.)

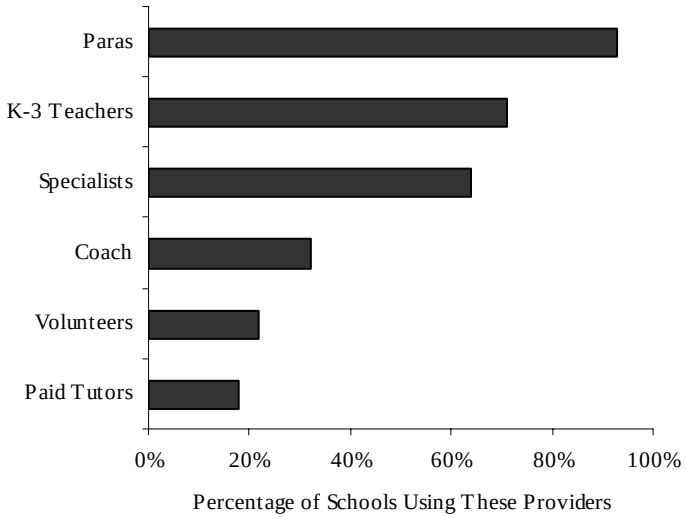


Figure 5-16. Position of Intervention Providers

As noted earlier, a shortage of providers posed a significant obstacle to providing interventions to all eligible students at many schools. In interviews, schools frequently mentioned that they did not have enough staff members o provide appropriate interventions to all students; many were concerned about the impact this had on group size. Some also worried about a lack of Spanish-speaking intervention providers in particular. In a related finding, only 31 percent of principals reported on surveys their staffing resources were sufficient to provide interventions to all students who needed them; this is a decrease from the previous year (see Figure 5-17).

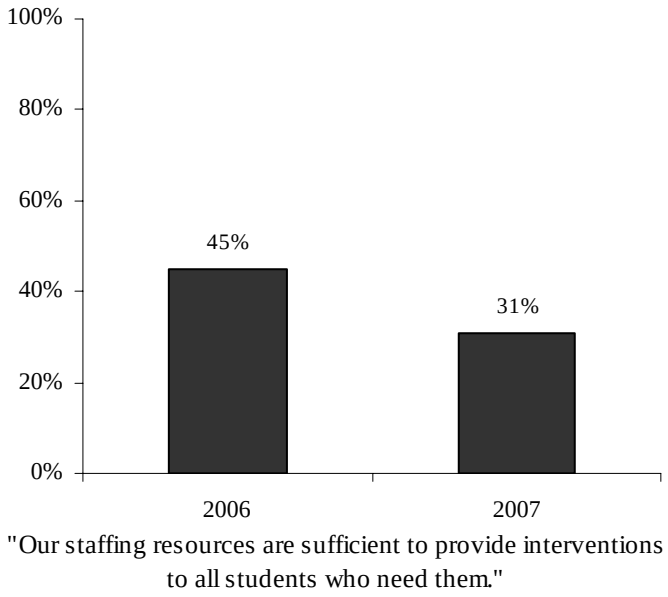


Figure 5-17. Principal Perception of Intervention Staffing Resources

At several cohort 3 schools, teachers were asked to deliver interventions. While a few enjoyed this practice ("it's a time when you can show them the enjoyment of reading") many were unhappy with the arrangement ("it's my least favorite time of the day"), saying they already had enough on their plates.

> *Teachers feel there is so much to fit in right now, giving over that extra time for an additional piece of reading (interventions) is hard when there are other demands. (Coach)*

> *We thought we'd be hiring intervention providers; now we find that we have to do it on our own. (Teacher)*

In 2005–2006, training for intervention providers was one of the most frequently cited challenges of intervention programs, and the wide variation in preparation and training of intervention providers showed up in the quality of some interventions. Given the diverse credentials and needs of this group, the evaluation recommended highly differentiated professional development for providers.

In 2006–2007, confidence in the level of training and preparation among intervention providers continued to be moderate; 62 percent of teachers and 64 percent of coaches felt that their school's intervention providers were well-trained to meet the needs of struggling readers (see Figure 5-18). Cohort 1 coaches were more likely to agree than cohort 2 and 3 coaches.

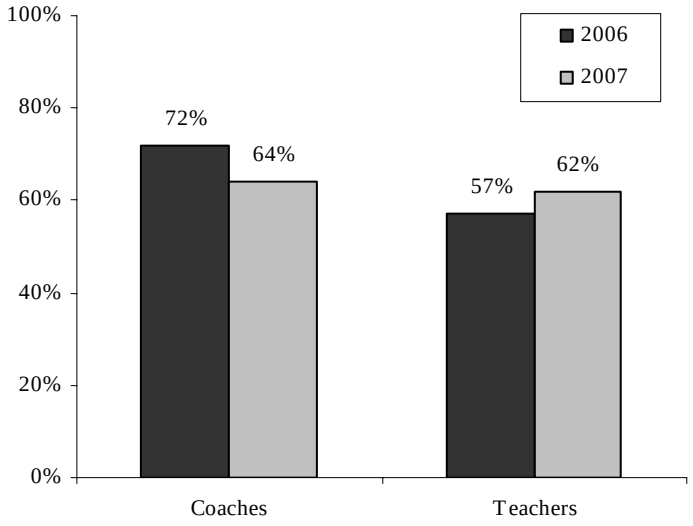


Figure 5-18. Perception of Intervention Providers

In interviews, providers shared a diverse array of training they had participated in to help them provide effective interventions. Most mentioned the 2006 Summer Institute template training; a few cited the December intervention training in Yakima provided by the state. Intervention providers at cohort 2 schools tended to report more training than those at cohort 3 schools, including onsite training from the coach and, less commonly, from the reading specialist or regional coordinator.

> *I feel very spoiled, because the coach just helps us as much as possible. I love the opportunity for so much training; I pick up more each time. (Intervention provider, cohort 2)*

Providers also cited program-specific trainings in materials such as Read Well, Reading Mastery, and Open Court. However, providers were eager for more training and requested training on new materials:

> *We have some new materials but little or no training. Most interventions we've learned ourselves. The district hasn't provided training so in some cases we just can't use the materials. (Intervention provider, cohort 2)*
> *The more I learn, the better I do. (Intervention provider, cohort 3)*

Content and Quality of Interventions

Evaluator observation of interventions at a subset of schools provided an indicator of overall issues relating to content and quality. During observations, a variety of materials were used. Most frequent was use of the core program only (56%); the core program was also used in combination with other materials (25%). Less common was use of a supplemental or intervention program only (13%). Teacher-developed materials were sometimes used (19%), typically in combination with a commercial program.

Satisfaction with intervention materials was moderate and similar to the previous year: 69 percent of coaches and 58 percent of teachers agreed that the intervention materials were well matched to the needs of their struggling readers. Satisfaction with materials among schools with more than 20 percent ELL students improved over the previous year and was not different from those with less than 20 percent ELL students. However, observations indicated that this mismatch of materials to such students was not yet fully resolved: in one example, interventions were delivered to small groups of Spanish-speaking students, just starting to read in English, using Read Naturally, focusing entirely on speed rather than comprehension.

Almost all interventions included work on phonics (94%); about half of these included use of the WRRFTAC templates. Half of interventions included work on fluency (50%). Less frequent were vocabulary (38%) and comprehension (25%). Phonemic awareness was fairly rare (13%).

Overall, intervention quality as rated by observers was strong and had improved over the previous year (see Figure 5-19). In fact, interventions were rated more highly than regular classroom observations during the reading block. This might be attributable to the smaller group size and focused nature of the work.

Evaluators rated over 80 percent of interventions as demonstrating strong lesson clarity, student engagement, adequate practice opportunities, and monitoring of student understanding. Provision of appropriate feedback was evident in 75 percent of interventions. Additional descriptors of interventions included: “upbeat and cheerful, pace is quick,” “smooth and engaging,” and “excellent monitoring, very smooth and clear.”

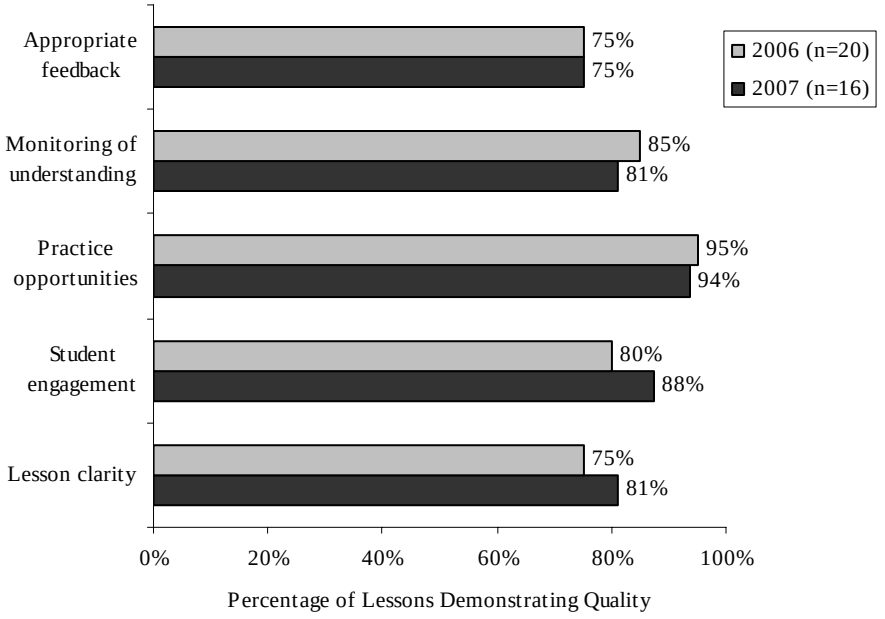


Figure 5-19. Evaluator Ratings of Observed Intervention Quality, 2006–2007

While overall ratings were high, evaluators also had concerns about some of the interventions observed. These included concerns related to group size. For example, in one observation, the evaluator noted that the provider's good instruction was undermined by large group size, a short time span in which to actually provide the intervention (13 minutes), and lack of paraprofessional support, which meant the provider had to manage three small groups of independent workers in addition to the intervention group. In other cases, the setting or tone of delivery were concerns mentioned.

CHAPTER SIX:
SUSTAINABILITY

HIGHLIGHTS

- Research on school reform initiatives has identified a series of key characteristics of reforms that are sustained over a longer period of time. Overall, Washington Reading First schools were very well-positioned on some of these characteristics and struggled with others. In many cases, the potential for sustainability varied substantially across schools and districts.

- Across most schools, sustainability was favored by:

    - A generally supportive state political context. The one important exception was in the instruction of English language learners, where many schools reported confusion and contradiction between state Reading First and ELL guidelines.

    - District political contexts that were generally, although not universally, supportive.

    - Positive trends in student outcomes, which motivate stakeholders to continue the initiative.

    - The way in which practical components of Reading First were firmly established into everyday life.

- Across most schools, a few common challenges stood out:

    - Many were deeply concerned about funding for program components, such as the ability to provide on-going professional development and perhaps most pressingly, how to fund the reading coach position.

    - Leadership stability was another challenge; Reading First schools had higher-than-average rates of principal turnover.

- The potential for and challenges to sustainability often varied across schools and districts. The factors that varied the most across schools and districts were teacher and coach retention, teacher commitment and competing reform initiatives.

CHAPTER SIX:
SUSTAINABILITY

Washington OSPI awarded the first round of Reading First subgrants to schools for a three-year period, with the possibility of renewal upon their successfully meeting the continuation criteria.[1] In June 2007, for the first time, three schools were eliminated from cohort 1 for not meeting continuation criteria. All other schools in all three cohorts will receive continued funding in 2007–2008.

While cohort 2 and 3 schools continue receiving full funding, in the coming year cohort 1 schools will receive a reduced sum of $100,000 each to continue their Reading First programs in 2007–2008; this was more than a 50 percent reduction from the previous year, and funds will eventually be eliminated. Thus for these schools, considerations of sustainability were especially pressing. Schools in the other two cohorts have slightly more time before their grants end, but ultimately face the same concerns about sustainability.

This chapter examines the prospects for sustainability among Washington Reading First schools by looking at the degree to which they have the necessary characteristics to sustain a systemic school reform. In a review of the literature on sustainability, Taylor (2005) identified a series of key characteristics associated with sustainability:

- Supportive political context and protection from competing reforms
- Sufficient funding
- Positive student outcomes
- Leadership stability
- Staff member retention
- Sustained professional development
- Staff commitment
- Practical components structured into daily life

Within each key characteristic, the research identifies multiple relevant aspects or areas that define it. In the following sections, the major areas of each key characteristic are summarized and, to the degree possible, data from the evaluation are drawn upon to determine how well Washington Reading First schools embody those characteristics.

Note that while much research has identified key characteristics of sustained reform initiatives, it has not yet established links between them or the relative importance of the different characteristics (nor how this might vary in different contexts). It seems likely that a complex combination of key characteristics together determine a school's success in sustaining reform efforts.

[1] See Chapter 1 for a description of continuation criteria and the waiver process.

Supportive Political Context and Protection from Competing Reforms

Changing state and district policies, priorities, leadership, and agendas can make it easier or harder for schools to maintain their reform efforts. Research suggests that reforms last when the state and district political contexts are supportive, or at least not at odds with the direction of the initiative.

State support and context. Currently, about 11 percent of the state's school districts receive Reading First grants; in that sense, the project has not had a direct impact on the majority of districts. Still, the state K–12 reading model promotes a three-tier approach to reading that is consistent with Reading First. Another initiative that will affect the state, Response to Intervention (RTI) is also aligned to the Reading First approach. At this time, there are no statewide reading initiatives that run counter to the Reading First project.

The one place where other state initiatives have not aligned well with Reading First is in the education of English language learners. Over this past year, coordination between the state Reading First and Migrant/Bilingual offices dealing with these two initiatives improved substantially, and they provided coordinated support to Reading First schools that teach in Spanish. Still, more than half of the principals at Spanish-language schools who were interviewed said they would like to have more direction from the state. Several of these principals perceived continuing conflicts between best practices for dual language learners and state and federal Reading First policies, particularly around issues of when to test and instruct students in English.

Furthermore, this improved coordination between Reading First and Migrant/Bilingual education centered specifically on Spanish-language instruction. English-language instruction of the broader population of ELL students continued to be a major challenge in a large number of schools, and conflicting messages about requirements persist.

Under Reading First, the state set up a structure of regional coordinators to work directly with schools by providing technical assistance and professional development. This highly valued support, however, is likely to disappear at the end of Reading First. It remains to be seen whether other structures or programs (Title I, RTI, or assistance to schools in need of improvement under NCLB) might reproduce this type of support for at least some schools.

Overall, the picture of the state political support for Reading First's approach to reading was primarily positive, with challenges in the instruction of ELL students an important exception.

In terms of explicit support to ensure longer-term sustainability for Reading First, schools were mixed in their assessment of the training and technical assistance they had received from the state Reading First office on this issue. While most (87%) district coordinators said they were pleased, fewer principals (50%) and coaches (61%) agreed. Many viewed the state's professional development session on sustainability as "only an introduction,"

providing them with a framework to use, but not going far enough or addressing specific issues.

District support and context. The district context varied significantly in different parts of the state. Most schools described their districts as supportive of Reading First and said the project was aligned with other district initiatives. Other schools struggled with contradictions that were sometimes unique to them, including new math adoptions and time-consuming training for teachers, or district commitment to a balanced literacy approach. Whether these perceptions are indicative of potential sources for draining energy away from Reading First sustainability is unclear. Schools and districts need to be aware of competing reforms and their possible impact on efforts to sustain Reading First.

The state required that funded districts provide district coordinators to facilitate assessment use, collaboration and use of the core reading program. Some districts have also provided a substantial amount of professional development in reading to their teachers. These supports may help schools in the years after the grant has ended.

Just as there were contradictions between Reading First and ELL policies at the state level, these also existed at the district level. In fact, nearly half of coaches (46%) and more than a third of teachers (38%) reported that the philosophy or pedagogy of their ELL programs and services sometimes clashed with Reading First.

District coordinators reported that Reading First impacted the reading programs at non-Reading First schools. In fact, in all districts with non-Reading First schools, some elements of Reading First have been implemented districtwide. The most common elements were the 90-minute block, DIBELS, and ongoing reading professional development. This "spill-over" of Reading First into other schools will likely enhance sustainability, as these components become part of standard district operating procedures.

Sufficient Funding

Comprehensive reform efforts often require significant amounts of funding to initiate and implement; they also have a greater chance of being sustained over time if they then do not require continued high levels of funding. It is essential that schools establish a stable source of funding that can last through policy and leadership changes. Schools and districts need to use recurring resources optimally to support reform results by setting priorities for key reform components and allocating funds accordingly.

Asked about what components they most wanted to keep from Reading First but were concerned about funding, principals most often mentioned the reading coach and paraprofessional support for interventions and assessment.

Almost all principals wanted the coach position to continue. However, half said they did not think this would be possible in the longer term, given funding constraints. Some were already considering reducing their coach position to half-time, as a way to cope

with reduced Reading First funding. Those who did believe the coach would continue either knew their district had committed to support the coach position or planned to shift Title I or district funds to cover the coach.

Principals also saw paraprofessionals as playing an important role in keeping Reading First running smoothly. Almost all schools (94%) relied at least partly on paraprofessionals to provide interventions. Paraprofessionals also ran small groups during the reading block and sometimes helped with data entry, which could be an enormous task in a large school conducting frequent progress monitoring. Some principals wondered how they would fund this work without the grant.

> *As the grant disappears you just have to make due without it. The knowledge base is there [with classroom teachers]. But without the support of the parapros, we won't have the same small groups. (Principal)*

Principals described a number of creative solutions they were considering to maintain coach and/or paraprofessional support. For example, in schools with district funding for the coach position, principals were considering the use of Title I funds to support paraprofessional staffing. A few principals expected to weave Reading First into their School Improvement Plan and then use school improvement funds to support it. Some reported more generally that they would "make do with the resources they had" and in the future make decisions about what to keep based on "what's best for the kids and not what is in the grant." At some schools, questions of funding are likely to seriously threaten their ability to sustain important components of Reading First.

Positive Student Outcomes

Positive student outcomes are critical to sustaining reform initiatives, as they provide the rationale for continuing efforts. As described in Chapter 7 of this report, Washington Reading First cohort 1 and cohort 2 schools have consistently increased the percentage of students reading at grade level over the duration of the grant (four years for cohort 1, three years for cohort 2).

Cohort 1 schools have demonstrated the largest gains; across schools, 19 percent more third-grade students finished the year at grade level in 2007 than did in 2004. Schools in cohort 2 also registered gains at third grade, with 15 percent more students at grade level in 2007 than in 2005. While cohort 3 schools were in their first year of Reading First in 2007 and thus had no longitudinal data, cohort 3 schools did show statistically significant gains in all grade levels from fall to spring.

Overall, the steady growth across years favors longer-term sustainability, as it builds credibility for—and buy-in to—the Reading First approach among school and district staff members, as well as in the communities they serve. There was, however, substantial variation across schools in terms of the degree to which student achievement improved; schools with lower gains may struggle more to justify the expense and effort of maintaining components of Reading First.

Leadership Stability

Leadership is crucial to the sustainability of reform initiatives; setting policy, identifying priorities, allocating funding, and ensuring implementation determine the direction of a school. Years of work can be continued with consistent leadership; or they can evaporate with a leadership change.

There are essentially two ways to keep leadership (and thus reform initiatives) stable: first, to retain the same principal, and/or secondly, to distribute leadership among staff so that the direction of the school does not depend on any single person.

The first strategy may not be a viable one for many Washington Reading First schools, where principal turnover was 24 percent this year. This is a fairly high rate, compared to an average 15 percent turnover rate in the region (NWREL 2004). It is possible that districts and schools can attempt to counter the impact of principal turnover "through planned succession and reading-based hiring practices" (Paine 2007); success, however, may be contingent on local labor markets.

The second strategy, building distributed leadership, holds greater promise, in particular because grantee schools were required to implement a schoolwide Reading Leadership Team (RLT). Over the past four years, the evaluation has reported that Washington Reading First has consistently helped foster a higher degree of collaboration in schools than prior to the grant. In particular, teachers report collaborating more frequently and often more productively within grade levels than they did in the past. In some schools, RLTs were also an effective forum for collaboration. They can, in the best of circumstances, promote shared responsibility for leading reform efforts, rather than concentrating this within a single person. Virtually all schools had RLTs that met at least monthly. There was a great deal of unevenness in whether or not principals regularly attended and participated, and in practice, however, many RLTs were not decision-making bodies but instead were simply places to share information. Thus, while the RLT was a potential structure to support distributed leadership, it did not yet fulfill this potential at all schools.

Districts can play an important role in promoting sustainability of Reading First by attending closely to leadership stability—creating conditions that keep effective principals in schools, promoting shared leadership, and hiring replacement administrators who buy into both Reading First and shared leadership.

Staff Retention

Just as leadership stability favors sustainability, so does staff retention. Schools in which teacher turnover is low do not need to spend a lot of resources and time providing professional development to new teachers who need to learn the reform approach.

On average, teacher turnover in Washington Reading First schools in 2006–2007 was approximately 19 percent—slightly higher average than the national average of 17 percent for elementary schools (Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek & Morton 2007). According to principals, about half of Reading First schools had rates below this level; but at the same time, about one-quarter of schools had teacher turnover rates of 30 percent or higher (up to 63 percent).

Schools and districts also need to contend with coach turnover. Turnover of coaches in cohort 1 and cohort 2 schools was similar to the rate for teachers; this year, 20 percent of coaches were new at their schools and 12 percent were brand new to coaching.

Districts can ease the process of bringing new staff members into a Reading First school by hiring teachers and coaches with similar philosophical views, and when possible, knowledge and/or previous experience teaching with a comparable approach. In schools and districts with high turnover, on-going professional development becomes especially crucial.

Sustained Professional Development

Staff members who worked at Reading First schools for the past three or four years have received a substantial amount of professional development in reading, assessment, interventions, coaching, and related topics. To continue collaborative work, newly hired staff members need opportunities to catch up to their experienced colleagues. At the same time, experienced teachers benefit from opportunities that refresh their perspective and/or deepen their skills. This means it is necessary to provide differentiated professional development that takes into account teachers' prior experience and current needs.

Cohort 1 principals were asked about what their schools had done thus far to help bring new teachers up to speed on Reading First. They most commonly cited the following strategies:

- Sending new teachers to the Summer Institute and other trainings
- Providing one-on-one work with the coach
- Encouraging mentoring from experienced teachers or a district mentor
- Engaging direct support from contracted technical assistance providers and regional coordinators.

Often principals said they used a combination of approaches:

> *The coach worked personally with the new teachers. The coach modeled and trained the kindergarten teachers and sent new teachers to a Read Well workshop. Also the new second grade teacher observed classes in two different schools. (Principals)*

> *In the longer run, the coach position will be cut to half-time and I will maintain support for new teachers by hiring subs and providing paid time for them to get what they need. I will arrange out of school observations and visits, if it seems necessary. Recent hires have had excellent preparation in reading and GLEs [state Grade Level Expectations], and they only need help getting started in the core program. (Principal)*

Principals often saw the coach role as particularly important because of its potential contribution to supporting new teachers, but many principals feared they would lost the coaching position and were uncertain about how to meet these staffing needs.

Staff Commitment

One of the most important factors for sustaining reform work is staff member commitment and support for reform activities. Washington Reading First had a high level of buy-in from coaches and principals and mixed support from its teachers. Nearly all coaches and principals said they were pleased to have a Reading First grant, and few objected to philosophical or pedagogical components of Reading First. Among teachers, in contrast, a quarter cited philosophical or pedagogical objections and only half said they strongly supported the instructional changes occurring under Reading First.

Despite these indicators of mixed teacher buy-in, two-thirds of teachers said that they would not return to their old way of teaching after the grant was over. Moreover, when teachers were asked whether they felt specific components of Reading First *should* be maintained after the grant was over, they strongly supported keeping most components, including:

- reading-related professional development (97% of teachers)
- interventions for struggling students (96%)
- grouping students by instructional level (96%)
- the core reading program (96%)
- regular grade-level meetings (96%)
- the 90-minute reading block (87%)
- a schoolwide Reading Leadership Team (87%)
- the DIBELS (82%); and to a somewhat lesser degree
- the reading coach (77%)

This commitment to the central components of the Reading First initiative favors the sustainability of the changes.

Practical Components Structured into Daily Life

When the practical components of a reform effort are structured into the daily life of the school community, reform is more likely to be sustained; the reform becomes how the school "does business." The school leadership ensures that critical reform elements are continued with high fidelity and are working effectively.

In Washington Reading First, the major program components include:

- the core reading curriculum and explicit instructional practices
- 90-minute reading block
- provision of interventions to struggling readers
- use of assessments to screen students and monitor progress
- use of data for decisionmaking
- on-going professional development, including coaching
- collaboration

All of these components were well-established in almost all of the Washington Reading First schools. The core program was a regular part of virtually all teachers' teaching. Few teachers used the 90-minute block for any non-reading activities. At least 80 percent of struggling readers received interventions in 2006–2007. Students were regularly assessed and schools used the results for a variety of purposes; most teachers frequently looked at data several times a month, if not weekly. Attendance at state-provided professional development was high, and all schools had reading coaches and demonstrated an extremely high use of data for progress monitoring and program improvement. Collaboration occurred regularly at grade-level and RLT meetings, though the frequency and quality of collaboration varied across schools.

Although these components have become "part of regular business" at schools, many of them rely heavily on the reading coach for their successful functioning. This is another area, then, where loss of the coach has important implications.

In interviews, teachers tended to say that the 90-minute reading block, the core reading program, and use of walk-to-read would probably continue regardless of whether or not their school had a coach. As one teacher said, "it is the way we do reading now," but she added with concern, "it might become watered down" with passing years.

On the other hand, teachers feared the loss of the coach would result in a more negative impact on other program components:

- ***Use of data***. Who, teachers wondered, would compile all the data and create the charts and displays they relied on? If that responsibility was passed to teachers, they said, their planning instruction would suffer. Overall, teachers were in broad agreement that it would be difficult to keep the assessment and use of data

at its current high level. This is supported by data from coaches showing that, on average, they spend about 30 percent of their time on data-related work.

- ***Grade-level meetings.*** Most teachers thought that grade-level meetings would continue in some manner, but would be less focused on reading, and less effective; coaches were helpful in directing the meetings.

- ***Interventions.*** Teachers saw the future of interventions from different viewpoints. Some thought they would be discontinued, because of the coach role in organizing them or training intervention provides. Other teachers thought interventions would continue at their schools, although perhaps with modifications.

Overall, the main components of Reading First were firmly established at most schools and this favors sustainability of the project. However, the loss of the reading coach, who facilitates the components, could make it much harder for schools to sustain their program.

CHAPTER SEVEN:
STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

HIGHLIGHTS

The *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS) were used as a common measure of student achievement for each grade level at all schools. At the end of the 2006-2007 school year, the following percentages of students were at benchmark on the DIBELS:

	Cohorts 1 and 2	Cohort 3
Kindergarten	85%	70%
Grade 1	70%	53%
Grade 2	60%	50%
Grade 3	62%	50%

For students being taught to read in Spanish, schools used the Tejas LEE in kindergarten through first grade to assess reading skills. In spring 2007, the following percentages of students were at benchmark on the Tejas LEE:[1]

Kindergarten	75%
Grade 1	48%

In general, schools were more successful retaining students at benchmark than moving intensive or strategic students to a higher level.

Achievement by Cohort

Levels of achievement varied by cohort; more experienced cohorts consistently demonstrated higher percentages of students at benchmark.

Over the course of the 2006–2007 school year, continuing and new schools (viewed as two groups) saw the following DIBELS patterns:

- Statistically significant *increases* in the percentage of students at benchmark at all grades.

- Statistically significant *decreases* in the percentage of students in the intensive group in kindergarten, first and third grades.

[1] The percentages of students at benchmark on the DIBELS and the Tejas LEE are not necessarily comparable.

Looking at DIBELS trends over time for schools with multiple years of Reading First:

- Cohort 1 registered steady gains in the percentage of students at benchmark at all grades; over four years, the project registered increases of between 14 and 27 percentage points per grade. Gains in 2006–2007 were small but statistically significant. There also were statistically significant decreases in the percentage of students in intensive at all grades.

- Cohort 2 saw statistically significant increases in the percentage of students at benchmark in kindergarten, first and third grades, but not in second grade. Decreases in the percentage of students in the intensive group were significant only in third grade.

Second grade was a challenge for all cohorts, with little to no movement in either direction. This stalling in benchmark growth was particularly notable in cohort 2; however, all cohorts experienced difficulties in reducing the proportion in the intensive group.

Achievement by Student Subgroups

The pace of growth in the attainment of benchmark on the DIBELS among Hispanic students (53 percent of all Washington Reading First students) and English language learners (between 34 and 46 percent of all Reading First students) exceeded their peers in second and third grades. This narrowed, but was not enough to overcome, the achievement gap. By the end of the year, Hispanic students were as likely to attain benchmark status as other ethnic groups in kindergarten, but were less likely to do so in first, second, and third grade. This pattern was similar to the previous year.

Asian students were the most likely to be at benchmark, at all grade levels. African American and white students performed similarly in kindergarten and first grade, but in second and third grades, African American students were less likely to be at benchmark.

There were few Native American students in Washington Reading First schools. They were equally likely to attain benchmark in kindergarten and second grades, and less likely in first and third grades.

Achievement of Students Taught in Spanish

Among the 16 schools providing Spanish-language instruction, students showed strong gains in the percentage of kindergarten and first-grade students at benchmark on the Tejas LEE, both within the school year and compared to the previous year. While these students' performance on the English-language DIBELS was lower than their ELL counterparts receiving instruction in English, the Spanish-language students' performance improved compared to the previous year, with more students at benchmark and fewer in the intensive group.

Achievement of Students in Reading First for Four Years

Longitudinal analysis of an intact group of cohort 1 students who received a full four years of Reading First suggested positive results. Although the goal of every child reading at grade-level by the end of third grade was not met, there were other notable successes. Comparing students receiving a full four years of Reading First to performance at the same schools at the start of the grant showed a real change; the earlier pattern, which had fewer students at benchmark in each subsequent grade, no longer existed. Instead, most students who were at grade-level in kindergarten stayed at grade level. In addition, the majority of students who struggled in kindergarten with early reading skills moved up to benchmark during the course of the project.

CHAPTER SEVEN:
STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

To monitor student progress in reading, all Washington Reading First schools use the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS), which is administered three times per year: fall, winter, and spring.[2]

In addition, the Tejas LEE is administered to assess Spanish-language reading skills for a subset of kindergarten and first-grade students at 16 schools who receive their reading instruction in Spanish. Beginning in second grade, all students are assessed with the English-language DIBELS.

For a description of procedures for coding and analyzing scores, please refer to Chapter 2: Methods.

DIBELS assessment results are presented in this chapter in the following order:

(1) 2006–2007 DIBELS Results: A graphic overview of change between fall and spring of this year in the percentage of students at benchmark or in the intensive group, as well as tables presenting the percentage of students in each of the three overall instructional support recommendation groupings in spring 2007. This section also tracks fall to spring growth of student subgroups.

(2) 2004–2007 DIBELS Trends: Graphic overviews of change from spring to spring of each year, as well as tables presenting the percentage of students at benchmark over time.

(3) Longitudinal Analyses: A section reporting changes in DIBELS results for intact cohorts of students over time.

(4) Tejas LEE Results: Tables presenting the percentage of students in each instructional category on the Tejas LEE in spring 2007 and over time.

Where appropriate, data are disaggregated by cohort as well as key demographic characteristics: ethnicity, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), English language learner (ELL) status, and eligibility for special education. Please note that all data are matched, meaning they include only students with valid fall and spring scores.

[2] These three assessments are called the "benchmark assessments" and are administered to all students. In addition, students are given progress-monitoring assessments more often, at intervals that vary depending on their reading level. See Chapter 4 for more information about progress-monitoring assessments.

2006–2007 DIBELS Results

This section summarizes student assessment results on the DIBELS from the 2006–2007 school year.

Changes in Percentage of Students at Benchmark

Figure 7-1 depicts the change between fall 2006 and spring 2007 in the percentage of students from cohort 1 and 2 schools at benchmark on the DIBELS. There were strong increases in the percentage of kindergarten, second, and third grade students at benchmark; these changes were statistically significant (McNemar chi-square<0.001). There was a slight increase in first grade; this change was also statistically significant (McNemar chi-square<0.01).

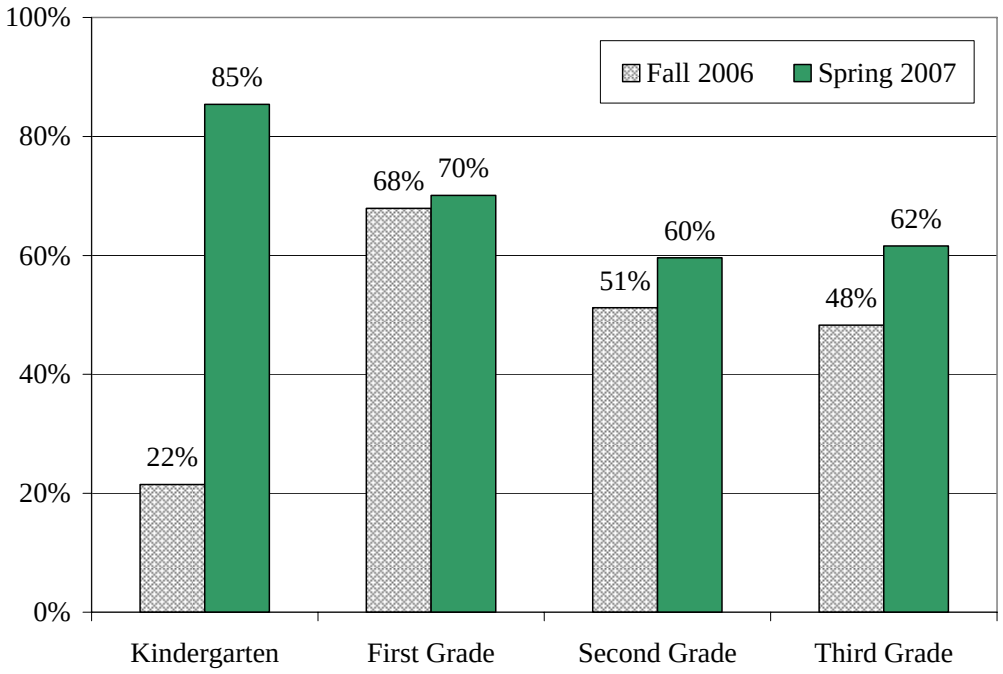


Figure 7-1. Percentage of Students at Benchmark, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Cohorts 1 and 2 (Combined)

Compared to last year (2005–2006), this year's students in first through third grade began the year somewhat higher than last year's students. Gains over the year were about the same as last year for second and third grades, while they were somewhat lower for first grade (data not shown in chart).

Figure 7-2 depicts the change in the percentage of students from cohort 3 schools at benchmark between fall 2006 and spring 2007. The data show substantial and significant increase in the percentage of kindergarten students at benchmark (McNemar chi-square<0.001). Increases in first, second and third grades were smaller, but still statistically significant (first grade McNemar chi-square<0.01; second grade McNemar chi-square<0.001; third grade McNemar chi-square<0.05).

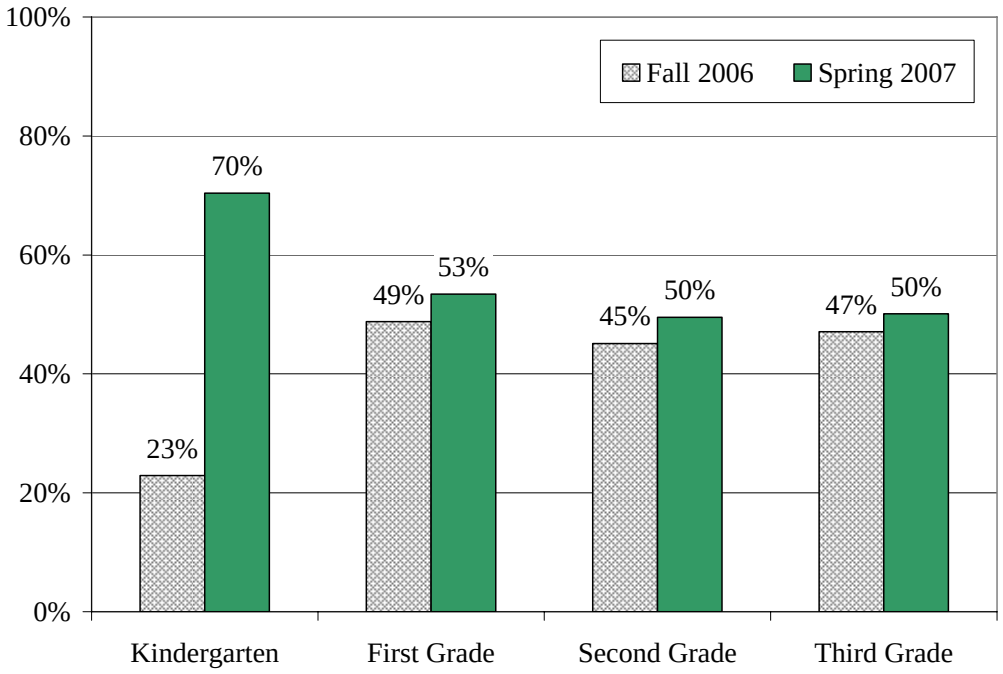


Figure 7-2. Percentage of Students at Benchmark, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Cohort 3

Changes in Percentage of Students in Intensive

The goal of Reading First is not only to increase the percentage of students at benchmark, but also to reduce the percentage of students who are struggling in reading. The DIBELS identifies those students who are struggling the most as "intensive," meaning that they are in need of intensive interventions to bring them up to level.

Figure 7-3 presents the change in the percentage of students from cohort 1 and 2 schools in the intensive group from fall 2006 to spring 2007. Changes in these grades were statistically significant (McNemar chi-square<0.001). The data show a small decrease in the percentage of kindergarten and third-grade students in the intensive group, and a more moderate decrease in first grade. However, there was no change in second grade. This pattern was similar in the previous year (2005–2006), although this year there was a somewhat smaller percentage of students in intensive at the end of the year.

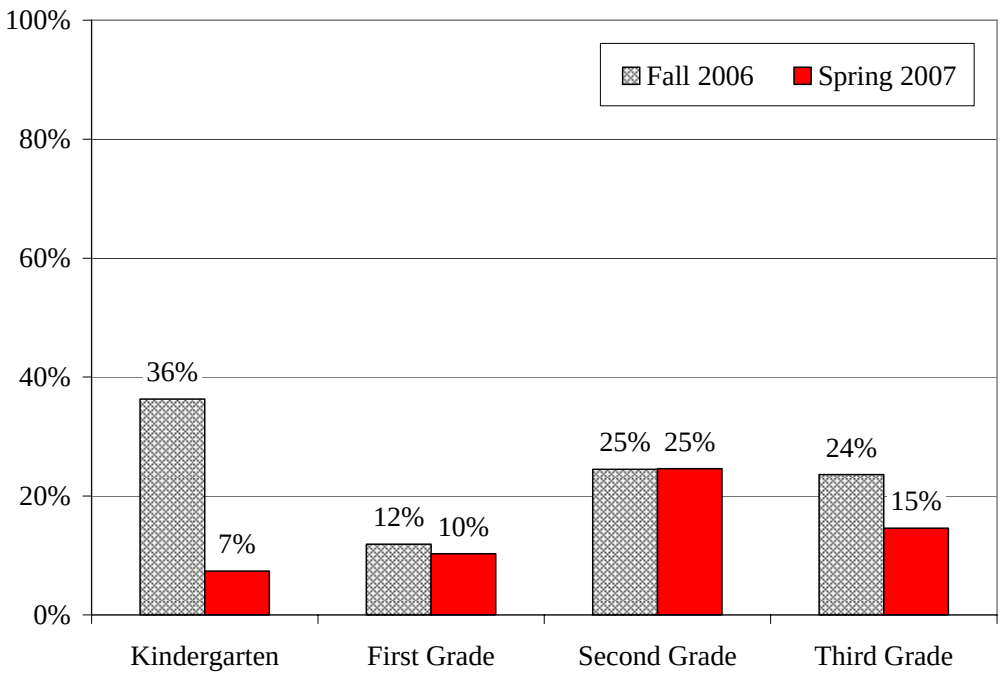


Figure 7-3. Percentage of Students in Intensive, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Cohorts 1 and 2 (Combined)

Figure 7-4 presents the change in the percentage of students from cohort 3 schools in the intensive group from fall 2006 to spring 2007. The data show that there were statistically significant decreases in kindergarten, first, and third grades (McNemar chi-square<0.001). However, there was a slight increase in second grade, which was also statistically significant (McNemar chi-square<0.01).

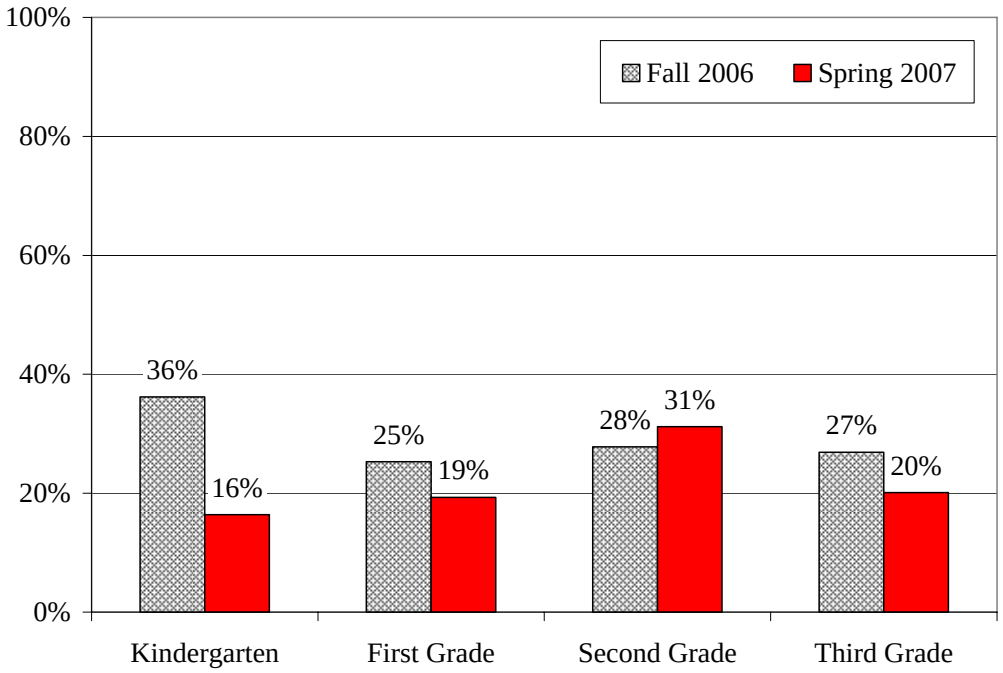


Figure 7-4. Percentage of Students in Intensive, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Cohort 3

Levels of Performance at the End of the 2006–2007 School Year

The following tables (7-1 through 7-4) provide the results from the spring 2007 DIBELS. For each grade, they present the percentage of students in each of the three Instructional Support Recommendation (ISR) categories: intensive, strategic, and benchmark. The numbers across each row add up to 100 percent (±0.1 percent, to account for rounding). In addition to the cross-grade trends noted above, the following patterns were observed:

- **Cohorts.** At all grades, the percentage of students at benchmark was higher for cohort 1 than cohort 2 schools, and higher for cohort 2 than cohort 3 schools.

- **Race/Ethnicity.** Asian students were the most likely to be at benchmark, at all grade levels. African American and white students performed similarly in kindergarten and first grade, but in second and third grades, African American students were less likely to be at benchmark. In kindergarten, Hispanic students were as likely to attain benchmark status as other ethnic groups, but were less likely to do so in first, second, and third grade.

- **Free or Reduced-Price Lunch.** Students eligible for FRL were less likely to attain benchmark and more likely to be in the intensive group. This trend was much more pronounced in first, second, and third grades than kindergarten.

- **Special Education.** Students eligible for special education—nine percent of all Washington Reading First students—were substantially less likely to attain benchmark and much more likely to be in the intensive group than their peers.

- **English Language Learners (ELLs).** Two analyses were run in order to look both at students who were currently classified as ELLs (the "narrow" definition), and at students who were *ever* classified at ELLs (this includes current and former ELL students and/or those who spoke a language besides English at home (the "broad" definition). Both groups were less likely than native-speakers to attain benchmark at first, second and third grades, but the performance of ELLs in kindergarten was similar to that of their native-speaking peers.

Table 7-1
Instructional Support Recommendations—Kindergarten

Spring 2007	N	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
All WA Reading First Kindergarten	**4971**	**9.4%**	**8.6%**	**81.9%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	3822	7.4%	7.2%	85.4%
Cohort 1	3014	7.0%	7.1%	85.9%
Cohort 2	808	8.5%	7.9%	83.5%
Cohort 3	1149	16.4%	13.2%	70.4%
Alaska Native/American Indian	145	6.9%	9.7%	83.4%
Asian	327	7.3%	8.9%	83.8%
Black/African-American	485	8.5%	6.6%	84.9%
Hispanic/Latino	2507	9.5%	9.2%	81.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	25	8.0%	20.0%	72.0%
White	1224	10.6%	7.8%	81.5%
Other	62	11.3%	9.7%	79.0%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	3414	10.1%	9.3%	80.7%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1061	7.7%	7.7%	84.5%
Eligible for Special Education	348	19.8%	15.2%	64.9%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4129	8.6%	8.0%	83.3%
English Language Learners (broad)	2069	10.0%	10.1%	79.9%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2902	9.1%	7.5%	83.4%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1638	9.5%	9.6%	80.9%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3333	9.4%	8.1%	82.4%

Table 7-2
Instructional Support Recommendations—Grade 1

Spring 2007	N	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
All WA Reading First Grade 1	**5126**	**12.3%**	**21.3%**	**66.4%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	3994	10.3%	19.6%	70.1%
Cohort 1	3199	10.0%	19.8%	70.2%
Cohort 2	795	11.3%	19.0%	69.7%
Cohort 3	1132	19.3%	27.3%	53.4%
Alaska Native/American Indian	149	12.8%	23.5%	63.8%
Asian	356	7.3%	18.0%	74.7%
Black/African-American	504	11.1%	16.7%	72.2%
Hispanic/Latino	2656	13.6%	24.5%	61.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	15	.0%	13.3%	86.7%
White	1272	11.5%	17.8%	70.8%
Other	48	6.3%	18.8%	75.0%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	3956	13.5%	23.0%	63.4%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1000	7.2%	15.1%	77.7%
Eligible for Special Education	455	31.4%	23.5%	45.1%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4411	10.3%	21.2%	68.5%
English Language Learners (broad)	2264	13.8%	25.5%	60.7%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2862	11.0%	18.0%	70.9%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1632	14.5%	27.1%	58.5%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3494	11.2%	18.6%	70.1%

Table 7-3
Instructional Support Recommendations—Grade 2

Spring 2007	N	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
All WA Reading First Grade 2	**5181**	**26.1%**	**16.5%**	**57.4%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	4032	24.6%	15.7%	59.6%
Cohort 1	3228	23.4%	15.5%	61.2%
Cohort 2	804	29.6%	16.8%	53.6%
Cohort 3	1149	31.2%	19.2%	49.5%
Alaska Native/American Indian	147	27.9%	9.5%	62.6%
Asian	314	16.9%	10.5%	72.6%
Black/African-American	473	25.2%	14.2%	60.7%
Hispanic/Latino	2794	29.3%	18.5%	52.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14	28.6%	14.3%	57.1%
White	1304	21.3%	14.6%	64.1%
Other	48	20.8%	31.3%	47.9%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	4066	28.6%	17.2%	54.2%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	977	15.7%	13.0%	71.3%
Eligible for Special Education	502	47.4%	15.5%	37.1%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4495	23.6%	16.5%	59.9%
English Language Learners (broad)	2552	29.7%	17.8%	52.5%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2629	22.6%	15.2%	62.2%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1897	33.5%	18.5%	48.1%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3284	21.8%	15.4%	62.8%

Table 7-4
Instructional Support Recommendations—Grade 3

Spring 2007	N	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
All WA Reading First Grade 3	**5104**	**15.8%**	**25.1%**	**59.1%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	4009	14.6%	23.8%	61.6%
Cohort 1	3211	14.2%	23.3%	62.5%
Cohort 2	798	15.9%	26.2%	57.9%
Cohort 3	1095	20.1%	29.8%	50.1%
Alaska Native/American Indian	134	17.2%	29.1%	53.7%
Asian	327	8.9%	19.6%	71.6%
Black/African-American	446	16.6%	24.7%	58.7%
Hispanic/Latino	2747	17.2%	27.0%	55.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21	14.3%	23.8%	61.9%
White	1282	13.3%	22.0%	64.7%
Other	37	24.3%	35.1%	40.5%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	4025	17.3%	26.6%	56.1%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	937	8.9%	18.4%	72.8%
Eligible for Special Education	478	42.5%	23.6%	33.9%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4458	12.8%	25.1%	62.2%
English Language Learners (broad)	2451	17.7%	26.4%	55.9%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2653	13.9%	23.9%	62.2%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1696	21.8%	27.9%	50.4%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3408	12.8%	23.7%	63.5%

Progress During the 2006–2007 School Year

This section summarizes the change in student performance over the course of the 2006–2007 school year, looking in particular at the percentage of students at benchmark at each of the three testing periods. Tables 7-5 through 7-8 provide this information for kindergarten through third grade. Across grades, the following patterns were evident:

- **Cohorts.** At all grades, the percentage of students at benchmark was higher for cohort 1 than cohort 2 schools, and higher for cohort 2 than cohort 3 schools.

- **Hispanic/Latino Students.** The pace of growth in the attainment of benchmark among Hispanic/Latino students exceeded their peers in all grades except for first. Despite this, the achievement gap was not eliminated.

- **Free or Reduced-Price Lunch.** The pace of growth in the attainment of benchmark among FRL students was similar to their non-FRL peers. In all grades other than kindergarten, however, FRL students trailed 14-17 percentage points behind. This was similar to the previous year.

- **English Language Learners.** The pace of growth in the attainment of benchmark among ELL students generally exceeded that of non-ELL students, which helped to narrow the achievement gap.

Table 7-5
Percentage of Students at Benchmark—Kindergarten

	N	Fall 2006	Winter 2007	Spring 2007
All WA Reading First Kindergarten	**4971**	**21.8%**	**55.8%**	**81.9%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	3822	21.5%	58.7%	85.4%
Cohort 1	3014	22.1%	59.8%	85.9%
Cohort 2	808	19.2%	54.7%	83.5%
Cohort 3	1149	22.9%	46.1%	70.4%
Alaska Native/American Indian	145	17.9%	55.2%	83.4%
Asian	327	25.7%	54.2%	83.8%
Black/African-American	485	29.7%	54.0%	84.9%
Hispanic/Latino	2507	13.9%	51.6%	81.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	25	28.0%	40.0%	72.0%
White	1224	34.4%	65.1%	81.5%
Other	62	38.7%	67.7%	79.0%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	3414	17.0%	52.6%	80.7%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1061	35.3%	62.2%	84.5%
Eligible for Special Education	348	13.5%	34.7%	64.9%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4129	22.2%	56.7%	83.3%
English Language Learners (broad)	2069	11.8%	48.0%	79.9%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2902	28.9%	61.4%	83.4%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1638	12.2%	47.9%	80.9%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3333	26.6%	59.7%	82.4%

Table 7-6
Percentage of Students at Benchmark—First Grade

	N	Fall 2006	Winter 2007	Spring 2007
All WA Reading First Grade 1	**5126**	**63.7%**	**54.1%**	**66.4%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	3994	67.9%	57.5%	70.1%
Cohort 1	3199	68.9%	58.3%	70.2%
Cohort 2	795	63.9%	54.2%	69.7%
Cohort 3	1132	48.8%	42.1%	53.4%
Alaska Native/American Indian	149	69.8%	59.2%	63.8%
Asian	356	72.2%	66.1%	74.7%
Black/African-American	504	64.7%	57.5%	72.2%
Hispanic/Latino	2656	61.6%	49.5%	61.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	15	60.0%	46.7%	86.7%
White	1272	64.5%	58.3%	70.8%
Other	48	77.1%	64.6%	75.0%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	3956	61.6%	50.5%	63.4%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1000	71.5%	67.0%	77.7%
Eligible for Special Education	455	44.4%	33.6%	45.1%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4411	65.9%	56.1%	68.5%
English Language Learners (broad)	2264	58.6%	47.6%	60.7%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2862	67.7%	59.3%	70.9%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1632	60.0%	45.4%	58.5%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3494	65.4%	58.2%	70.1%

Table 7-7
Percentage of Students at Benchmark—Second Grade

	N	Fall 2006	Winter 2007	Spring 2007
All WA Reading First Grade 2	**5181**	**49.9%**	**60.4%**	**57.4%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	4032	51.2%	61.7%	59.6%
Cohort 1	3228	52.3%	62.9%	61.2%
Cohort 2	804	46.8%	56.6%	53.6%
Cohort 3	1149	45.1%	55.9%	49.5%
Alaska Native/American Indian	147	57.1%	68.3%	62.6%
Asian	314	72.6%	73.5%	72.6%
Black/African-American	473	54.5%	62.3%	60.7%
Hispanic/Latino	2794	43.3%	55.4%	52.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14	42.9%	57.1%	57.1%
White	1304	56.6%	66.5%	64.1%
Other	48	41.7%	60.4%	47.9%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	4066	46.0%	56.7%	54.2%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	977	66.1%	74.4%	71.3%
Eligible for Special Education	502	27.5%	38.1%	37.1%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4495	52.5%	63.0%	59.9%
English Language Learners (broad)	2552	42.7%	54.3%	52.5%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2629	56.8%	66.3%	62.2%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1897	36.8%	49.2%	48.1%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3284	57.4%	66.9%	62.8%

Table 7-8
Percentage of Students at Benchmark—Third Grade

	N	Fall 2006	Winter 2007	Spring 2007
All WA Reading First Grade 3	**5104**	**48.1%**	**51.7%**	**59.1%**
Cohorts 1 and 2	4009	48.3%	52.1%	61.6%
Cohort 1	3211	48.6%	52.9%	62.5%
Cohort 2	798	47.5%	48.8%	57.9%
Cohort 3	1095	47.1%	50.5%	50.1%
Alaska Native/American Indian	134	44.0%	46.6%	53.7%
Asian	327	65.1%	69.0%	71.6%
Black/African-American	446	52.5%	53.6%	58.7%
Hispanic/Latino	2747	41.1%	45.8%	55.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21	47.6%	52.4%	61.9%
White	1282	58.3%	61.1%	64.7%
Other	37	37.8%	35.1%	40.5%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	4025	44.2%	47.6%	56.1%
Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	937	65.1%	69.6%	72.8%
Eligible for Special Education	478	26.4%	28.3%	33.9%
Not Eligible for Special Education	4458	50.6%	54.6%	62.2%
English Language Learners (broad)	2451	41.5%	45.6%	55.9%
Not English Language Learners (broad)	2653	54.1%	57.4%	62.2%
English Language Learners (narrow)	1696	33.4%	39.3%	50.4%
Not English Language Learners (narrow)	3408	55.4%	57.9%	63.5%

Progress of Students by Fall ISR Category

By looking at students who began the 2006–2007 school year in each of the three ISR categories (intensive, strategic and benchmark,) and identifying the ISR category in which they ended the year, it is possible to obtain measures of the effectiveness of regular instruction in retaining students at benchmark and of interventions in moving students out of the intensive and strategic categories. Table 7-9 provides this information.

Table 7-9
Student Movement Among DIBELS ISR Categories, Fall 2006 to Spring 2007

ISRS Fall 2006	ISRs Spring 2007		
	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
Grade K			
Intensive	17%	13%	70%
Strategic	7%	8%	85%
Benchmark	1%	2%	96%
Grade 1			
Intensive	51%	31%	18%
Strategic	17%	35%	48%
Benchmark	2%	14%	84%
Grade 2			
Intensive	79%	14%	7%
Strategic	24%	36%	40%
Benchmark	1%	8%	92%
Grade 3			
Intensive	59%	32%	8%
Strategic	4%	48%	48%
Benchmark	0%	8%	92%

Overall, students who began the school year at benchmark:

- Were very likely to remain there (over 90 percent in kindergarten, second, and third grades, and 84 percent in first grade)
- Almost never fell into the intensive group at the end of the school year (2 percent or fewer)

Among students who began the year in the strategic group:

- Most kindergarten students ended the year at benchmark (85%)
- Between 40 and 48 percent of first-, second-, and third-grade students ended the year at benchmark
- More students remained in the strategic category than slipped down into the intensive group overall, but a quarter of strategic second-grade students did end up in intensive at the end of the year

Among students who began the year in the intensive group:

- More than two-thirds of the kindergarten students (70%) moved up to benchmark
- At the other grades, more than half of the students, and 79 percent in second grade, did not move out of the intensive category

In general, schools were much more successful in keeping their benchmark students at benchmark than they were at moving up their lowest performing students. These results were very similar to results from the previous year (data not shown in table).

2004-2007 Trends in Student Performance on the DIBELS

This section examines DIBELS results over time, from the first year of the project (spring 2004) through spring 2007. Cross-year charts compare student outcomes for different students, for example kindergarten students in one year to different kindergarten students at the same schools the following year.

Changes in Percentage of Students at Benchmark on the DIBELS

Cohort 1 schools completed their fourth year in Reading First in spring 2007. As shown in Figure 7-5, since the first year of Reading First, at every grade level and consistently each year, the percentage of students at benchmark has increased, with no reversals. Over four years, the project registered increases of between 14 and 27 percentage points per grade.

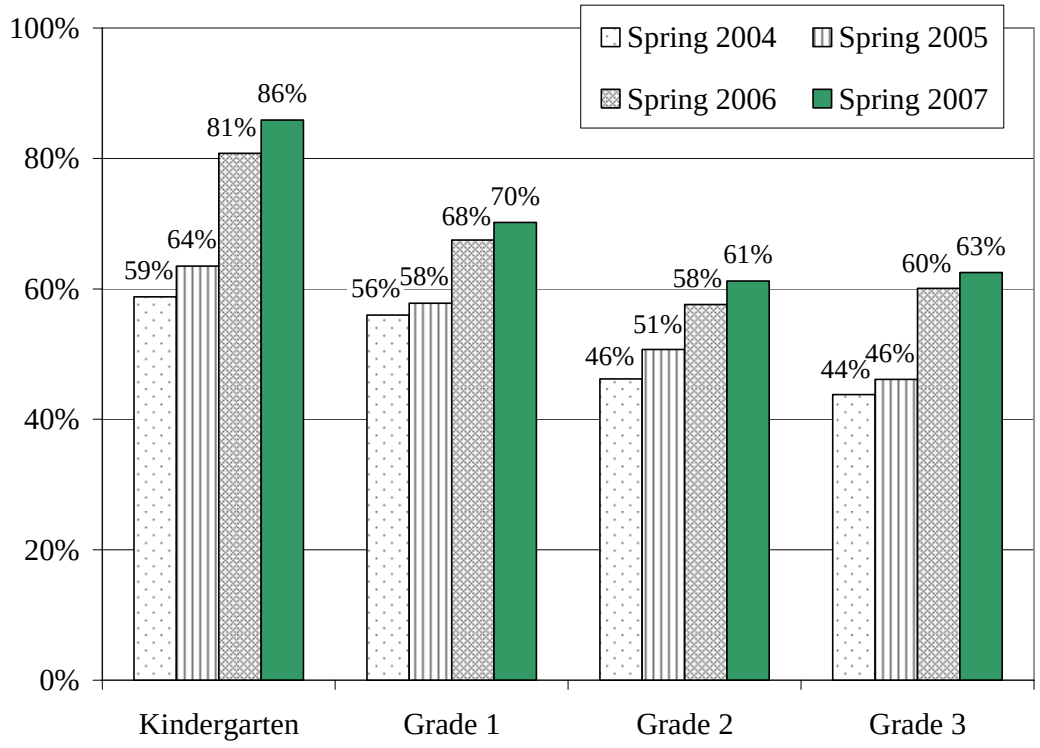


Figure 7-5. Percentage of Students at Benchmark, Spring 2004–Spring 2007 Cohort 1

Compared to spring 2006, in spring 2007 Washington Reading First cohort 1 schools had an additional 5 percent of kindergarten, 2 percent of first-grade, 3 percent of second-grade, and 3 percent of third-grade students at benchmark. While these increases in the percentage of students at benchmark were smaller than the gains made the previous year, they were statistically significant at all grades (kindergarten Pearson chi-square<0.001; second grade Pearson chi-square<0.01; first and third grade Pearson chi-square<0.05).

Strictly speaking, the changes in percentage of students at benchmark between 2006 and 2007 were very small.[3] Yet, because they are part of a steady trend, the size of the gains made by cohort 1 schools between 2006 and 2007 should not be dismissed as trivial. In fact, the more schools make progress in moving students to benchmark, the more difficult it may become to make further progress. In the earlier years of the project, schools may have already reaped the benefit of small efforts to move up the students who were almost at benchmark. At this point, schools may have to make much greater efforts to move up students who are further below grade level, and this could slow the year-to-year rate of improvement.

Furthermore, the amount of movement registered in Figure 7-5 reflects the average across all cohort 1 schools, including schools with lower levels of performance. Other schools registered significantly higher levels of gains.[4]

A similar analysis was conducted on the three consecutive years of data available so far for cohort 2 schools. Figure 7-6 depicts steady gains in the percentage of students at benchmark on the DIBELS in kindergarten, first, and third grades, but little change in second grade.

Between 2006 and 2007, there were increases in the percentage of students at benchmark in kindergarten (+7%), first grade (+10%), and third grade (+7%) that were larger than the gains made in cohort 1 schools. These gains were statistically significant in first grade (Pearson chi-square<0.001), kindergarten and third grade (Pearson chi-square<0.01).[5] There was no change in second grade, which also had only a marginal increase the previous year. Although these changes were also small, cohort 2, like cohort 1 shows evidence of promising longer-term trends in all grades except second.

---

[3] Testing of statistical significance simply examines the probability of obtaining these results by chance. Thus the statistics indicate that the changes in the percentage of students at benchmark were very unlikely to have occurred by chance. At the same time, these tests say nothing about the meaning of the change—were they small or large changes? This is especially important to consider in instances where the sample size (in this case, the number of students with DIBELS scores) is large. For information about the meaning of changes, statisticians turn to measures of effect size, which adjusts for sample size and provides a measure of the magnitude of the changes and permits comparison across different studies. For analyses using chi-square, "phi" is the appropriate measure of effect size. Phi values for the 2006-2007 changes were 0.068 in kindergarten, 0.029 in first grade, 0.036 in second grade, and 0.025 in third grade. Statisticians consider phi values of less than 0.10 as very small (see Rea & Parker 1992).

[4] Individual school results were reported in the Washington Reading First spring interim report (Deussen, Nelsestuen & Roccograndi 2007).

[5] Phi values for these changes were 0.078 in kindergarten, 0.106 in first grade, and 0.069 in second grade.

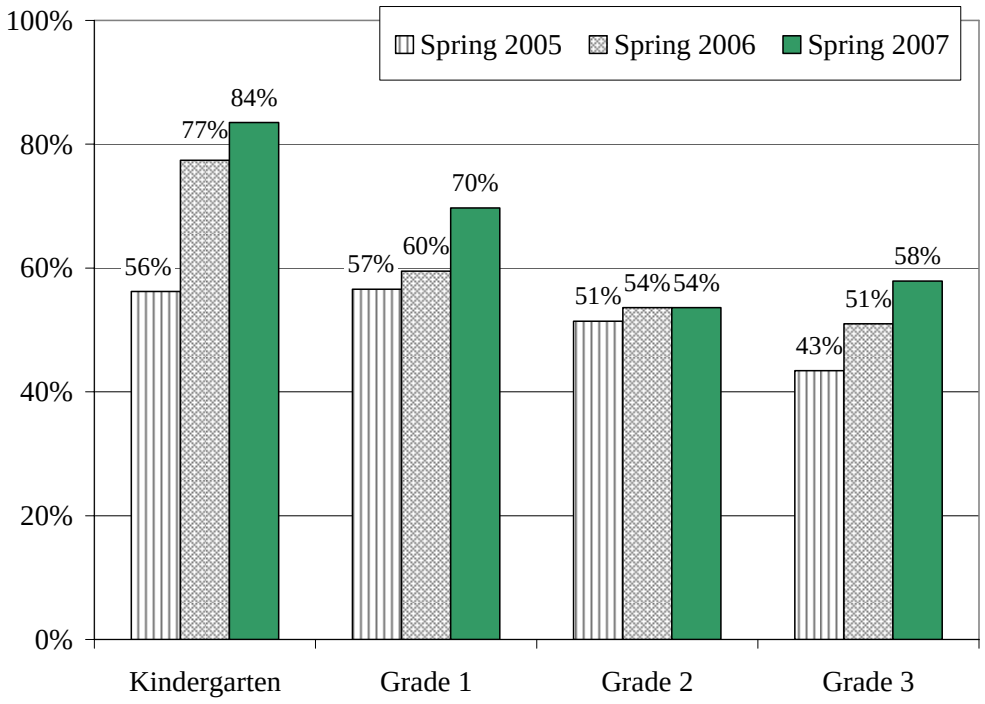


Figure 7-6. Percentage of Students at Benchmark, Spring 2005–Spring 2007 Cohort 2

Changes in Percentage of Students in Intensive on the DIBELS

Figure 7-7 presents the change in the percentage of cohort 1 students in the intensive group as measured by the DIBELS every spring from 2004 through 2007. The figure shows that between 2004 and 2007, there were substantial drops in the percentage of students in the intensive group at all grades. Between spring 2006 and spring 2007, these changes were statistically significant at all grades (kindergarten and third grade Pearson chi-square<0.001; first and second grade Pearson chi-square<0.05). Again, although the changes between 2006 and 2007 were small, they continue a steady trend in the reduction of students in the intensive category.

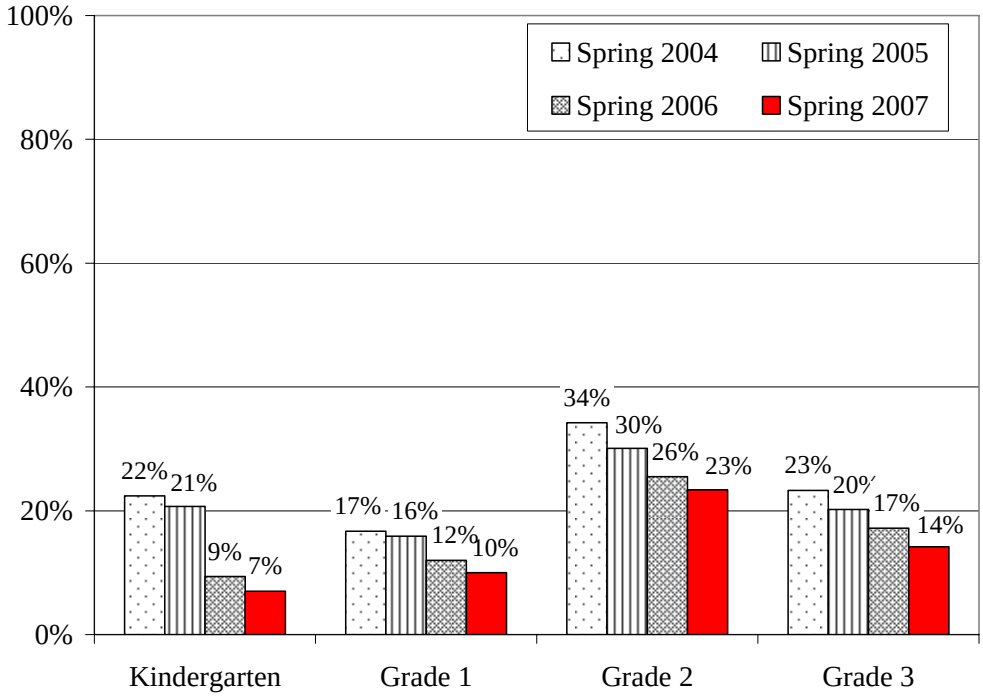


Figure 7-7. Percentage of Students in Intensive, Spring 2004–Spring 2007 Cohort 1

Figure 7-8 presents the change in the percentage of cohort 2 students in the intensive group as measured by the DIBELS every spring from 2005 through 2007. The figure shows decreases in the percentage of students in the intensive group at all grades except for second. This finding mirrors the lack of growth in the proportion of cohort 2 students at benchmark shown above in Figure 7-6. The changes that occurred between spring 2006 and spring 2007 in cohort 2 were statistically significant only in third grade (Pearson chi-square<0.001).

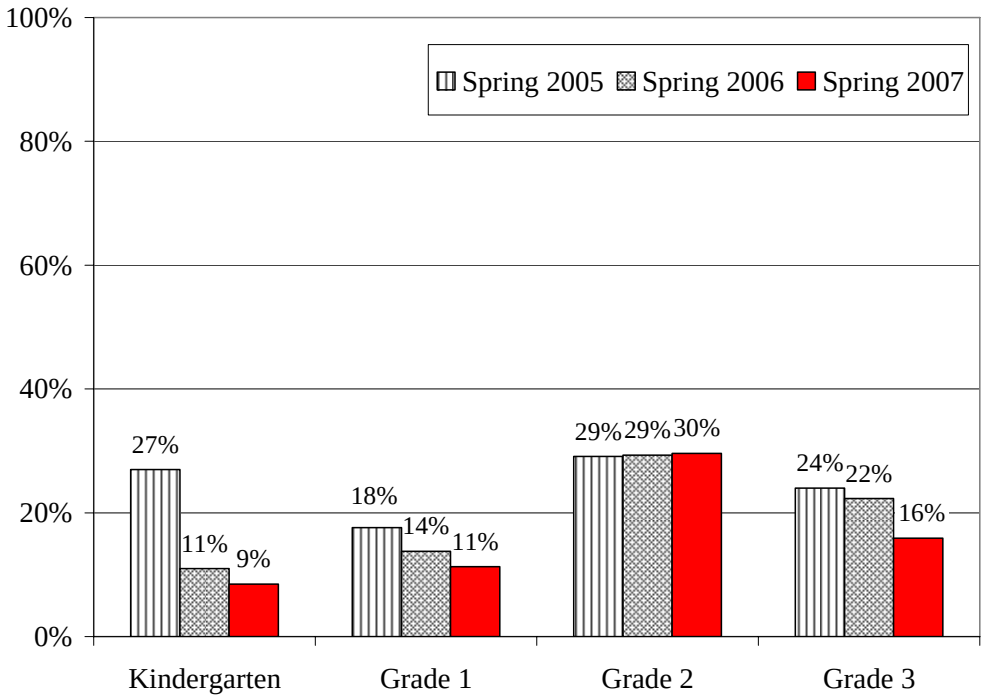


Figure 7-8. Percentage of Students in Intensive, Spring 2005–Spring 2007 Cohort 2

When discussing the statistical significance of findings, it is crucial to acknowledge that larger sample sizes (number of students tested) make it easier to register statistically significant findings. This is why a 2 percent reduction in the percentage of first-grade students in intensive is significant for cohort 1 but a 3 percent reduction for cohort 2 is not.

In this case, the most important things to consider are the trends over time and the overall percentage of students in each category. Using these criteria, and looking at the percentage of students at benchmark after three years of implementation (cohort 1 in 2006, cohort 2 in 2007), cohort 2 schools performed less well than cohort 1 schools in second and third grade, but saw slightly better results in kindergarten and first grade. Looking at the percentage of students in the intensive category, cohort 2 schools look much like cohort 1 schools, with the exception of problems reducing the percentage of second-grade students in intensive.

Achievement of Students in Reading First Since Kindergarten

This section examines changes in DIBELS results for intact groups of students over time; specifically, it looks at the progress of students from cohort 1 schools who began kindergarten in fall 2003 at a Reading First school and completed third grade in spring 2007. To ensure that these analyses capture students who received a full four years of the program, it only included students for whom four years of intact data were available (N=1,553).

Figure 7-9 presents the percentage of these students at benchmark as they moved through the full four years of Reading First. It compares their trajectory to the best available measure for comparison—the spring 2004 DIBELS results for the same group of cohort 1 schools, shown below as "Without Reading First." (The lack of a comparison or control group makes it difficult to know exactly what the alternative outcomes might have been. There also was no baseline data collection in Washington Reading First.)

While these data show that for cohort 1 schools, the goal of every child reading at grade level by the end of third grade was not met, they do show positive outcomes that might otherwise not have occurred in the absence of Reading First. With Reading First, the percentage of students at benchmark has been sustained over four years of K–3 instruction; without the changes brought about by Reading First, it is quite possible that the percentage of students at benchmark would have dropped substantially (Stanovich, 1986; Juel, 1988).

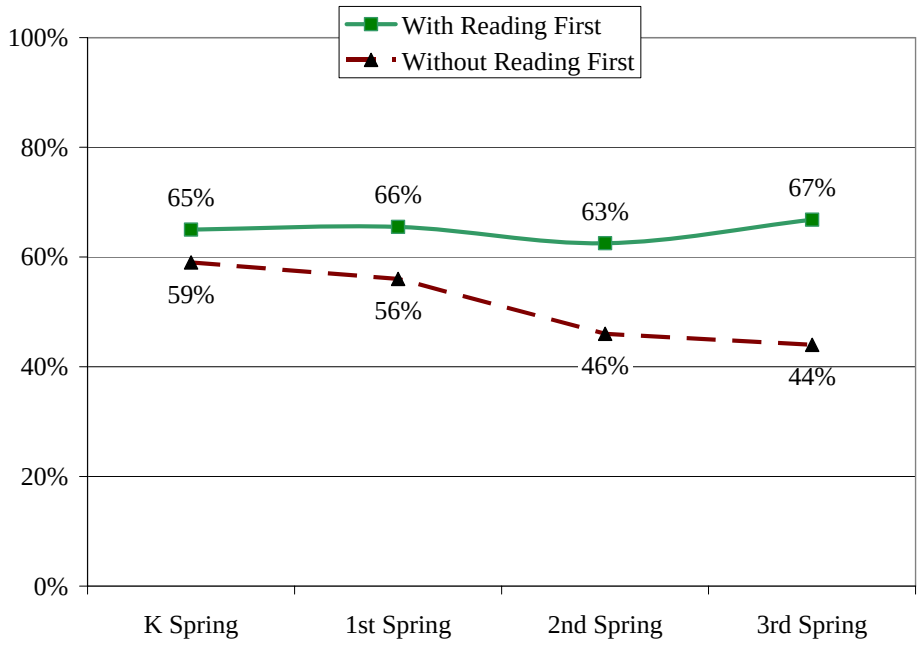


Figure 7-9. Percentage at Benchmark, Students with Four Years of Reading First Versus Students with One Year of Reading First

Figure 7-9 by itself does not provide a more nuanced understanding of where this movement is occurring among the three DIBELS groupings: are the same students remaining at benchmark, while those in intensive and strategic move from one category to another? Therefore, another helpful way of looking at student progress over the past four years is examining students' movement from one ISR to another over four years (see Table 7-10). These data show that:

- Almost all students who began kindergarten at benchmark remained there at the end of third grade (82%).

- The majority of students who began kindergarten in the intensive or strategic groups moved to benchmark (53 and 69 percent, respectively).

- Only 18 percent of students who began kindergarten in the intensive group remained there at the end of third grade. Of these students remaining in intensive, 28 percent were eligible for special education (data not shown in table).

Table 7-10
Movement of Students Among ISRs, Fall 2003-Spring 2007

Fall 2003 ISR (Beginning of Kindergarten)	n	Spring 2007 ISR (End of Third Grade)		
		Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
Intensive	523	18%	29%	53%
Strategic	630	11%	20%	69%
Benchmark	400	3%	15%	82%

The longitudinal data presented above reveal that while cohort 1 schools did not meet the goal of having all students read at grade level by the end of third grade, there was real movement upward of students who had low early reading skills in kindergarten. Also, the majority of students at benchmark in kindergarten were still at benchmark in third grade (82%).

As subsequent cohorts of schools transition through the program, the evaluation will continue to analyze longitudinal data for students who have received a full four years of Reading First.

Tejas LEE Results

This section presents results from the Tejas LEE assessment at the 16 schools providing Spanish-language instruction.[6] Data are matched from fall 2006 to spring 2007 and include all cohorts. (Because there was only one school from cohort 3 that used the Tejas LEE, this cohort was not broken out separately as it was in DIBELS analyses.)

Figure 7-10 depicts the change in the percentage of students at benchmark on the Tejas LEE between fall 2006 and spring 2007. The data show that there were strong gains in both grades during the school year: by spring, three-quarters (75%) of kindergarten students and almost half (48%) of first grade students were at benchmark.

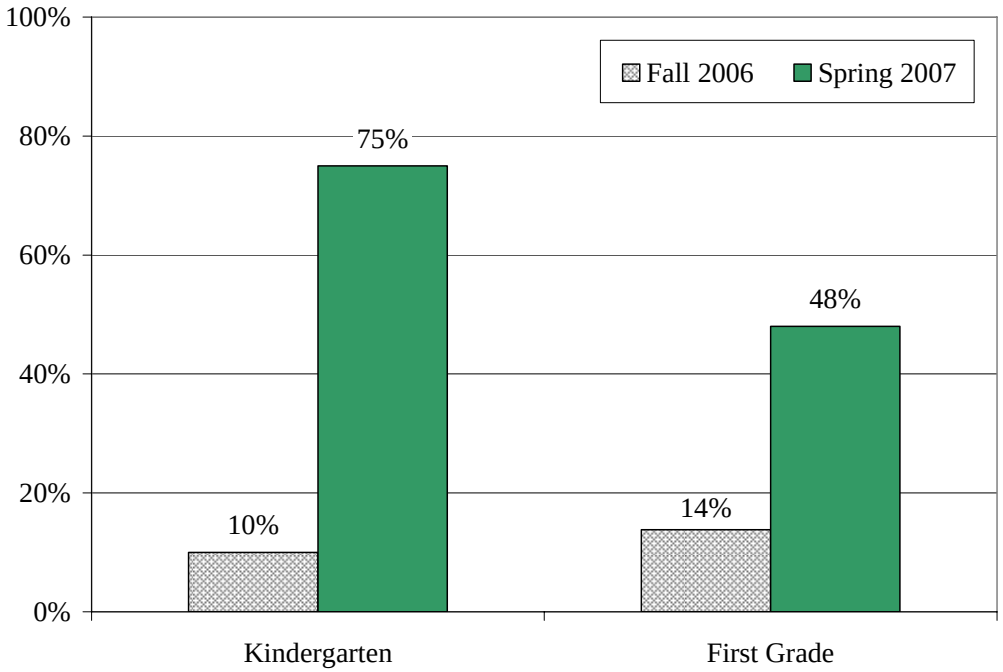


Figure 7-10. Percentage of Students at Benchmark on the Tejas LEE, Fall 2006–Spring 2007, All Cohorts

Figure 7-11 compares the change in the percentage of students at benchmark on the Tejas LEE between spring 2006 and spring 2007 for cohort 1 and 2 schools. This entails a comparison of different students—this year's first graders to last year's. In order to compare the same schools, scores for the one cohort 3 school using Tejas LEE were omitted from this chart. For both kindergarten and first grade, there was a 10-point increase in the percentage of students at benchmark between spring 2006 and spring 2007.

[6] Assessing in Spanish with the Tejas LEE was an option for Spanish-language schools. One school opted to assess all their students in English, regardless of language of instruction.

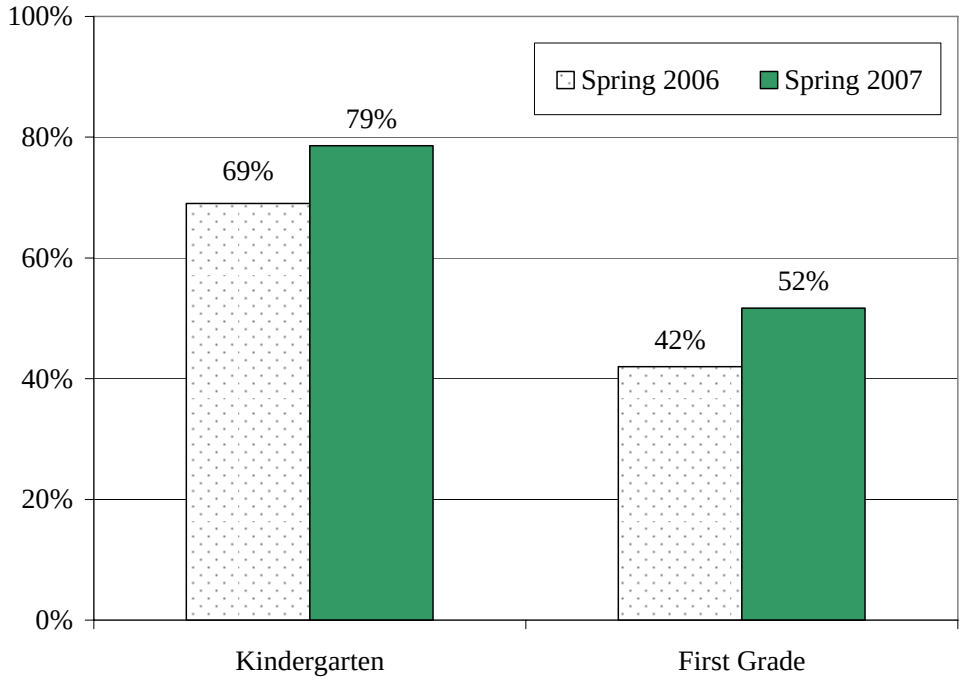


Figure 7-11. Percentage of Students at Benchmark on the Tejas LEE, Spring 2006-Spring 2007, Cohorts 1 and 2 (Combined)

Table 7-11 below presents the instructional categories on the spring 2007 administration. In addition to the data shown graphically above, the table shows that in spring 2007 a higher proportion of first grade students were in the strategic (38%) or intensive (14%) groups, compared to kindergarten students (21% and 4%).

Table 7-11
Tejas LEE Instructional Categories Spring 2007

	N	Intensive	Strategic	Benchmark
Kindergarten	449	4.2%	20.5%	75.3%
Grade 1	325	13.8%	37.8%	48.3%

Performance on Individual Tejas LEE Measures

The percentage of students scoring at an 'acceptable' level on individual measures included in the overall instructional categories is displayed in Table 7-12. Kindergarten students made large gains in letter sounds and letter names from fall to spring. At least 92 percent of kindergarteners scored at an acceptable level on all measures except word recognition (79%) in spring 2007.

In spring 2007, 88 to 99 percent of first-grade students reached an acceptable level on eight of the measures included in the overall instructional categories. In contrast, only 52 percent of first graders reached or exceeded 60 wcpm in the spring, the acceptable level

for benchmark. Fluency was the measure that accounted for the much lower percentage of students at benchmark in first grade, compared to kindergarten.

Table 7-12
Percentage of Students Passing Individual Tejas LEE Measures

Kindergarten			
Measure	**Fall 2006**	**Winter 2006**	**Spring 2007**
Letter Names	17	90	99
Letter Sounds	12	87	96
Auditory Syllable Blending		96	97
Auditory Syllable Segmentation		95	95
Initial Sound Identification			92
Word Recognition			79
Grade 1			
Measure	**Fall 2006**	**Winter 2006**	**Spring 2007**
Letter Sound Identification	78	98	99
Auditory Syllable Blending & Segmentation	77	96	97
Initial Syllable Omission	83		90
Final Syllable Omission			86
Initial Sound Identification		99	99
Auditory Sound Blending and Segmentation			95
Initial Sound Omission			93
Final Sound Omission			88
Fluency (wcpm)		60	52

Progress of Spanish-Language Students on English DIBELS

Although schools providing Spanish-language instruction relied primarily on the Tejas LEE to assess their K–1 students' literacy development, they were also required to assess their students once a year, in the spring, using the English-language DIBELS, in order to determine students' reading level in English. Thirteen of the 16 schools submitted these data as required.

Results of the spring DIBELS assessment are presented in Table 7-13. Far fewer students receiving Spanish-language instruction scored at benchmark on the DIBELS in English than did their peers receiving English-language instruction. However, their performance was an improvement over the previous year, with more students at benchmark and fewer in the intensive group.

Table 7-13
Instructional Support Recommendations—Spanish-Language Programs

Kindergarten Spring 2007	**N**	**Intensive**	**Strategic**	**Benchmark**
Spanish-language instruction	496	47.2%	32.9%	20.0%
ELL Narrow (English instruction)	1638	9.5%	9.6%	80.9%
First Grade Spring 2007	**N**	**Intensive**	**Strategic**	**Benchmark**
Spanish-language instruction	381	33.3%	30.2%	36.5%
ELL Narrow (English instruction)	1632	14.5%	27.1%	58.5%

It should be noted that there were very large school-level differences in the percentage of Spanish-language students at benchmark on the English DIBELS, ranging from zero to 60 percent. This is likely attributable to students' differential exposure to English (in the home and community) and English-language instruction; some students received English- as well as Spanish-language instruction, while others were taught solely in Spanish.

CHAPTER EIGHT:
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Now in its fourth year since school-level implementation began, Washington Reading First has achieved some significant successes, including:

- Continued gains in the percentage of students at benchmark on the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS), particularly in cohort 1 schools

- The continued provision of highly-rated and highly valued professional development and technical assistance to 88 Reading First schools

- Much higher satisfaction with Reading First among schools that provide Spanish-language instruction, compared to previous years.

Some components of Reading First were already strong beginning in the first year of implementation (2003–2004) and have remained solid or even been strengthened over four years. These include the use of the core reading program with high levels of fidelity, high reliance on assessment data to group students and guide interventions, and high levels of collaboration amongst teachers. Furthermore, cohort 3 schools, though they had only one year in Reading First, looked similar in many ways to cohort 1 and 2 schools, having implemented many practices and structures in a short period of time.

Overall, there were four areas of challenge that stood out as requiring more intensive attention in the coming year: the instruction of English language learners, the size of intervention groups, second-grade student achievement (which has not seen the rate of growth experienced at other grade levels), and longer-term sustainability. This chapter summarizes the major findings from this year's report and then makes four broad suggestions for continued development in the coming year.

Professional Development

As in previous years, Washington Reading First provided on-going professional development to principals, coaches, and teachers, delivering it over the course of the 2006–2007 school year in multiple ways.

Much of the professional development provided to principals and coaches occurred during the bimonthly coach and principal meetings coordinated by state project staff members. Over the past three years, principals and coaches have praised these meetings for their relevance and quality; this trend continued to hold for the 2006–2007 school year. Because these meetings were valued, principals and coaches from cohort 1 and 2 schools were concerned about the reduced number of meetings and asked to meet more often in the future.

Most teachers at Reading First schools received professional development from the state via the summer institute, which overall received high ratings from cohort 1 and 2 teachers. Cohort 3 teachers reported a less positive experience, particularly with some of the core program training they received.

Although the state and district offered additional trainings that teachers could participate in, the reading coach continued to be the primary route for the delivery of professional development to teachers. This included observing instruction and providing feedback, helping to administer assessments and interpret results, and assisting with the creation and delivery of interventions. In general, teachers valued this support.

At the same time, what is typically understood as "coaching," the collaborative work of coach and teacher to refine instruction, occurred very unevenly across schools. In some schools, coaches observed all or almost all teachers regularly while, in contrast, teachers in other schools reported infrequent observations. Teachers who were observed more frequently had more positive perceptions of their reading coach.

Teachers identified interventions and working with English language learners (ELLs) as high priority areas for their future professional development. It should be noted in addition, however, that high rates of teacher turnover (about 19 percent, but much higher in some schools) means that there will a continuing need for professional development at the basic and introductory training, even as other teachers move to a higher level of literacy knowledge and have very different needs.

Specifically targeted professional development and technical assistance provided to Spanish-language schools in 2006–2007 were highly valued by staff members in those schools, and staff were much more positive about Reading First than in previous years. Still, many principals of these schools continued to experience major challenges reconciling the demands of Reading First and a strong dual language program, and felt that focused state support should continue in the coming year.

Technical Assistance

This year, 11 regional coordinators provided individualized technical assistance to schools. With rare exceptions, they were viewed by principals and coaches as valuable and trustworthy allies in the school change effort. They contributed to schools in a variety of ways, from data analysis to classroom observations and overall encouragement.

Reading First project staff members at the state level continued to receive very high praise from coaches and principals, who saw them as extremely responsive and effective.

This year there were two regional coordinators who were able to address the specific instructional and assessment needs of schools providing Spanish-language reading instruction. In addition, state project staff members collaborated with the state Bilingual/Migrant office, visiting all Spanish-language schools and assisting in the development of school action plans that better integrated the school's work on reading in

both languages. Coaches receiving this support were very appreciative—even as they asked for continued specialized support in the coming year. Many principals reported that there remained issues on which they needed explicit and clear guidance.

Amid all the praise for and appreciation of Reading First technical assistance, the one point of dissatisfaction that stood out related to instruction of ELLs.

Schools continued to feel that Reading First did not adequately address the needs of their ELL students, who now comprise almost half of all Washington Reading First students. With the exception of a session at the summer institute, state-provided trainings did not focus on ELL issues. Yet appropriate instruction of English language learners is an area which many principals, coaches, and teachers urgently want help with.

Leadership Roles and Buy-in

The coherent implementation of Reading First required strong leadership at the district, principal, and coach level, as well as a high level of teacher collaboration and buy-in.

District role. District coordinators reported that the expectations for their involvement in Reading First were clear and reasonable, and most were satisfied with state support for Reading First. Principals, in turn, were generally satisfied with the support they received from districts in their implementation of Reading First. The one exception to this overall pattern was in the area of alignment of other district initiatives to Reading First. In a few districts, schools reported that this was a problem for them, most often related to issues of how to educate English language learners.

Principal role. Principals' responsibilities centered around three areas: ensuring fidelity advocating for Reading First, and promoting the use of data to make instructional decisions.

Principals felt one of their major responsibilities was to ensure fidelity to the grant and reading program. They used classroom walk-throughs as one means to examine fidelity. Although principals felt walk-throughs were important for several reasons, many continued to report difficulty finding time for observations and the majority of teachers were observed by their principal less than once a month. About half were observed only once or a few times a year.

Most principals strongly supported Reading First and many were actively involved in grant activities, although their level of involvement (e.g., attending meetings, observing classrooms) varied across schools. Principals did regularly use reading data to inform decisions, although fewer principals reported that they "always" used data, compared to last year.

Coach role. Coaches played a crucial role in the implementation of Reading First at most schools. As noted above, they coordinated and assisted with student assessment, organized data and led analyses, observed classrooms, provided teachers with individualized feedback, facilitated meetings, provided group professional development, as well as assorted other tasks related to the smooth functioning of Reading First. Coaches reported working long hours in order to complete these many responsibilities. This year the percentage of coaches reporting they worked more than 50 hours per week increased to 48 percent. Like last year, this year coaches spent the largest percentage of their time on data and assessment, and the second largest percentage went to working with teachers on their instruction.

Collaboration and buy-in. High collaboration has been characteristic over the entire period of the grant. In 2006–2007, this continued to be true, though it may have been slightly less so among teachers at cohort 3 schools. Collaboration occurred at Reading Leadership Team (RLT) meetings, which at most schools met monthly. This was a setting for the discussion of school-wide trends in student assessment data. Grade-level meetings were another forum for collaboration, and teachers generally agreed that these meetings, focused directly on issues of teaching and learning, were a good use of their time.

In spite of the RLT and grade-level meetings, nearly two-thirds of teachers said they did not feel they had a voice in their school's decisionmaking about Reading First, which may contribute to the lower level of buy-in that is reported. As in previous years, principals and coaches tended to be strongly supportive of Reading First, while teachers were less uniformly positive about the project. This pattern has remained the same in each year of implementation.

Yet, even as teachers reported some dissatisfaction with Reading First, they very much valued the project's core components. For example, when asked what components of Reading First they would want to keep after the grant ended, they expressed very high support for continuing the following:

- Reading-related professional development (97%)
- Interventions (96%)
- Grouping (96%)
- The core program (96%)
- Grade-level meetings (96%).
- 90-minute reading block (87%)
- RLT (87%)
- DIBELS (82%)
- Reading coach (77%)

When asked if they would go back to teaching the way they used to after their school no longer participated in Reading First, two-thirds of teachers said they would not.

Assessment Systems and Use of Data

Systems to collect, record, analyze, and interpret student assessment were already firmly in place for several years for cohort 1–2 schools, and cohort 3 put their own assessments in place this year. Nearly all schools (89 percent or more) met state expectations for regular progress-monitoring of benchmark (monthly), strategic, and intensive students (biweekly).

Principals, coaches, and teachers all reported regularly using the collected student assessment data for a wide variety of purposes. Teachers relied on data even more frequently than in the past. Many teachers, for example, looked at data several times a month, if not weekly.

Both coach reports and an independent check by regional coordinators suggest that the DIBELS assessment was accurately administered and correct scores were reported. While there is little question about the reliability of DIBELS assessment scores, many teachers remained skeptical of the assessment as a valid indicator of student reading achievement.

Previously, staff members at Spanish-language schools had expressed dissatisfaction with the Tejas LEE, the test used to assess students instructed in Spanish. This year, however, the percentage of principals, coaches, and teachers who found the Tejas LEE a useful assessment increased dramatically.

Instruction

In accordance with Reading First expectations, schools relied on their core reading program(s) to deliver instruction and used them, overall, with a high degree of fidelity. Also, all schools delivered at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction to their first-, second- and third-grade students. Most, though not all, kindergarten students also received a full 90 minutes.

The vast majority of students were taught at their instructional level, either through grouping techniques such as walk-to-read or via small group instruction supported by paraprofessionals in the reading classroom. Although nearly all teachers provided some differentiated instruction, many wished they had the resources and support to differentiate still further. And in a small subset of classrooms—estimated to be about six percent—there appeared to be little or no differentiation.

Instruction of English language learners, who make up as much as 46 percent of students at Washington Reading First schools, continued to be a major concern. While Spanish-language schools were more positive than in previous years, for schools that taught their ELL students in English only, there was no real change in what they said about how Reading First met the needs of their ELL students. Concerns centered on matching

materials to the needs of students, improving teacher skills and knowledge, and aligning ELL and Reading First policies at the state level.

Inside the classroom, observers witnessed an increase in the percentage of lessons demonstrating clarity, opportunities for student practice, and strong student engagement. However, in about 15 percent of classrooms, a high proportion of students were off task; this percentage was unchanged from the year before.

For students at risk of reading failure, targeted interventions provided them with additional time and support to work on areas in which they needed support. Reading interventions were well established at most (82%) cohort 1 and 2 schools, serving large numbers of students and generally receiving high ratings from site visitors. However, at a handful of cohort 1 and 2 schools, interventions began very late in the year, occurred irregularly, or served a comparatively small proportion of students. By spring 2007, most cohort 3 schools were providing some sort of interventions, typically to certain pockets of students or grade levels, but had often not yet implemented a full intervention program.

Some schools reported facing staffing challenges that made it difficult to provide all the interventions that their struggling students needed. Although interventions are supposed to be small and highly targeted, large intervention groups size actually became more common this year compared to the previous year, and some intensive interventions served up to 20 students at a time.

Sustainability

Although all cohort 1 schools received a continuation of their grant, and cohort 2 schools have at least another year of Reading First funding, it is not too early for schools to be formulating plans to sustain the assessment, collaboration, grouping, instructional, and intervention procedures they have painstakingly built over the past several years. Principals reported that, to date, state project staff members have worked very little with them to create such plans. Still, most principals, coaches, and teachers believed key changes occurring under Reading First would remain in place even after their school no longer received grant funding.

High rates of turnover add an extra challenge to sustaining Reading First in the longer term. Commitments from districts to hire supportive staff, and from both the state and district to provide access to introductory-level professional development, will be essential to ensuring sustainability.

In general, when schools expressed concerns about sustainability, their biggest concern was usually the funding of the coach's position. Given the wide range of responsibilities that fall on the coach, and the enormous role many coaches play in the coordination and use of data at their schools, the loss of the coach position could, in fact, mean real reductions in collection and/or use of data. This is another area which merits attention in the coming year, particularly in work with cohort 1 schools.

Student Achievement Outcomes

English-language outcomes. The vast majority of Washington Reading First students were instructed and assessed in English. While schools also used assessments specific to their core reading programs, across all schools and grade levels the DIBELS served as a common measure of student achievement. In spring 2007, the following percentages of students were at benchmark on the DIBELS:

	Continuing Reading First Schools (Cohorts 1 and 2)	New Reading First Schools (Cohort 3)
Kindergarten	85%	70%
Grade 1	70%	53%
Grade 2	60%	50%
Grade 3	62%	50%

For cohort 1 schools, this past year's results represented small but statistically significant gains from the previous spring in all grades. Over four years, cohort 1 schools have made steady and continued growth at all grades; between spring 2004 and spring 2007, the project registered increases of between 14 and 27 percentage points per grade.

For cohort 2 schools, this year's results represented statistically significant gains from the previous spring in kindergarten, first, and third grades. Over three years, cohort 2 schools have registered steady increases in kindergarten, first, and third grades, but haveseen very little change in second grade.

Second-grade achievement was a challenge for all cohorts; gains over the course of the year and from last year to this year were much smaller than at other grade levels. This low level of growth was particularly notable in cohort 2; however, all cohorts experienced difficulties in reducing the percentage of second-grade students in the intensive group (the lowest group on the DIBELS).

Demographic disaggregation. The rate of growth in the attainment of benchmark on the DIBELS from fall to spring among Hispanic students (who comprise over half of all students) exceeded their peers in second and third grades. This narrowed, but was not enough to fully overcome the achievement gap in those grades. By the end of the year, Hispanic students were as likely to attain benchmark status as other ethnic groups in kindergarten, but were less likely to do so in first, second, and third grade.

Asian students were the most likely to be at benchmark, at all grade levels. African American and white students performed similarly in kindergarten and first grade, but in second and third grades, African American students were less likely to be at benchmark.

There were few Native American students in Washington Reading First schools. They were equally likely to attain benchmark in kindergarten and second grades, and less likely in first and third grades.

Despite the wide spread concern of teachers, coaches, and principals about their work with English language learners, in most cases students made good gains that narrowed the gap between them and their native-speaking peers. Nevertheless, at the end of the school year there were at least 10 percent fewer first-, second-, and third-grade English language learners at benchmark, compared to native English speakers.

Longitudinal results. Students at cohort 1 schools who began kindergarten in the first year of Washington Reading First completed third grade in spring 2007. Longitudinal analysis of an intact group of these students who received a full four years of Reading First suggested positive results. Comparing students receiving a full four years of Reading First to performance at the same schools at the start of Reading First revealed a real change; the earlier pattern—which had fewer students at benchmark in each subsequent grade—no longer existed. Instead, most students who were at grade level in kindergarten stayed at grade level. In addition, the majority of students who struggled in kindergarten with early reading skills moved up to benchmark during the course of the project.

Spanish-language outcomes. Sixteen Washington Reading First schools instructed and assessed a portion of their students in Spanish; this was the second year that the Tejas LEE assessment was used to measure student outcomes in Spanish. In 2006–2007, students showed strong gains in the percentage of kindergarten and first-grade students at benchmark on the Tejas LEE, both within the school year and compared to the previous year:

	Spring 2006	Spring 2007
Kindergarten	69%	75%
Grade 1	42%	48%

To the degree that first-grade students did not make benchmark on the Tejas LEE, it was usually an inability to meet the fluency target of 60 words correct per minute. Nearly all first-grade students met all other reading targets.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YEAR 5

Based on the combination of information collected from districts, principals, coaches, and teachers across all 88 Washington Reading First schools, a few issues stand out as the most pressing priorities. In Year 5, the first cohort of Reading First schools will move forward with reduced funding and the likelihood of even less funding in the following year, while cohort 2 and 3 schools continue with full funding but at very different points in their implementation. Given the variety of needs, evaluation findings suggest the follow areas of focus:

1. Prioritize the Needs of English Language Learners

A very substantial portion of students at Washington Reading First schools—nearly half—are non-native speakers of English, meaning that their needs in terms of language and literacy development are not necessarily identical to those of their native-English-speaking classmates. Multiple sources of data all point to the urgent need to provide additional support to schools to help them better meet the needs of their ELL students.

This is the same recommendation made by the evaluation last year in the 2005–2006 annual report. While important strides were made during the 2006–2007 school year in support for Spanish-language programs, there was no measurable change in the level of frustration and confusion schools expressed about their work with ELLs in English.

The specific needs that emerged from multiple stakeholders and a wide-range of schools include the following:

- Training for teachers and coaches in instructional strategies to work with ELL students (for example, SIOP or GLAD on a large scale)
- Help identifying and selecting appropriate materials
- Assistance in designing appropriate interventions for ELLs
- Ensure that all regional coordinators understand the needs of ELL students
- Help in developing a schoolwide plan to work with ELLs, including meeting scheduling and staffing challenges (this may entail individualized technical assistance rather than a more generic training)
- Attention at the state and district level to structural contradictions between ELL and Reading First requirements, with the goal of development a common vision at the state, district, and local level of how Reading First and ELL programs can work together.

2. Strengthen Interventions for Struggling Readers

Over the past year, there was no discernable reduction in the large size of many intervention groups. On the contrary, the prevalence of large intervention groups has increased. Furthermore, although the percentage of students in the intensive group has declined under Reading First, many students remain in need of interventions, particularly in second grade.

This recommendation also appeared in the 2005–2006 annual report. For the students requiring the most intensive interventions, research strongly suggests that intervention groups serve six students or fewer. Schools need to be aware of this research on the impact of group size. Many schools expressed frustration that staffing and other constraints made it difficult to reduce group size; for those schools, individualized technical assistance may be needed to help schools develop appropriate strategies, targeted for the specific school, to reduce the size of intensive intervention groups.

3. Investigate Second-grade student Achievement

Gains in the percentage of students at benchmark in second grade have been slower than at other grades, especially in cohort 2 schools. Schools have also found it especially hard to move second-grade students out of the intensive group. This pattern deserves closer attention in 2007–2008. There are many possible explanations, including:

- A misalignment of the core reading programs and the expectations of the DIBELS assessment in second grade
- The concentration of schools' resources for intervention on third-grade students at the expense of second-graders
- Overly large intervention groups that do not sufficiently address specific needs
- Pacing issues in either the second- or first-grade core programs, so that students do not cover all the material they need to in order to meet expectations.

Reading First state project staff members could conduct a "root cause" analysis to address this question, and/or work with evaluators to collect data to identify causes and possible remedies.

4. Provide Specific and Focused Support on Sustainability

There is no single "magic bullet" to sustain the changes made under Reading First. In and of themselves, continuing to strengthen implementation and addressing the previous recommendations are steps toward sustainability. However, there are several pressing issues that can be addressed in 2007–2008. In particular, the state Reading First office can help schools address staff member turnover, strategize to ensure that the vital work

done by coaches does not disappear, and build enduring structures to support shared leadership.

Addressing staff member turnover. The above-average levels of staff turnover can be addressed in a number of ways, including:

- Providing training opportunities for new principals and coaches, such as the New Leaders training to be offered in 2007–2008

- Inviting new principals and coaches to attend *any* state-provided Reading First training, regardless of cohort

- Intensifying regional coordinator visits to schools with new coaches or principals at the beginning of the year, or whenever turnover occurs

- Encouraging districts to hire new principals who support the Reading First model

- Create Reading First "induction" materials that can be shared with staff new to Reading First schools, especially any who do not attend summer institutes

- Collaborating with other state offices that address reading (Title I, RTI, K–12 reading program) to see whether introductory-level professional development opportunities (core program training, basic DIBELS) can be cooperatively sponsored. These opportunities are especially vital for the many new teachers, coaches, and principals who begin in Reading First schools each year, even after federal funds for Reading First are no longer available.

Strategize to keep the coaches' contributions. The evaluation has repeatedly documented that coaches carry many responsibilities beyond working with teachers on their instruction; in Washington, they spend a third of their time working on assessment-related tasks. In order to maintain the high use of assessment data, either the coaching position itself must be retained, or alternative ways of providing the same functions need to be found. The state Reading First office might support schools and districts by:

- Helping them find or redirect funding streams to maintain the coaching position. Sharing specific solutions, including examples from other states if necessary, would be helpful.

- Creating very specific models and guides for how to distribute the coaching workload in schools unlikely to keep a coach. What could teachers take on and how could their other responsibilities shift to accommodate these extra tasks? How could the Reading Leadership Team become a stronger entity with specifically defined responsibilities? What could principals be responsible for? Who at the school (e.g., administrative assistants) could be trained to enter data? How might districts help?

Build enduring shared leadership structures. Creating strong shared leadership in schools may help to maintain a vision and direction even in the face of principal turnover. While nearly all schools had Reading Leadership Teams already, their level of functioning varied tremendously. Shared leadership could be promoted by:

- Providing training about effective school leadership teams and/or direct technical assistance to schools where Reading Leadership Teams meet rarely or are not decision-making bodies.

- Identify and formally train teacher leaders in Reading First schools to take on specific responsibilities (e.g., grade-level facilitators, data managers). The state could either provide "teacher leader" training directly, or train coaches (or districts) to do so at their own site.

The points identified here may not be equally appropriate to all schools. To focus technical assistance in sustainability, the state might consider administering a short "sustainability needs assessment" survey of districts and principals, in order to identify the most pressing issues at individual schools. This survey could be drafted around the key characteristics of sustainability identified in Chapter 7. Results could drive school- and district discussions and technical assistance.

REFERENCES

Datnow, A.. *The Sustainability of Comprehensive School Reform Models in Changing District and State Contexts.* Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol41, No. 1 (February 2005) 121-153.

Deussen, T., Nelsestuen, K. & Roccograndi A. (2007). *Washington Reading First Interim Evaluation Report: Student Assessment Results—Spring 2007*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Deussen, T., Autio, E., Nelsestuen, K., Roccograndi, A., Scott, C. (2006). *Washington Reading First Annual Evaluation Report 2005-2006*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Deussen, T., Coskie, T., Robinson, L. & Autio, E. (2007). *"Coach" can mean many things: five categories of literacy coaches in Reading First*. (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007-No.005). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

Jerald, C. *More than Maintenance: Sustaining Improvement Efforts Over the Long Run.* Policy Brief. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. Washington, DC. September 2005.

Juel, C. (1988). Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of 54 children from first to fourth grades. Journal of Educational Psychology, 80(4), 437-447.

Marvel, J., Lyter, D.M., Peltola, P., Strizek, G.A., & Morton, B.A. (2006). *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the 2004-2005 teacher follow-up survey* (First Look ed.). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved August 14, 2007, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007307.pdf

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. 2004. Regional Needs Assessment.

Paine, S. & LeRock, V. *Sustaining Improved Outcomes in Reading First*. Materials from workshop conducted for Washington Reading First, in SeaTac, WA February 12, 2007.

Pikulski, J. (1994). Preventing reading failure: A review of five effective programs. *The Reading Teacher*. 48, 30-39.

Rea, L.M., & Parker, R.A. (1992). *Designing and conducting survey research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). "Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy." *Reading Research Quarterly*.

Taylor, J. E. *Sustainability: Examining the Survival of Schools' Comprehensive School Reform Efforts.* American Institutes for Research. A paper presented for the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, Montreal, Canada, April 11-12, 2005

Torgesen, J. (2004, August). *Using Data and Interventions to Improve Reading Outcomes in Early Literacy Skills.* Presentation at the Wyoming Reading First 2004 Summer Institute, Jackson, WY.

Walter, F. *District Leaders' Guide to Reallocating Resources.* Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR. January 2001.

Appendix A

Survey Instruments & Frequencies

District Survey
Principal Survey
Coach Survey
Teacher Survey

WASHINGTON READING FIRST
DISTRICT SURVEY 2007

32 out of 32 districts returned surveys. Unless otherwise noted, all or almost all respondents answered each question.

This survey was administered online.

---

1. How many elementary schools are in your district? Average 9, Range 1-63

2. How many elementary schools have a Reading First grant? Average 3, Range 1-10

3. Beyond Reading First, what is your role in the district?
   - Superintendent 13%
   - Assistant Superintendent 10%
   - Curriculum director/specialist 10%
   - Instruction director/specialist 6%
   - Literacy director/specialist 6%
   - Budget/finance officer 3%
   - Other 52%

4. What percentage of time are you *officially allocated* to spend on Reading First? Average 23, Range 0-100 percent

5. In past years, some district coordinators have reported spending more time than anticipated on Reading First activities. In order to report any continuing discrepancies, please report the *actual* percentage of your time spent on Reading First. Average 25, Range 0-100

6. In which of the following ways has your district supported Reading First? *(select all that apply)*
   - □ By assisting with proposal writing 91%
   - □ By providing grant management 100%
   - □ By monitoring grant implementation 100%
   - □ By having a district staff member designated as the Reading First "go-to" person (district-level coordinator, representative) 91%
   - □ By facilitating districtwide Reading First meetings for principals 47%
   - □ By facilitating districtwide Reading First meetings for coaches 56%
   - □ By modifying district requirements to align with Reading First 78%
   - □ By analyzing student reading assessment data 94%
   - □ By providing professional development that is aligned with Reading First 91%
   - □ By providing technical assistance to support school change 94%
   - □ By supporting the core reading program 94%
   - □ By supporting intervention programs 94%
   - □ By providing overall curriculum guidance 84%
   - □ By educating and galvanizing the community 38%
   - □ Other: _____
   - □ Other: _____

7. In 2006-2007, how frequently did you attend the following activities?

	Did not attend	Once	Twice	3 times	4 + times
2006 Summer Institute	22%	78%	-	-	-
Statewide coach and principal meetings	9%	3%	19%	25%	44%
State meetings for district representatives	14%	17%	38%	17%	14%
Meetings with the Reading First regional coordinator for our district	3%	7%	7%	21%	62%

8. How useful, to you as Reading First coordinator, was your attendance at the following:

	Never Useful	Rarely Useful	Sometimes Useful	Usually Useful	Always Useful	Did not Attend
2006 Summer Institute	3%	0%	6%	6%	65%	19%
Statewide coach and principal meetings	3%	0%	13%	22%	56%	6%
State meetings for district representatives	3%	6%	13%	22%	44%	13%
Meetings with the Reading First regional coordinator for your district	3%	0%	3%	9%	81%	3%

9. When the regional coordinator visits schools in your district, are you informed ahead of time?
   - Never --
   - Seldom --
   - Sometimes 9%
   - Often 9%
   - Always 81%

10. When the regional coordinator visits schools in your district, how often do you participate?
   - Never --
   - Seldom 6%
   - Sometimes 31%
   - Often 25%
   - Always 38%

11. Who made hiring decisions about coaches at Reading First schools in your district?
   - District [Go to 12] 3%
   - School [Go to 14] 38%
   - Both [Go to 12] 59%

12. How easy/difficult was it to find qualified applicants for the coaching position(s)?
    Very easy [Go to 14] 32%
    Somewhat easy [Go to 14] 26%
    Somewhat difficult [Go to 13] 32%
    Very difficult [Go to 13] 11%

13. In what ways was it difficult to find qualified applicants for the coaching position(s)? Please be as specific as possible.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement below.

This year…		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
14.	The state's expectations for district involvement in Reading First are clear.	0%	0%	13%	50%	38%
15.	State Reading First project staff (directors, regional coordinators) are responsive to our district's needs.	3%	0%	3%	34%	59%
16.	The state has done a good job of communicating necessary information regarding Reading First to district staff.	0%	0%	0%	47%	53%
17.	Our district strongly supports the instructional changes occurring under Reading First.	0%	3%	3%	25%	69%
18.	Major initiatives (programs or grants) in our district contradict or are not aligned with Reading First.	38%	31%	3%	16%	13%
19.	I am pleased with the amount of support we have received from the state to address sustainability.	3%	3%	6%	61%	26%
20.	Reading First has greatly influenced the reading program in our district's non-Reading First schools.	4%	8%	36%	20%	32%
21.	There are tensions between Reading First and non-Reading First schools in our district.	35%	22%	35%	9%	0%
22.	The state's expectations of district involvement in Reading First are reasonable.	0%	0%	3%	50%	47%

23. In what ways could the state further support districts in the implementation of Reading First? Please be as specific as possible.

Please indicate if all, some, or none of the non-Reading First schools in your district have the following reading program components.

		Non-Reading First schools		
		No non-RF schools	**Some non-RF schools**	**All non-RF schools**
24.	Have a K-3 reading coach	47%	24%	29%
25.	Use DIBELS for benchmark assessments three times a year	31%	25%	44%
26.	Systematically progress monitor students	31%	44%	25%
27.	Use the same core reading program as Reading First schools	44%	25%	31%
28.	Have a 90-minute reading block in K-3	31%	13%	56%
29.	Provide systematic interventions for struggling students outside the 90-minute reading block	31%	38%	31%
30.	Provide or attend ongoing, high-quality professional development in reading	31%	31%	38%

WASHINGTON READING FIRST
PRINCIPAL SURVEY 2007

73 out of 88 principals returned surveys. Unless otherwise noted, all or almost all respondents answered each question.

SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Did you attend the 2006 Reading First Summer Institute?

□ No 12% □ Yes – some of it 12% □ Yes – all of it 76%

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

The professional development that I received at the coach and principal meetings this year…	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
2. was very relevant to my work.	0%	6%	0%	65%	30%
3. was mostly review for me.	3%	41%	27%	23%	6%
4. consisted of high-quality presentations.	0%	7%	15%	57%	21%
5. provided me with useful training in observing teachers and providing feedback.	1%	13%	28%	41%	17%
6. provided me with useful tools for working with resistant staff.	1%	37%	25%	34%	3%
7. met my specific needs as a Reading First principal.	1%	10%	23%	46%	20%
8. included adequate opportunities to reflect and share with my colleagues.	1%	10%	13%	56%	21%
9. was differentiated (tailored) to meet the needs of different groups, based on their level of pre-existing expertise.	1%	15%	24%	49%	11%
10. did a good job of addressing English Language Learner (ELL) issues.	3%	31%	31%	32%	3%
11. did a good job of addressing sustainability.	1%	13%	28%	47%	11%

I am very pleased with…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
12. the quality of training in instructional leadership that I received through the state and Reading First this year.	1%	14%	14%	47%	24%
13. the amount of training in instructional leadership that I received through the state and Reading First this year.	1%	15%	21%	42%	21%
14. If you were not pleased with the amount, was there too much or too little?	20% Too much		80% Too little		

SECTION B: USE OF ASSESSMENTS

The section below asks how frequently you use reading assessment data when performing specific aspects of your job. If a question asks about an activity that you do not perform, please select the option, "I don't do that."

I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	I don't do that	Includes only those principals who said they did these things.				
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
15. communicating with teachers about their students.	3%	0%	0%	23%	43%	34%
16. communicating with teachers about their instruction.	0%	0%	1%	29%	42%	28%
17. making decisions about student grouping.	6%	0%	2%	6%	24%	69%
18. making decisions about matching students to the appropriate interventions.	6%	0%	0%	7%	26%	66%
19. looking at school-wide (K-3) trends.	0%	0%	3%	8%	20%	69%
20. meeting with parents.	4%	2%	13%	21%	53%	12%

SECTION C: MEETINGS AND COLLABORATION

21. Are you a member of the Reading Leadership Team (RLT) at your school?

Yes - 95%	No - 3%	There is no RLT at my school - 1%

22. This year, how often did you attend RLT meetings?

Never 1%
Seldom 7%
Sometimes 14%
Often 30%
Always 46%

SECTION D: YOUR VIEWS ON READING FIRST

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement below. If a question is not applicable, please leave it blank.

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
23. I am very comfortable observing teachers and providing constructive feedback.	0%	0%	1%	63%	35%
24. I feel that Reading First is putting excessive emphasis on the involvement of the principal in instructional matters.	21%	46%	14%	14%	4%
25. Reading First would not run smoothly without the RLT.	4%	18%	23%	45%	10%
26. Major initiatives in our district contradict or are not aligned with Reading First.	20%	42%	15%	21%	1%
27. I strongly support the instructional changes that are occurring under Reading First.	0%	1%	10%	33%	56%
28. Our district provides sufficient support for Reading First.	1%	6%	13%	45%	35%
29. Overcoming teacher resistance to Reading First has been a challenge for me.	13%	39%	24%	22%	3%
30. I have significant philosophical or pedagogical objections to the approach of Reading First.	45%	42%	10%	3%	0%
31. I am pleased that our school has a Reading First grant.	0%	0%	1%	24%	75%
32. In my view, Reading First overemphasizes the importance of using DIBELS results.	24%	42%	18%	10%	7%
33. I think that the DIBELS is a valid, accurate indicator of student reading ability.	1%	6%	14%	54%	25%
34. Participating in Reading First has helped my school develop a more collaborative culture.	0%	3%	14%	47%	36%
35. Attending grade-level reading meetings is a good use of my time.	1%	1%	10%	50%	37%
36. Attending RLT meetings is a good use of my time.	1%	3%	13%	47%	36%

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
37. I am very satisfied with the core reading program we are using at our school.	1%	6%	10%	46%	37%
38. Our Reading First program is doing an excellent job meeting the needs of our ELL students.	7%	25%	29%	39%	0%
39. I believe that reading instruction at my school has improved noticeably.	0%	1%	4%	46%	49%
40. Our staffing resources are sufficient to provide interventions to all students who need them.	16%	43%	10%	27%	4%
41. As a school, we're doing an excellent job of providing appropriate reading interventions to all students who need them.	0%	21%	17%	50%	11%
42. Instruction in other subjects has suffered because of all of the focus on Reading First.	6%	28%	25%	35%	7%
43. State project staff (directors, regional coordinators) are responsive to my school's needs.	3%	6%	14%	44%	33%
44. The regional coordinator's support and input has been extremely valuable.	3%	3%	6%	47%	41%
45. I trust our regional coordinator with any information – good or bad – about our reading program.	1%	4%	12%	38%	44%
46. Our regional coordinator understands our school, our programs and culture, and takes that into account when making recommendations.	1%	6%	10%	41%	41%
47. We receive conflicting messages about reading from our district and our regional coordinator.	22%	38%	24%	13%	3%
48. I believe that all of the instructional changes we made under Reading First will be sustained after the grant is over.	1%	12%	22%	50%	15%
49. I am pleased with the amount of support we have received from the state to address sustainability.	1%	18%	29%	43%	9%

SECTION E: SPANISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

50. Does your school provide Spanish-language reading instruction?
Yes - 17% No (Skip to Section G) - 83%

Please indicate your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
51. Reading First is compatible with delivering a high-quality Spanish-language program.	11%	22%	11%	56%	0%
52. The Tejas LEE has been a useful tool for assessing our Spanish-language students.	0%	22%	11%	33%	33%
53. State Reading First project staff have provided sufficient support for our Spanish-language program.	0%	56%	11%	22%	11%
54. Assessing all students, including those who are in our Spanish-language program, using the English DIBELS provides us with a valuable "big picture" of how our school is doing in reading.	0%	22%	22%	44%	11%

SECTION F: PRINCIPAL & SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

55. How many K-3 classroom teachers do you have in your building?
Average 12, Range 2-24

56. This year, how many of those teachers were new to your building?
Average 2, Range 0-8

57. How many total years of principal experience do you have (including this year)? Average 8, Range 0-21
11% were new principals

58. How many years have you been the principal at this school (including this year)? Average 4, Range 0-17
24% were new to their schools

WASHINGTON READING FIRST
COACH SURVEY 2007

84 out of 88 coaches returned surveys. Unless otherwise noted, all or almost all respondents answered each question.

SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Did you attend the 2006 Reading First Summer Institute?

6% No 6% Yes – some of it 87% Yes – all of it

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

The professional development that I received at the coach and principal meetings this year…	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
2. was very relevant to my work.	0%	5%	5%	52%	39%
3. was mostly review for me.	1%	36%	33%	27%	4%
4. consisted of high-quality presentations.	1%	8%	11%	53%	27%
5. provided me with useful training in coaching methods.	4%	22%	18%	39%	18%
6. provided me with useful tools for working with resistant staff.	5%	30%	40%	22%	2%
7. included adequate opportunities to reflect and share with my colleagues.	1%	12%	9%	61%	17%
8. met my specific needs as a Reading First coach.	1%	12%	22%	49%	16%
9. was differentiated (tailored) to meet the needs of different groups, based on their level of pre-existing expertise.	5%	20%	21%	45%	10%
10. did a good job of addressing English Language Learner (ELL) issues.	5%	37%	25%	28%	5%
11. did a good job of addressing sustainability.	0%	8%	16%	55%	20%

I am very pleased with…	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
12. the <u>quality</u> of coaching training that I received through the state and Reading First this year.	1%	13%	11%	54%	21%
13. the <u>amount</u> of coaching training that I received through the state and Reading First this year.	1%	26%	13%	40%	19%
14. If you were not pleased, was there too much or too little?	3% Too much		97% Too little		

15. Looking ahead to next year (2007-08), in which area(s) would **you as coach** most like additional training: ***(select all that apply)***

- ☐ Coaching methods 37%
- ☐ Developing rapport and buy-in with staff 28%
- ☐ Working with resistance or conflict resolution 45%
- ☐ Lesson modeling 28%
- ☐ Classroom observations 29%
- ☐ Providing constructive feedback 49%
- ☐ Meeting facilitation 19%
- ☐ Budgeting 12%
- ☐ Selection and use of supplemental programs 34%
- ☐ Using the core program effectively 12%
- ☐ Selection and use of intervention programs 59%
- ☐ Working with ELL students 51%
- ☐ Student engagement 16%
- ☐ Strategies to teach the 5 Components 12%
- ☐ Differentiated instruction 43%
- ☐ Administering and scoring assessments 2%
- ☐ Interpreting and working with assessment results 18%
- ☐ Other: 6%

	Did not take place	Once	Twice	3 times	4 times	5 or more times
How frequently this year has your school received Reading First technical assistance from the following sources?						
16. OSPI regional coordinators	9%[1]	5%	4%	15%	21%	48%
17. District reading staff	31%	4%	5%	3%	8%	49%
How frequently this year have the following external trainers provided building-level reading-related professional development to teachers at your school?						
18. Publisher representatives/trainers	72%	17%	6%	2%	1%	1%
19. District reading staff	53%	14%	13%	8%	1%	10%
20. Other contracted experts/trainers	54%	10%	8%	13%	9%	8%

Over the 2006-07 school year, how helpful were visits from:	Never Helpful	Rarely Helpful	Sometimes Helpful	Usually Helpful	Always Helpful	Did Not Take Place
21. OSPI regional coordinators	0%	4%	14%	23%	59%	0%
22. Publisher representatives/trainers	1%	4%	12%	7%	9%	67%
23. Other contracted experts/trainers	1%	3%	6%	10%	25%	54%

24. The frequency of visits from our regional coordinator this year was:
    7% Too much 9% Too little 84% Just right

[1] OSPI state project staff report that all schools received technical assistance site visits from regional coordinators in 2006-2007 and had site reports to back this up. It is possible that a few coaches misunderstood the question and/or did not believe that a regional coordinator visit constituted "technical assistance." In the body of the report, we note that all schools received visits from their site coordinators.

SECTION B: STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

25. Which assessment(s) are used in your K-3 reading program for the following purposes: ***(check as many as apply)***

	DIBELS	Tejas LEE	CORE Multiple Assessments	Core Reading Program Assessments	Teacher-developed Assessments	Other	None
Screening	92%	17%	51%	66%	20%	24%	--
Diagnosis	72%	11%	70%	52%	16%	28%	1%
Progress Monitoring	99%	17%	19%	53%	26%	12%	--

26. Who <u>regularly</u> administers the K-3 DIBELS <u>benchmark</u> assessments to students at your school? ***(check all that apply)***

- □ I do (coach) 84%
- □ Principal 7%
- □ Paraprofessionals 51%
- □ Administrative/ support staff 6%
- □ Specialists (Title I, ELL, Special Ed, etc.) 22%
- □ K teacher(s) 12%
- □ 1st grade teacher(s) 7%
- □ 2nd grade teacher(s) 7%
- □ 3rd grade teacher(s) 7%
- □ 4th -6th grade teachers 1%
- □ Literacy facilitators 11%
- □ District staff 16%
- □ Other: 37%

27. Who <u>regularly</u> administers the K-3 DIBELS <u>progress-monitoring</u> assessments to students at your school? ***(check all that apply)***

- □ I do (coach) 61%
- □ Principal 2%
- □ Paraprofessionals 64%
- □ Administrative/ support staff --
- □ Specialists (Title I, ELL, Special Ed, etc.) 29%
- □ K teacher(s) 69%
- □ 1st grade teacher(s) 74%
- □ 2nd grade teacher(s) 74%
- □ 3rd grade teacher(s) 75%
- □ 4th -6th grade teachers 17%
- □ Literacy facilitators 7%
- □ District staff 1%
- □ Other: 8%

<u>On average</u>, how often are students in each of the following groups progress-monitored at your school?	Weekly	Every 2 weeks	Every 3 weeks	Every 4 weeks	Every 6 weeks	Every 7 weeks or less often	Never
28. Benchmark	0%	16%	5%	72%	4%	4%	0%
29. Strategic	4%	85%	7%	2%	0%	1%	0%
30. Intensive	17%	82%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

The section below asks about how frequently you use reading assessment data when performing specific aspects of your job. If a question asks about an activity that you do not perform, please select the option, "I don't do that."

I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	I don't do that	Includes only those coaches who said they did these things.				
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
31. communicating with teachers about their students.	0%	0%	0%	4%	43%	54%
32. communicating with teachers about their instruction.	1%	0%	0%	31%	38%	31%
33. making decisions about student grouping.	0%	0%	0%	10%	22%	68%
34. modifying lessons from the core program.	6%	1%	4%	25%	37%	33%
35. identifying which students need interventions.	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	86%
36. matching struggling students to the correct intervention for their needs.	0%	0%	0%	4%	26%	70%
37. monitoring student progress in interventions.	0%	0%	0%	1%	29%	70%
38. helping teachers tailor instruction to individual student needs (i.e. differentiated instruction).	0%	0%	1%	17%	41%	41%
39. looking at school-wide (K-3) trends.	1%	1%	0%	5%	21%	73%
40. meeting with parents.	23%	2%	11%	18%	31%	39%

SECTION C: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

41. Who is on the Reading Leadership Team (RLT)? ***(select all that apply)***

95% I am (coach)
86% Principal
46% ELL teacher(s)
48% Special ed teacher(s)
40% Title I teacher(s)
15% Parent(s)
32% Paraprofessional(s)
83% K teacher(s)
84% Grade 1 teacher(s)
84% Grade 2 teacher(s)
80% Grade 3 teacher(s)
53% Grade 4-6 teacher(s)
5% District representative(s)
15% Other:
4% We don't have a RLT

42. This year, how often does your school have RLT meetings, on average? ***(select one)***

4% Never
7% Once or a few times a year
12% Every other month
63% Once a month
10% Every other week
5% Once a week
0% More than once a week

SECTION D: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

In previous years, the evaluation has found that many coaches work very long hours and carry a wide range of responsibilities. This year, we are asking in more detail about the amount of time you spend on different activities, in order to track overall patterns and make recommendations about task allocations. As always, no individual responses are reported; only overall summaries and trends are provided in the report.

For the following two questions, please round to the nearest hour: up for 30 minutes or more, down for 29 minutes or less.

43. As a reading coach, how many hours a week do you work at this job, on average?
    Average =47 hours; 76% worked more than 40 hours a week

44. On average, how many hours per week do you spend on the following tasks?

    *Note: The following responses were converted to **percentages** of total time, rather than hours.*

    - Coordinating or administering reading assessments Average 10% Range 0-50%
    - Managing data (entering data, creating charts, etc.) Average 11, Range 0-50
    - Reviewing and using reading assessment data Average 10, Range 0-22
    - Attending professional development or state-level meetings Average 4, Range 0-18
    - Planning for and attending RLT and grade-level meetings Average 7, Range 0-20
    - Training groups of teachers in grades K-3 Average 6, Range 0-25
    - Observing, demonstrating or providing feedback to individual teachers in grades K-3 Average 19, Range 0-50
    - Observing, demonstrating or providing feedback to individual teachers in grades 4-6 Average 0, Range 0-8
    - Training groups of teachers in grades 4-6 Average 0, Range 0-4
    - Planning interventions Average 10, Range 0-74
    - Providing interventions directly to students Average 6, Range 0-33
    - Covering or subbing for teachers Average 2, Range 0-9
    - Paperwork (not including assessment/data management) Average 10, Range 0-42
    - Bus/recess duty Average 1, Range 0-10
    - Other: Average 5, Range 0-47

SECTION E: THE READING FIRST CLASSROOM

Grade	How many minutes long is the reading block?	Are at least 90 minutes uninterrupted?
45. Kindergarten	<90 minutes: 21% =90 minutes: 65% >90 minutes 15%	Yes 80% No 20%
46. First	<90 minutes (--) =90 minutes: 82% >90 minutes: 18%	Yes 99% No 1%
47. Second	<90 minutes (--) =90 minutes: 81% >90 minutes: 19%	Yes 98% No 2%
48. Third	<90 minutes (--) =90 minutes: 81% >90 minutes: 19%	Yes 98% No 2%

49. Does your school use walk-to-read (students walk to another teacher for reading instruction) during the 90-minute block?
    - □ Yes, in all or nearly all classes 71%
    - □ Yes, in some grades or classes but not all 23%
    - □ No, not at all 6%

50. During the reading block, most instruction is at students':
    - □ Grade level 6%
    - □ Instructional level 94%

As the reading coach, you have a privileged view of what is going on across K-3 reading classrooms in your school. In the following section, your expertise is called upon to report how often you see certain practices when you are in classrooms during the reading block. Your school will not be graded on how you respond; the objective is to document overall trends. Please skip any questions that do not apply.

When you observe K-3 classrooms during reading, with what proportion of teachers do you regularly see:	**No or very few teachers**	**Some teachers**	**Most teachers**	**All teachers**
51. Use of the core program	0%	0%	11%	89%
52. Use of the templates	7%	44%	37%	12%
53. Differentiated instruction	4%	33%	38%	26%
54. Nonsense word practice	18%	51%	18%	12%
55. Quick transitions from activity to activity	1%	23%	65%	11%
56. Modeling of the work or thinking process	5%	32%	48%	16%
57. Guiding students with effective questioning	4%	35%	49%	12%
58. Providing multiple practice opportunities for students	1%	18%	54%	27%
59. Effective classroom management	1%	17%	73%	9%
60. Disruptive student behavior	57%	35%	9%	0%
61. Monitoring of student understanding	1%	27%	59%	13%
62. Provision of clear, direct and frequent feedback	1%	30%	61%	7%

The following series of questions refer to the interventions your school provides to students outside of the reading block.

63. How many students will have received **intensive interventions** this year (from August or September 2006 to June 2007)? Average 117, Range 2-593 **Sum 9240**

"Intensive interventions" occur outside the reading block, at least 2 hours per week for at least 6 weeks. Count any individual student only once, even if he/she has received interventions for more than one session or term. If you do not have exact numbers, please provide the best estimate that you can.

64. How many other students (not counted in the previous question) will have received **less intensive interventions** (outside the reading block, less than two hours per week and/or less than six weeks)? (Average 68, Range 0-375 **Sum 5233**

For what percentage of students in each DIBELS grouping is your school able to provide interventions?

	<20%	20-39%	40-59%	60-79%	80-99%	100%
65. Intensive	4%	5%	5%	10%	27%	50%
66. Strategic	5%	6%	2%	9%	30%	48%

67. If fewer than 100 percent of eligible students receive interventions, what are the primary obstacles your school faces? (check all that apply):
    - □ Insufficient staffing 56%
    - □ Lack of trained staff 19%
    - □ Student transportation/bussing (limits before/after school options) 23%
    - □ Available space in the building 13%
    - □ Teacher resistance 16%
    - □ Lack of parental support 13%
    - □ Other 26%
    - □ 100% of eligible students receive interventions 29%

68. Who regularly provides interventions at your school? ***(check all that apply)***

- □ I do (coach) 32%
- □ Principal 1%
- □ Paraprofessionals 93%
- □ Administrative/ support staff 1%
- □ Specialists (Title I, ELL, Special Ed, etc.) 64%
- □ K teacher(s) 54%
- □ 1st grade teacher(s) 55%
- □ 2nd grade teacher(s) 60%
- □ 3rd grade teacher(s) 57%
- □ 4th -6th grade teachers 8%
- □ Literacy facilitators 13%
- □ District staff --
- □ Volunteers 22%
- □ Paid tutors 18%
- □ Other: 11%

69. What is the largest number of **intensive** students that work at one time with an intervention provider? Average 7, Range 2-20

SECTION F: YOUR VIEWS ON READING FIRST

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement below. If a question is not applicable, please leave it blank.

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
70. My role as the reading coach is clearly defined.	1%	8%	1%	52%	37%
71. Most teachers at my school understand the role of the reading coach.	1%	6%	7%	60%	25%
72. Our principal is a visible advocate for reading.	1%	5%	6%	30%	58%
73. I am very comfortable observing teachers and providing constructive feedback.	2%	11%	13%	45%	29%

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
74. Reading First would not run smoothly without the RLT.	5%	12%	33%	39%	12%
75. Major initiatives (programs or grants) in our district contradict or are not aligned with Reading First.	21%	31%	22%	16%	10%
76. I strongly support the instructional changes that are occurring under Reading First.	0%	1%	1%	34%	64%
77. Overcoming teacher resistance to Reading First has been a challenge for me.	17%	35%	17%	23%	8%
78. I have significant philosophical or pedagogical objections to the approach of Reading First.	53%	35%	10%	2%	0%
79. In my view, Reading First overemphasizes the importance of using DIBELS results.	31%	46%	10%	10%	4%
80. I think that the DIBELS is a valid, accurate indicator of student reading ability.	0%	1%	6%	74%	19%
81. I am fully confident that before each benchmark testing period, all members of our assessment team thoroughly understand the administration and scoring of the DIBELS.	1%	2%	1%	48%	47%
82. Our school has an organized system for administering the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments.	0%	0%	1%	27%	71%
83. Our school has an organized system for analyzing and sharing the results of the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments with teachers.	0%	1%	1%	45%	52%
84. Our school has an organized system for reviewing reading assessment data that have been disaggregated (split up) by key demographic variables (i.e. race/ethnicity or ELL status).	5%	36%	27%	23%	10%
85. I am pleased that our school has a Reading First grant.	0%	1%	0%	24%	75%
86. Participating in Reading First has helped my school develop a more collaborative culture.	0%	4%	7%	42%	48%
87. Attending grade-level reading meetings is a good use of my time.	0%	1%	5%	30%	63%
88. Attending RLT meetings is a good use of my time.	2%	4%	17%	32%	45%
89. I am very satisfied with the core reading program we are using at our school.	0%	5%	4%	55%	36%
90. I believe that reading instruction at my school has improved noticeably.	0%	1%	8%	28%	63%
91. Our school uses supplemental and intervention materials that are well-matched to the needs of our ELL students.	1%	20%	28%	39%	13%
92. Teachers at my school have the knowledge and skills necessary to modify and supplement the core program to meet the needs of all ELL students.	6%	28%	20%	42%	4%
93. The philosophy or pedagogy of our ELL program or services sometimes clashes with Reading First.	2%	28%	23%	35%	11%
94. Our Reading First program is doing an excellent job meeting the needs of our ELL students.	2%	23%	23%	38%	12%

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
95. The intervention materials we use are well-matched to the needs of our struggling readers.	0%	4%	10%	67%	20%
96. Our school's intervention providers are well-trained to meet the needs of struggling readers.	0%	10%	16%	54%	20%
97. As a school, we're doing an excellent job of providing appropriate reading interventions to all students who need them.	0%	17%	14%	46%	23%
98. Instruction in other subjects has suffered because of all of the focus on Reading First.	8%	30%	31%	24%	6%
99. State project staff (directors, regional coordinators) are responsive to my school's needs.	2%	5%	5%	49%	39%
100. The regional coordinator's support and input has been extremely valuable.	4%	5%	5%	45%	42%
101. I trust our regional coordinator with any information – good or bad – about our reading program.	4%	4%	6%	39%	48%
102. Our regional coordinator understands our school, our programs and culture, and takes that into account when making recommendations.	4%	12%	6%	41%	37%
103. I believe that all of the instructional changes we made under Reading First will be sustained after the grant is over.	2%	12%	24%	47%	14%
104. I am pleased with the amount of support we have received from the state to address sustainability.	1%	11%	28%	39%	22%

SECTION G: SPANISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

105. Does your school have a Spanish-language program?

□ Yes 19% □ No 81% (Skip to Section H)

Please indicate your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
106. Reading First is compatible with delivering a high-quality Spanish-language program.	0%	0%	20%	73%	7%
107. The Tejas LEE has been a useful tool for assessing our Spanish-language students this year.	0%	7%	7%	87%	0%
108. I am fully confident that before each benchmark testing period, all members of our assessment team thoroughly understand the administration and scoring of the Tejas LEE.	0%	13%	13%	60%	13%

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
109. Assessing all students, including those who are in the Spanish-language program, using the English DIBELS provides us with a valuable "big picture" of how our school is doing in reading.	13%	7%	13%	40%	27%
110. State Reading First project staff have provided sufficient support for our Spanish-language program.	7%	13%	7%	60%	13%

SECTION H: DEMOGRAPHICS

111. What is your current position?

- □ Part-time reading coach 11%
- □ Full-time reading coach 89%

112. Is there another reading coach at your school?

□ Yes 29% □ No 71%

113. If yes, does this reading coach also work with K-3 reading teachers?

□ Yes 31% □ No 69%

114. How many total years of coaching experience do you have (including this year)?
Average 4, Range 1-20
22% were new coaches

115. How many years have you been the reading coach at this school (including this year)?
Average 3, Range 1-7
33% were new to the school

116. How many years have you worked at this school (in any capacity, including this year)?
Average 8, Range 0-36

117. How many years of teaching experience do you have (prior to becoming a coach)?
Average 17, Range 2-36

118. What are your educational credentials? (select as many as apply)

- □ Bachelor's degree 69%
- □ Reading certification 17%
  Master's degree
  - □ In reading 18%
  - □ In area of education other than reading 58%
  - □ In discipline other than education 2%
- □ Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) --

WASHINGTON READING FIRST
TEACHER SURVEY 2007

1129 out of approximately 1263 teachers returned surveys. Unless otherwise noted, all or almost all respondents answered each question.

SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Did you attend the 2006 Reading First Summer Institute?

 No 25% Yes – some of it 7% Yes – all of it 68%

If you attended some or all of the 2006 Reading First Summer Institute, please indicate below your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. Otherwise, please skip to question 8 below.

The Reading First Summer Institute…	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
2. was very relevant to my work.	2%	6%	10%	61%	21%
3. was mostly review for me.	3%	23%	20%	37%	16%
4. consisted of high-quality presentations.	1%	7%	19%	59%	14%
5. provided me with instructional strategies I have used in my classroom.	1%	7%	15%	63%	13%
6. included adequate opportunities to reflect and share with my colleagues.	2%	17%	22%	49%	9%
7. did a good job of addressing English Language Learner (ELL) issues.	5%	24%	33%	32%	5%

Thinking back over this school year, please indicate how helpful you feel that the various forms of Reading First professional development were for you, personally.

Over the 2006-2007 school year, how helpful was/were:	Never Helpful	Rarely Helpful	Sometimes Helpful	Usually Helpful	Always Helpful	Did Not Take Place
8. training in the core program from the publisher?	2%	8%	17%	18%	8%	48%
9. demonstration lessons provided by your reading coach?	1%	4%	11%	20%	32%	32%
10. feedback on your instruction provided by the coach after observation of your classroom?	2%	5%	16%	24%	36%	18%
11. feedback on your instruction provided by the principal after observation of your classroom?	2%	7%	16%	26%	32%	18%
12. assistance from the coach in administering and scoring student assessments?	1%	3%	10%	21%	47%	18%
13. assistance from the coach in interpreting assessment results?	1%	5%	13%	23%	52%	6%
14. assistance from the coach in providing quality interventions?	2%	6%	15%	26%	43%	7%
15. assistance from the coach in monitoring the effectiveness of interventions?	2%	7%	14%	27%	39%	11%

16. Looking ahead to next year (2007-08), in which area(s) would you most like additional training: ***(select all that apply)***

- ☐ Phonemic awareness 15%
- ☐ Phonics 14%
- ☐ Fluency 28%
- ☐ Vocabulary 25%
- ☐ Comprehension 42%
- ☐ Student engagement 40%
- ☐ Working with ELL students 42%
- ☐ Differentiated instruction 42%
- ☐ Using the core program effectively 19%
- ☐ Using supplemental programs effectively 30%
- ☐ Using intervention programs effectively 45%
- ☐ Administering and scoring assessments 8%
- ☐ Interpreting assessment results 13%
- ☐ Using assessment results to drive instruction 23%
- ☐ Other: 6%

SECTION B: STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

The section below asks how frequently you use reading assessment data when performing specific aspects of your job. If a question asks about an activity that you do not perform, please select the last option, "I don't do that."

		Includes only those teachers who said they did these things.				
I use the results of reading assessments (such as the DIBELS) when…	I don't do that	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
17. grouping students into small instructional groups within my classroom.	12%	2	5	15	31	48
18. communicating with colleagues about reading instruction and student needs.	1%	<1	2	12	38	47
19. looking at school-wide (K-3) trends.	8%	1	7	21	34	37

20. meeting with parents.	3%	2	6	25	31	36
21. modifying lessons from the core program.	6%	3	8	30	34	26
22. identifying which students need interventions.	3%	<1	1	5	24	70
23. matching struggling students to the correct intervention for their needs.	5%	1	2	12	31	55
24. monitoring student progress in interventions.	5%	<1	2	11	30	57

SECTION C: THE READING FIRST CLASSROOM

25. Which best describes the group of students you usually have in your classroom during the reading block:

66% Homogeneous – students are mostly at about the same level and have similar instructional needs.

34% Heterogeneous – students are at a wide variety of levels and have differing instructional needs.

26. On a typical day, how many students are in your classroom during the reading block?
Average 19, Range 1-35 (n=1041)

Please indicate the frequency with which the following activities took place during this school year (2006-2007).

This year, how often did…	Never	Once or a few times a year	Once a month	2-3 times a month	1-3 times a week	Daily
27. the principal observe your classroom during the reading block?	5%	56%	19%	16%	4%	0%
28. the principal provide you with specific and constructive feedback on your instruction?	20%	56%	14%	8%	1%	0%
29. the reading coach observe your classroom during the reading block?	5%	35%	24%	24%	10%	1%
30. the reading coach provide you with specific and constructive feedback on your instruction?	16%	34%	20%	22%	7%	1%
31. another teacher observe your classroom during the reading block?	58%	37%	3%	2%	1%	1%
32. you observe another teacher's reading lesson?	62%	34%	2%	1%	0%	1%
33. paraprofessionals work with you during the reading block?	31%	3%	1%	2%	6%	57%
34. you look at reading assessment data?	0%	4%	14%	29%	45%	8%
35. you attend a grade-level meeting?	2%	5%	22%	31%	35%	5%
36. you need to use the 90-minute reading block to work on non-reading instruction or tasks? (i.e. writing, science, math, field trips, administrative tasks)	72%	23%	2%	1%	1%	2%

37. This year, how often did the principal attend your grade-level meetings?
Never 11%
Seldom 23%
Sometimes 38%
Usually 18%
Always 9%

38. This year, how often did the coach attend your grade-level meetings?
    Never 3%
    Seldom 7%
    Sometimes 31%
    Usually 25%
    Always 33%

In your reading classroom under Reading First, are the following items things that are not at all part of your teaching, occasionally part of your teaching, sometimes a part of your teaching, or regularly a part of your teaching? If you do not know what the item refers to, check the first column ("I don't know what this is").

	I don't know what this is.	Not at all part of my teaching	Occasionally part of my teaching	Sometimes a part of my teaching	Regular part of my teaching
39. Use of my school's core reading program	0%	3%	2%	3%	93%
40. Following the precise language in the teachers' manual.	0%	2%	13%	35%	50%
41. Use of the templates	3%	8%	17%	27%	45%
42. Differentiated instruction during the 90-minute reading block	5%	9%	14%	24%	48%
43. Small group instruction during the reading block	1%	14%	13%	11%	62%
44. Phonemic awareness activities	0%	4%	10%	13%	72%
45. Nonsense word practice	2%	27%	21%	22%	29%
46. Time during the reading block for students to practice oral reading fluency	0%	2%	5%	12%	82%
47. Timed fluency assessments during the reading block.	0%	9%	10%	19%	61%
48. A focus on "tier two" vocabulary words	16%	6%	18%	27%	34%
49. Vocabulary practice that includes use of examples and non-examples	2%	6%	19%	28%	45%
50. Provision of background knowledge to prepare students before they read a new text	0%	2%	8%	20%	71%
51. Comprehension questions that ask for literal recall	0%	0%	7%	20%	73%
52. Comprehension questions that ask for higher-order thinking skills	0%	1%	7%	29%	63%
53. Explicit modeling of the work or thinking process before students try something new	0%	1%	5%	23%	70%
54. Adjustment of activities or practice, based on how students answered previous questions	0%	1%	5%	21%	72%
55. Immediate correction of students when they make an error	0%	1%	6%	18%	75%

SECTION D: MEETINGS AND COLLABORATION

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. If these meetings do not occur at your school or you did not attend, leave the items blank.

At my school's **grade-level reading** meetings…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
56. we discuss the issues of teaching and learning that we, the participants, identify as important.	3%	6%	8%	41%	42%
57. all participant comments and viewpoints are welcomed.	4%	5%	6%	36%	48%
58. we discuss the reasons for doing things, not just the requirements.	3%	8%	11%	40%	38%

59. Are you a member of the Reading Leadership Team (RLT) at your school?

30% Yes (please continue).	67% No (please skip to Section E).	3% There is no RLT at my school (please skip to Section E).

60. Which of the following topics do you typically discuss at RLT meetings? ***(select as many as apply)***

Talk about school-wide reading assessment data 88%
Talk about student-level reading assessment data 74%
Share about reading research (articles, ideas, etc.) 48%
Exchange information about what is going on at the school in reading 85%
Receive information from the coach and principal about what is going on with Reading First at the state level (i.e. from their "monthly meetings") 71%
Make decisions about what reading materials to use/purchase 42%
Make decisions about instruction for specific students 45%
Make decisions about instruction within or across grades 61%
Plan special reading events, family literacy activities 54%
Plan for sustainability, or what will happen when the school no longer has Reading First funds 37%
Other 13%

Please indicate your level of agreement.

At my school's **Reading Leadership Team** meetings…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
61. all participant comments and viewpoints are welcomed.	3%	6%	5%	37%	49%
62. we discuss the reasons for doing things, not just the requirements.	3%	8%	14%	38%	36%

SECTION E: YOUR VIEWS ON READING FIRST

The following statements present a range of opinions about different components of Reading First. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. If a question is not applicable, please leave it blank.

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
63. Participating in Reading First has helped my school develop a more collaborative culture.	3%	8%	20%	43%	26%
64. Our school has a visible and effective Reading Leadership Team.	4%	9%	23%	42%	21%
65. Attending grade-level reading meetings is a good use of my time.	3%	7%	16%	47%	26%
66. Attending Reading Leadership Team (RLT) meetings is a good use of my time.	4%	6%	47%	30%	14%
67. Overall, the professional development I received through Reading First was sustained and intensive.	4%	14%	29%	39%	14%
68. Overall, the professional development I received through Reading First this year focused on what happens in the classroom.	3%	9%	23%	48%	17%
69. I am very satisfied with the core reading program we are using at our school.	4%	9%	16%	43%	28%
70. I believe that reading instruction at my school has improved noticeably.	2%	3%	19%	43%	33%
71. I think the DIBELS is a valid, accurate indicator of student reading ability.	8%	19%	25%	34%	15%
72. Our school has an organized system for administering the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments.	1%	3%	4%	44%	48%
73. Our school has an organized system for analyzing and sharing the results of the DIBELS and other Reading First assessments with teachers.	1%	4%	8%	45%	42%
74. This year I have seen our school's reading assessment data disaggregated (split up) by key demographic variables (i.e. race/ethnicity or ELL status).	8%	27%	22%	31%	12%
75. Reading First has significantly changed the way I teach reading.	2%	7%	22%	42%	27%
76. The intervention materials we use are well-matched to the needs of our struggling readers.	3%	14%	26%	42%	16%
77. Our school's intervention providers are well-trained to meet the needs of struggling readers.	3%	12%	23%	42%	20%
78. As a school, we're doing an excellent job of providing appropriate reading interventions to all students who need them.	5%	18%	19%	41%	17%
79. I have significant philosophical or pedagogical objections to the approach of Reading First.	16%	30%	31%	17%	7%
80. Our principal is a visible advocate for reading.	1%	3%	11%	40%	45%
81. In my view, Reading First overemphasizes the importance of using DIBELS results.	4%	17%	23%	34%	23%
82. Our reading coach is a knowledgeable resource about reading research and practices.	2%	6%	12%	39%	41%
83. Even when providing critical feedback, I feel our reading coach is an ally in helping me to improve my instruction.	3%	5%	14%	38%	40%

This year…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
84. Our reading coach has helped me become more reflective about my teaching practice.	5%	10%	24%	35%	27%
85. Our reading coach has increased my understanding of how children learn to read.	6%	14%	30%	29%	22%
86. I would like our reading coach to come in my classroom and work with me more often than s/he does.	5%	24%	39%	24%	7%
87. I am pleased that our school has a Reading First grant.	6%	7%	22%	33%	32%
88. I feel that I have a voice in our school's decision-making about Reading First.	14%	22%	26%	27%	11%
89. Instruction in other subjects has suffered because of all of the focus on Reading First.	4%	13%	22%	39%	23%
90. I strongly support the instructional changes that are occurring under Reading First.	4%	10%	35%	36%	15%
91. I feel that Reading First puts excessive emphasis on the involvement of the principal in instructional matters.	8%	33%	42%	13%	4%
92. Our Reading First program is doing an excellent job meeting the needs of our ELL students.	10%	24%	35%	27%	4%
93. Our school uses supplemental and intervention materials that are well-matched to the needs of our ELL students.	8%	20%	40%	27%	5%
94. I have the knowledge and skills necessary to modify and supplement the core program to meet the needs of my ELL students.	3%	18%	29%	40%	11%
95. The philosophy or pedagogy of our ELL program/services sometimes clash with Reading First.	2%	10%	50%	27%	11%
96. When our school no longer has Reading First funding, I think that I will to go back to more or less the way I was teaching reading before.	25%	42%	25%	6%	2%

SECTION F: SPANISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

97. Does your school have a Spanish-language program?

□ Yes 34% □ No 66%
(Skip to Section G)

98. In which language do you conduct most of your reading instruction?

- English 78%
- Spanish 16%
- Both 6%

Please indicate your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
99. Reading First is compatible with delivering a high-quality Spanish-language program.	8%	24%	44%	21%	4%
100. The Tejas LEE has been a useful tool for assessing our Spanish-language students this year.	5%	6%	61%	23%	5%
101. Assessing students in the Spanish-language program using the English DIBELS is useful.	11%	19%	49%	19%	2%
102. State Reading First project staff have provided sufficient support for our Spanish-language program.	16%	23%	49%	11%	1%

SECTION G: SUSTAINABILITY

	In your opinion, once your school no longer has the Reading First grant, should the following program components continue?			
	Definitely not	Probably not	Probably yes	Definitely yes
103. Core program	1%	5%	35%	59%
104. 90-minute reading block	3%	10%	31%	56%
105. DIBELS	6%	12%	45%	38%
106. Reading coach	6%	17%	32%	45%
107. Ongoing professional development in reading	0%	3%	25%	72%
108. Grouping	1%	3%	28%	68%
109. Interventions	0%	4%	22%	73%
110. Grade-level meetings	1%	3%	28%	69%
111. RLT	3%	10%	41%	46%

SECTION H: DEMOGRAPHICS

112. What is your primary teaching role this year? *(select one)*

84% Regular classroom teacher

___ Specialist (select one)

- 0% Speech/language
- 7% Language arts/reading (e.g., Title I, reading specialist)
- 1% Library
- 4% Special education
- 3% ESL/bilingual

1% Paraprofessional

113. This year, which grade(s) do you teach during the reading block? For example, you might teach first and second grade students. (select all that apply).

23% Grade K 32% Grade 1 35% Grade 2 32% Grade 3 6% Other

1% I do not provide direct classroom instruction during the reading block.

114. This year, what is the grade level of the material you teach from during the reading block? (select all that apply.) For example, you might teach using the second grade Open Court materials.

24% Grade K 38% Grade 1 33% Grade 2 24% Grade 3 5% Other

1% I do not provide direct classroom instruction during the reading block.

115. How many years teaching experience do you have? Range 0 – 50, Mean = 12 years

116. How many years have you worked at this school? Range 0 – 40, Mean = 8

117. At which school do you work? *Your school name is used *only* to make sure we hear from each school. Your responses are confidential and no school names will be used in reporting.*

District	**School**
Bickleton	Bickleton Elementary (3)
Brewster	Brewster Elementary (15)
Bridgeport	Bridgeport Elementary (12)
Clover Park	Carter Lake Elementary/McChord Elementary (12)
Clover Park	Lakeview Accelerated Elementary (6)
Clover Park	Southgate Elementary 17
Clover Park	Tillicum Elementary (8)
Federal Way	Mark Twain Elementary (16)
Grandview	A.H. Smith Elementary (15)
Grandview	Harriet Thompson Elementary (16)
Grandview	McClure Elementary (15)
Granger	Roosevelt Elementary (19)
Highline	Beverly Park Elementary (14)
Highline	Bow Lake Elementary (11)
Highline	Hazel Valley Elementary (11)
Highline	Madrona Elementary (15)
Highline	Midway Elementary (10)
Highline	Mount View Elementary (5)
Highline	Seahurst Elementary (16)
Highline	White Center Heights (8)
Mabton	Artz-Fox Elementary (13)
Manson	Manson Elementary (10)
Nespelem	Nespelem Elementary (4)

North Franklin	Basin City Elementary (9)
North Franklin	Connell Elementary (10)
Othello	Hiawatha Elementary (16)
Othello	Lutacaga Elementary (13)
Othello	Scootney Springs Elementary (14)
Palisades	Palisades Elementary (3)
Paterson	Paterson Elementary (3)
Prescott	Prescott Elementary (5)
Prescott	Vista Hermosa Elementary (3)
Queets-Clearwater	Queets-Clearwater School (2)
Royal	Red Rock Elementary (0)
Seattle	African American Academy (7)
Seattle	Bailey Gatzert Elementary (7)
Seattle	Brighton Elementary (11)
Seattle	Concord Elementary (3)
Seattle	High Point Elementary (4)
Seattle	Highland Park Elementary (11)
Seattle	T.T. Minor Elementary (5)
Soap Lake	Soap Lake Elementary (8)
Spokane	Regal Elementary (12)
Spokane	Sheridan Elementary (11)
Sunnyside	Outlook Elementary (21)
Sunnyside	Pioneer Elementary (31)
Sunnyside	Washington Elementary (27)
Tacoma	Blix Elementary (0)
Tacoma	Boze Elementary (13)
Tacoma	Edison Elementary (26)
Tacoma	Mary Lyon Elementary (12)
Tacoma	McCarver Elementary (18)
Tacoma	McKinley Elementary (12)
Tacoma	Roosevelt Elementary 11)
Toppenish	Garfield Elementary (14)
Toppenish	Kirkwood Elementary (15)
Toppenish	Lincoln Elementary (13)
Toppenish	Valley View Elementary (16)
Vancouver	Fruit Valley Elementary (8)
Vancouver	Peter S. Ogden Elementary (13)
Vancouver	Washington Elementary (12)
Wahluke	Mattawa Elementary (17)
Wahluke	Saddle Mountain (3rd) (11)
Warden	Warden Elementary (15)
Yakima	Adams Elementary (19)
Yakima	Barge-Lincoln Elementary (20)
Yakima	Garfield Elementary (18)
Yakima	Hoover Elementary (0)
Yakima	Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary (16)
Yakima	McClure Elementary (21)
Yakima	Roosevelt Elementary (16)
Yakima	St. Paul Cathedral School (5)
Clover Park	Tyee Park (12)

Quincy	George (5)
Quincy	Mountain View (17)
Quincy	Pioneer (18)
Roosevelt	Roosevelt (2)
Sunnyside	Chief Kamiakin (28)
Tacoma	Lister (12)
Tacoma	Sheridan (16)
Tacoma	Whitman (16)
Vancouver	Anderson, Sarah J. (21)
Vancouver	Roosevelt (16)
Vancouver	Walnut Grove (22)
Wapato	Satus (19)
White Salmon	Whitson, Hulan (18)
Yakima	Ridgeview (18)
Yakima	Robertson (16)

Appendix B

Interview & Observation Protocols

Principal Phone Interview (Cohort 1)
Principal Interview (Cohorts 2 & 3)
Coach Interview
Teacher Group Interview
Classroom Observation Protocol
Intervention Observation Protocol

Washington Reading First
Cohort 1 Principal Phone Interview 2007

This interview was conducted on the phone.

1. Are you planning to re-apply for Reading First funds for the 2007-08 school year?

2. If not, why not? -OR-

   If so, do you expect that your school will meet continuation criteria? *(60% at benchmark in 3 out of 4 grades, one of which must be grade 3 – schools that instruct in Spanish probably eligible for a 1-year waiver).*

3. Could you briefly describe any major changes to your Reading First program this year that I might need to know in order to understand other things you talk about? (for example, a new coach or principal, a high level of staff turnover, a change in core reading program)?

The following questions focus on sustainability. We are interested in learning more about the longer-term sustainability of Reading First, both in order to help the state help you, but also to learn lessons for subsequent cohorts of Reading First schools.

Note: if school is very sure of continuation of funding for 2007-08, skip questions 4 and 5.

4. Looking forward to next year (2007-08), what changes do you anticipate in the way your school's K-3 reading program works?

5. To what degree are these changes that you and the staff at your school want to have happen, or are they changes you are making reluctantly because you will not be able to fund things as you did under the grant?

6. When you think about state support of your school's Reading First program next year, would you prefer that it remains about the same, increases, or decreases in the coming year?

7. What supports do you feel are crucial to continue, or to add, in order for your school to sustain your reading program?

For Spanish-language schools

8. Tell me about your experience with the state's work on the Spanish Action Plan. How has this affected the way your school functions?

9. Is there anything else about Reading First at your school, particularly related to longer-term sustainability, that you think I should know about?

Washington Reading First
Principal Interview 2007

Professional Development & Technical Assistance

1. Here is a list of the primary trainings to date *(show list)* that you have received from the state this year.

   (a) What stands out as especially useful? Why?
   (b) What stands out as especially not useful? Why?
   (c) Overall, as a professional development package, how well did these offerings meet your needs as principal? (Please explain.)

2. What other services or training could the state provide to **you as a Reading First principal**?

3. To what degree have state project staff been responsive to your needs?

Leadership

4. What does the state expect from you as a Reading First principal?

5. Are there some expectations you are not able to fulfill?

6. How do you know (or how do you check) if teachers are using the practices that they learned in professional development?

   Example if necessary: After a training on templates, how do you know they are using templates and doing so correctly?

7. Tell me about principal walk-thrus at your school.

   (a) On average, how often do you observe a given teacher? (___ per ___)
   (b) What checklists or tools, if any, do you use during walk-thrus?
   (c) How much priority do you think should be placed on principal walk-thrus?
   (d) How does conducting walk-thrus help you as an instructional leader?
   (e) What do teachers learn from your walk-thrus? How do you think it affects their instruction?

8. On the survey you will receive this spring, you'll be asked whether or not you agree with the following statement, "Our district provides sufficient support for Reading First."

   (a) Would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree? *(select one)*
   - □ Strongly agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly disagree

   (b) Why?

9. Has your district provided other training in reading – either concurrent with Reading First or in the recent past – that philosophically or pedagogically is a mismatch with the Reading First approach? If yes, please explain.

Buy-In

10. How would you describe teachers' buy-in to Reading First?
    - □ High
    - □ Medium/Mixed
    - □ Low

11. To what do you attribute the [high level/low level] of buy-in?

Communication & Collaboration

12. Do you think that attending RLT meetings is a good use of your time? Why or why not?

13. What about grade-level meetings; is it a good use of your time to attend them? Why or why not?

Sustainability

14. FOR CONTINUING SCHOOLS ONLY:

    (a) What is the typical level of turnover of K-3 teachers in your building? (percentage)
    (b) How do you bring new teachers up to speed on Reading First?

15. (a) What has the state done this year to help you address sustainability beyond the life of the RF grant?
    (b) Have they helped you develop a plan?

16. What is your school doing to address sustainability?

17. What else is or will be necessary for your school to maximize sustainability?

Overall

18. Is there anything else about Reading First in your school you think I should know?

Washington Reading First
State-Provided Professional Development 2006-2007
Cohorts 1 and 2

When	What	Where
July 18 -20, 2006	Reading First National Conference*	Reno, Nevada
July 31 – Aug. 2, 2006	Summer Institute	Yakima
Aug. 14 – 16, 2006	Summer Institute	SeaTac
Sep. 26 – 27, 2006	Tejas LEE Training*	Yakima
Oct. 24, 2006	Coach & Principal Meeting: Intervention Presentation by Madrona Elementary, School Sharing	Yakima
Dec. 12, 2006	Coach & Principal Meeting: RTI, presented by State Special ED & RTI Administrators	Yakima
Feb. 12, 2007	Sustainability Workshop	SeaTac
Apr. 19, 2007	Coach & Principal Meeting: Anita Archer on Vocab	SeaTac

Washington Reading First
State-Provided Professional Development 2006-2007
Cohort 3

When	What	Where
June 20-22, 2006	CORE Leadership Training	SeaTac Doubletree
July 18 -20, 2006	Reading First National Conference*	Reno, Nevada
August 7 – 10, 2006	Summer Institute for Cohort 3 Schools	
Sep. 26 – 27, 2006	Tejas LEE Training*	Yakima
Oct. 25, 2006	Coach & Principal Meeting: Coaching, Data Analysis	Yakima
Nov. 14, 2006	Coach & Principal Meeting: Fluency, Interventions	SeaTac
Dec. 13, 2006	Coach & Principal Meeting: Interventions	Yakima
Feb. 13, 2007	Coach & Principal Meeting: Vocabulary, Progress Monitoring	SeaTac
Mar. 20, 2007	Coach & Principal Meeting: LETRS training	Yakima
Apr. 19, 2007	Coach & Principal Meeting: Anita Archer on Vocab	SeaTac

* Items marked with an asterisks were optional or only relevant to some schools.

Washington Reading First
Coach Interview 2007

Professional Development & Technical Assistance

1. Here is a list of the primary trainings to date *(same as principal list)* that you have received from the state this year.

   (a) What stands out as especially useful? Why?
   (b) What stands out as especially not useful? Why?
   (c) Overall, as a professional development package, how well did these offerings meet your needs as coach? (Please explain.)

2. What other services or training could the state provide to **you as a Reading First coach**?

3. Regional coordinators:

   (a) To what degree have the services provided by regional coordinator(s) been helpful? (Please explain.)
   (b) What is the relationship (tone, feeling) between the regional coordinators and your school? (Please explain.)

Coaching Role

4. What does the state expect from you as a Reading First coach?

5. (a) Do you end up taking on tasks beyond these expectations?
   (b) Are there some expectations you are not able to fulfill?
   (c) Some coaches say that they are not able to get into classrooms as much as they would like to or feel they should. To what degree has this been an issue for you?
   (d) If it is an issue, what prevents you from spending more time in classrooms?

6. How do you select which teachers you work with?

7. How do you work with resistance?

Buy-In

8. How would you describe teachers' buy-in to Reading First? *(select one)*
   - o High
   - o Medium/Mixed
   - o Low

9. To what do you attribute the [high level/low level] of buy-in?

Communication and Collaboration

10. The ideal vision of the Reading Leadership Team is a body that meets at least monthly, plans specifically and collaboratively, relies on data, and is integrally involved in the implementation of the grant. To what extent is this true of the RLT in your school? Why?

11. a) Out of all K-3 grade-level meetings, do you attend: *(select one)*

- □ All
- □ Most
- □ Some
- □ Few
- □ None

b) What is your role at those meetings?

Data and Assessment

12. (a) Would you say you do all, most, some, little, or none of K-3 reading data collection (administration and/or coordinating administration) at your school? *(select one)*

- □ All
- □ Most
- □ Some
- □ Little
- □ None

(b) Would you say you do all, most, some, little, or none of K-3 reading data management (data entry, making charts) at your school? *(select one)*

- □ All
- □ Most
- □ Some
- □ Little
- □ None

c) What support do you have for data collection and management?

13. Administration and scoring of the DIBELS:

(a) How have the staff who administer the DIBELS been trained?

(b) Do you think they administer and score the DIBELS correctly and consistently? Any concerns?

14. *For WA schools that provide Spanish instruction only:*

(a) How have the staff who administer the Tejas LEE been trained?
(b) Do you think they administer and score the Tejas LEE correctly and consistently? Any concerns?

Instruction and Interventions

15. (a) What does fidelity mean to you?

NEW SCHOOLS

(b) How would you characterize the degree to which staff use the core program with fidelity?

(c) What percentage (0-100%) of staff are using the core with "good fidelity" right now?

CONTINUING SCHOOLS

(d) Have the expectations regarding fidelity changed since you began Reading First?

(e) If so, how?

16. (a) What have been the biggest achievements in your school's K-3 reading intervention program this year?

(b) What have been the biggest challenges?

17. Understanding that there are often limited resources to provide interventions, which students do you focus your energy on? Why?

18. To what degree do you think that your school is successful at grouping students to meet their different needs? Do you have any concerns about grouping?

English Language Learners

(Only at schools that serve ELL students.)

19. (a) What are the challenges to meeting the needs of ELL students in your school?

(b) What has the state done to help with those challenges?

(c) What additional support do you need?

Overall

20. Is there anything else about Reading First in your school you think I should know?

Washington Reading First

Teacher Focus Group 2007

This protocol is for use with up to four teachers, ideally one from each grade level.

1. There is a lot of talk in Reading First about this word "fidelity." At your school, to what degree are you expected to maintain fidelity to the core program? In your opinion, are these expectations reasonable?

2. How do your principal and/or reading coach know if you are really using the instructional strategies and materials you have been trained in through Reading First?

3. I assume that students in your classrooms have different needs; even those whose assessment results put them at about the same instructional level. To what extent does your teaching situation permit you to provide sufficient differentiated instruction to students during the reading block?

4. Establishing effective intervention systems has been a challenge for some Reading First schools.

(a) (FIRST YEAR SCHOOLS ONLY): Does your school have an intervention program for struggling readers?

If not, why not? (If yes, go to (b).)

(b) (CONTINUING SCHOOLS & FIRST YEAR SCHOOLS WITH INTERVENTION PROGRAMS): In your school's intervention program, what is working well and what is not working?

5. There are many different ways that Reading First coaches work in schools.

Some of the things we have heard that coaches do include:

- administering assessments
- working with data
- observing teachers in the classroom and giving feedback
- setting up and monitoring interventions
- providing interventions directly to students
- training groups of teachers
- giving demonstration lessons
- facilitating grade-level and other meetings

Has your coach helped you change your instruction? If so, how?

6. FOR SCHOOLS IN YEARS 2-4 OF IMPLEMENTATION (NOT NEW SCHOOLS) Imagine that next year your school no longer has a reading coach. What happens to…

a) The core program?
b) Assessment and data use?
c) Grade-level meetings?
d) Interventions?
e) The Reading Leadership Team?

Washington Reading First 2007 Classroom Observation Protocol	
Date:	School & District:
Teacher:	Evaluator:

Grades of students (circle main grade level or more than one if there are many Ss from different grades):
K 1 2 3 Other _____

Instructional Level:
ABOVE AT BELOW MIXED

Observation start time:
Observation end time:
TOTAL Observation Minutes (minimum 20):

Number of students <u>at start of observation</u>:

Number of adults besides the teacher (present for part *or* all of the observation):

What are other adults doing? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Teaching small group(s)
- ☐ Working 1:1 with students
- ☐ Circulating around the room
- ☐ Assessment
- ☐ Providing ELL assistance to students
- ☐ Not working with students (e.g., grading)
- ☐ Other _____

Is this a walk-to-read class or a self-contained classroom?

- ☐ WTR
- ☐ Self-contained

What core reading program materials do you see the teacher <u>using</u> during your observation? (check all you see)

English

- ☐ Harcourt Trophies
- ☐ Houghton Mifflin
- ☐ Open Court
- ☐ Read Well
- ☐ Reading Mastery
- ☐ Success for All (SFA)
- ☐ Scott Foresman, Reading Street

Spanish

- ☐ Harcourt Trofeos
- ☐ Houghton Mifflin, *Lectura*
- ☐ McGraw-Hill, *Lectura*
- ☐ Success for All, Spanish version

Is the teacher using the teacher's manual from the core reading program during your observation?

☐ Yes – reading directly from it	☐ Yes – consults briefly	☐ No – but it's open and/or out	☐ No

☐ Check if instruction is clearly *not* using the core reading program.
Explain:

Use the following space to record what happens during each 5-minute observation block, a separate sheet for each block. Include both what the teacher is doing and what students are doing. Also describe transitions. At the end of the five minutes, look around and count up the number of students off-task and total number of students.

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 1		
Size of group (number of students) working with teacher _____		
Time	**Notes of what happens**	**Labels/Notes**
	Please include a sentence or two to provide the context or big picture of what is going on. Context:	

BREAK. Number of students off-task: _____ Total Students in the room: _____

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 2		
Size of group working with teacher _____		
Time	**Activities**	**Labels/Notes**

Number of Students off-task: _____ Total Students in the room: _____

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 3		
Size of group working with teacher _____		
Time	**Activities**	**Labels/Notes**

Number of Students off-task: _____ Total Students in the room: _____

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 4		
Size of group working with teacher _____		
Time	**Activities**	**Labels/Notes**

Number of Students off-task: _____ Total Students in the room: _____

Observation Ratings

Try to complete the ratings on the same day as the observation but <u>after</u> the observation is complete.

A. TIME IN SMALL GROUP

Total <u>Minutes</u> of Small Group Instruction (6 or fewer): _____

B. FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

What was the <u>main</u> <u>focus</u> of the teachers' instruction for each 5-minute block you observed? (Choose up to 2 per block.)										Size of Group with T	SS Off-Task (Fraction)
	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics & Decoding (+ sight words)	Fluency	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Directions/ Transitions	Other Subject	Assmt	No Instruction		
Block1											
Block2											
Block3											
Block4											
☐ Check if you saw the use of WRFTAC templates.											

C. COMPREHENSION

In a comprehension lesson, did you see any of the following?

☐ Check here if there was no comprehension lesson.

	Use of Graphic Organizers	Look-back citation	ID of Main Idea/Details	Questions to generate HOT	Recall questions	Retell (beginning, mid, end)	Summarizing	Response Journals	Other (note below)
Block1									
Block2									
Block3									
Block4									

Other comprehension:

D. INSTRUCTION FROM TEACHER & ON-GOING ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Always rate the instruction overall (across the blocks). Provide block numbers where there is evidence of 0, 1, or 4 scores.

Remember to refer back to the rubric!

1. Lesson is clearly presented.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
2. The teacher models the work or thinking processes.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
3. The teacher guides students through thinking with effective questioning.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
4. All students are engaged in the lesson.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
5. Students have opportunities to practice the content of the lesson.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
6. The teacher monitors student understanding.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
7. The teacher provides clear, direct, and frequent feedback.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					

E. IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM AREAS

Did you see any of the following "problematic" issues?

☐ Time is lost due to lengthy transitions or directions
☐ Students were confused and teacher did not adjust the lesson
☐ Material seemed too easy and/or was presented too slowly (students were bored)
☐ Interruptions to the 90-minute block
☐ Round-robin reading
☐ Other: _____

F. GUIDE TO QUALITATIVE NOTES

In your qualitative notes, are there (choose all that apply):

Especially positive examples of

- o Phonemic awareness
- o Phonics/decoding
- o Fluency
- o Vocabulary
- o Comprehension
- o Classroom management or student engagement
- o Other _____

Especially problematic examples of

- o Phonemic awareness
- o Phonics/decoding
- o Fluency
- o Vocabulary
- o Comprehension
- o Classroom management or student engagement
- o Other _____

Why?

G. OTHER COMMENTS

Washington Reading First 2007 **Intervention Observation Protocol**	
Date:	School & District:
Intervention Provider:	Evaluator:
Intervention occurs: ___ Before School ___ During School ___ After School	

Observation start time:	
Observation end time:	
TOTAL Observation Minutes (minimum 20):	

Follow one adult who is working with a group of/individual students (preferably intensive). The following notes pertain to that group:

Number of students in group (largest number at any one time):

Students are (circle all that apply): Intensive Strategic Benchmark

Students are in grades (circle all that apply): K 1 2 3 Other_____

The adult providing this intervention is:

- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Principal
- ☐ Reading coach
- ☐ Reading specialist
- ☐ ELL specialist
- ☐ Paraprofessional
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Paid tutor
- ☐ Other:

Intervention materials are (check all that apply):

- ☐ Core Program (includes any materials from core program)
- ☐ Supplemental or Intervention Program
- ☐ Teacher-developed materials

*Look around the room at the end of your observation and list the number of **OTHER** intervention groups by indicating the number of adults and the number of students in every group. If there are no other groups in the room, leave blank.*

Group 1:	Number of adults _____: Number of Students ____
Group 2:	Number of adults _____: Number of Students ____
Group 3:	Number of adults _____: Number of Students ____
Group 4:	Number of adults _____: Number of Students ____
Group 5:	Number of adults _____: Number of Students ____

Use the following space to record what happens during each 5-minute observation block, a separate sheet for each block. Include both what the teacher is doing and what students are doing. Also describe transitions.

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 1		
Who are you following: _____ Size of group working with them:_____		
Time	**Notes of what happens**	**LABELS/Notes**
	Please include a sentence or two to provide the context or big picture of what is going on. Context:	

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 2		
Who are you following: _____ Size of group working with them:_____		
Time	**Notes of what happens**	**LABELS/Notes**

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 3		
Who are you following: _____ Size of group working with them:_____		
Time	**Notes of what happens**	**LABELS/Notes**

OBSERVATION BLOCK # 4		
Who are you following: _____ Size of group working with them:_____		
Time	**Notes of what happens**	**LABELS/Notes**

Observation Ratings

Try to complete the ratings on the same day as the observation but <u>after</u> the observation is complete.

A. FOCUS OF INTERVENTION INSTRUCTION

What was the <u>main</u> <u>focus</u> of the teachers' instruction for each 5-minute block you observed? (Choose up to 2 per block.)										Group Size
	Phonemic Awar	Phonics & Sight Words	Fluency	Vocab	Compre-hension	Directions/ Transitions	Other Subject	Assmt	No Instruction	
Block1										
Block2										
Block3										
Block4										
☐ Check if you saw the use of WRFTAC templates.										

B. COMPREHENSION

In a comprehension lesson, did you see any of the following?

☐ Check here if there was no comprehension lesson.

	Use of Graphic Organizers	Look-back citation	ID of Main Idea/Details	Questions to generate HOT	Recall questions	Retell (beginning, mid, end)	Summarizing	Response Journals	Other (note below)
Block1									
Block2									
Block3									
Block4									

Other comprehension:

C. INSTRUCTION AND ON-GOING ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Always rate the instruction overall (across the blocks). Provide block numbers where there is evidence of 0, 1, or 4 scores.

Remember to refer back to the rubric!

1. Lesson is clearly presented.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
2. All students are engaged in the lesson.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
3. Students have opportunities to practice the content of the lesson.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
4. The teacher monitors student understanding.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					
5. The teacher provides clear, direct, and frequent feedback.	0	1	2	3	4
See block(s) #_____					

D. PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS

List or describe any concerns you identified during the observation. They may be related to the group you observed or to what was happening in other areas of the room.

Concerns described above relate to (check all that apply):

- ☐ Content of intervention
- ☐ Delivery of intervention (instruction)
- ☐ Student behavior
- ☐ Setting
- ☐ Interruptions
- ☐ Other: _____

E. TWO-SENTENCE SUMMARY

Please provide a short overview of what happened in this intervention – group size, focus, general quality, and engagement/behavior management.

At the end of your observation, ask the provider the following questions:

1. What training have you received to provide K-3 reading interventions?

2. What additional training and/or resources, if any, do you feel you need to provide effective K-3 reading interventions?