

OKLAHOMA READING FIRST 2005-2006 EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Submitted to
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) received a Reading First grant in February 2003. Between August and November 2003, the Oklahoma SDE awarded Reading First subgrants to the first cohort of school districts. A second cohort of grantees was announced in July 2004. Censeo Group was contracted as the external evaluator of the project in spring 2006. The first year of the external evaluation examined grant implementation through staff surveys and school self-assessments, changes in participant knowledge in 2006 Teacher Reading Academies (TRA) through pre- and post-assessments, and student performance on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy (DIBELS) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Over the two to three years of grant implementation, staff has become familiar with new curricula; developed, delivered, and attended professional development; and implemented an assessment system to monitor student outcomes. Teachers' self-reported changes from Reading First with the 2005-2006 school year include increased use of a dedicated, uninterrupted 90-minute reading block; more explicit attention to the five components of reading; frequent use of assessment to monitor student growth and plan instruction; and small-group teacher-led instruction.

The majority of the teaching staff regards Reading Coaches, who support implementation and help teachers change their practice, as being helpful and knowledgeable. Similarly, staff described the Reading First professional development activities as beneficial. In addition to self-reported results of professional development, pre- and post-assessments of knowledge of TRA content indicated that participants in the summer TRAs improved their knowledge of effective reading instruction over the course of the four-day session.

School staff has made significant changes in practices and embraced the basic elements of Reading First. Respondents were generally positive about the grant and willing to try to meet grant expectations. Areas of implementation that will require continued support in subsequent years of the grant include explicit instruction, effective grouping, and differentiation. Teachers seemed generally comfortable providing instruction to students in the DIBELS strategic category; they were less confident about their ability to provide instruction for students learning English as a second language, students with disabilities, and students

who are reading far below grade level. No differences in ratings regarding differentiated instruction were noted based on the number of years that a respondent had engaged with Reading First.

In the majority of schools, the Reading Coaches have led the Reading First initiative with variable involvement of administrative staff. In fall 2006, the SDE asked schools to develop Leadership Teams consisting of Reading Coaches, administrative staff and teachers. These newly-formed teams are still learning about their role, however, they have conducted a self-assessment and received initial training on how to improve grant implementation in their school. Stronger principal support is expected due to administrative presence on the Leadership Teams and more focused SDE attention to the role of the Leadership Team in grant implementation.

In addition to examining the implementation of Reading First, this evaluation also analyzed changes in student achievement over the course of grant implementation. DIBELS and ITBS data suggest that a number of schools have made significant gains in the percentage of students who have reached benchmark levels and who have improved their performance on both assessment measures. The successes are particularly evident among Cohort 1 schools, which have been implementing the program for one year longer than Cohort 2 schools. The gains among Cohort 1 schools on the ITBS include improvement among all racial and ethnic groups, both genders, and all grade levels.

Evaluation suggests that instructional practices in Reading First schools have improved, increased confidence among staff that student outcomes have improved, increased teacher knowledge about reading instruction, and higher percentages of students showing stronger DIBELS and ITBS outcomes. Future evaluation activities will include more in-depth analyses of instructional practices, support for long-term change and sustainability of Reading First methods, and the relationships between levels of implementation and student outcomes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
GRANT COMPONENTS	2
READING FIRST SCHOOLS	3
METHODOLOGY	5
EVALUATION QUESTIONS	5
EVALUATION PROCEDURES	5
<i>Definition of Terms</i>	8
DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS.....	8
<i>Review of Extant Data</i>	8
<i>Participant Interviews</i>	8
<i>Participant Survey</i>	8
<i>Teacher Reading Academy Pre- and Post-Assessments</i>	10
<i>School Self-Assessment</i>	11
<i>School Site Visits</i>	12
<i>Analysis of Achievement Data</i>	12
LIMITATIONS	12
RESULTS.....	13
IMPLEMENTATION.....	13
<i>Core Reading Program</i>	13
<i>Instructional Strategies</i>	15
<i>Changes in Teachers' Reading Pedagogy</i>	20
<i>Intervention for Students Struggling to Learn how to Read</i>	21
<i>Institution of a Seamless Early Reading Curriculum</i>	22
STAFF SUCCESSES AND CONCERNS RELATED TO READING FIRST IMPLEMENTATION	25

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	34
<i>Teacher Reading Academy</i>	34
<i>District-Level Professional Development</i>	37
<i>Support Provided by Reading First Reading Coaches</i>	38
IMPACT OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	42
<i>Staff Perceptions of Student Outcomes</i>	43
<i>Student Achievement as Measured by DIBELS</i>	44
<i>Changes in Student Achievement as Measured by ITBS</i>	50
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	56
RECOMMENDATIONS	62

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK.....	6
TABLE 2. CONCERNS BASED ADOPTION MODEL (CBAM) LEVELS OF CONCERN.....	10
TABLE 3. CORE READING PROGRAMS	14
TABLE 4. SPRING 2006 SURVEY – INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES.....	16
TABLE 5. SELF-ASSESSMENT – INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	19
TABLE 6. SPRING 2006 – TEACHING STAFF SURVEY RESULTS	20
TABLE 7. SELF-ASSESSMENT – INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	22
TABLE 8. SPRING 2006 SURVEY – LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT	23
TABLE 9. SELF-ASSESSMENT – LEADERSHIP, EVALUATION STRATEGIES, AND SUSTAINABILITY	24
TABLE 10. TEACHER CONCERNS AND SUCCESSES RELATED TO READING FIRST IMPLEMENTATION	26
TABLE 11. READING FIRST STAFF CONCERNS	29
TABLE 12. READING FIRST STAFF SUCCESSES.....	31
TABLE 13. POTENTIAL CHANGES TO READING FIRST PRACTICES.....	32
TABLE 14. SELF ASSESSMENT – DISTRICT AND SITE-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	37
TABLE 15. SPRING 2006 SURVEY – COACH SUPPORT	39
TABLE 16. SPRING 2006 SURVEY – COACH SUPPORT AND SCHOOL CLIMATE.....	40
TABLE 17. CHANGES IN PRACTICE DUE TO READING FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	41
TABLE 18. SPRING 2006 SURVEY – STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT.....	43
TABLE 19. DIBELS ASSESSMENT RESULTS	45
TABLE 20. ITBS ASSESSMENT RESULTS	51
TABLE 21. SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS BY LEVEL OF CONCERN.....	61

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN OKLAHOMA READING FIRST	4
FIGURE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF TRA PRE-ASSESSMENT SCORES.....	36
FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF TRA POST-ASSESSMENT SCORES.....	36
FIGURE 4. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING BENCHMARK GOALS IN SPRING 2006	48
FIGURE 5. AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT BENCHMARK CATEGORY SPRING 2006	48
FIGURE 6. AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT INTENSIVE CATEGORY SPRING 2006	49
FIGURE 7. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS MEETING DIBELS BENCHMARK CRITERIA SPRING 2006.....	49
FIGURE 8. ITBS TOTAL READING - PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE 50TH PERCENTILE BY RACE.....	54
FIGURE 9. ITBS TOTAL READING - PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE 50TH PERCENTILE BY GENDER	55
FIGURE 10. SCHOOLS WITH PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE 50 TH PERCENTILE ITBS SPRING 2006	55
FIGURE 11. ITBS TOTAL READING - PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE 50TH PERCENTILE BY COHORT	56

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Reading First is a focused nationwide effort to enable all students to become successful early readers. Reading First is authorized by Title I, Part B, Subpart I of the Elementary and Secondary Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and focuses on ensuring that all children read at or above grade level by the end of third grade. The three priorities of Reading First are to improve the quality of classroom instruction, base instruction on scientifically proven methods, and provide professional development for educators in reading instruction. In addition to these three components, screening and diagnosis of reading difficulties and monitoring of student progress are expected to contribute to higher reading achievement in participating schools.

State Education Agencies (SEA) apply for a Reading First grant and award subgrants to eligible Local Education Agencies (LEA). As part of the state grant, SEAs also develop a plan to help grantees use scientifically based reading research to improve instruction and achievement, provide technical assistance to school districts to help identify appropriate instructional assessments, programs, and materials; develop a statewide professional development strategy to improve instructional practices; and coordinate with other literacy programs in the state.

Scientifically based reading research has identified five essential components of reading instruction that children need to master in order to become proficient readers: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies (National Reading Panel, 2000). The programs, strategies, and approaches that subgrantees choose must be based on scientifically based reading research; include instruction in the five essential components of reading instruction; must have a coherent instructional design (e.g., strategies that address students' strengths and weaknesses, coordinated instructional sequences, ample practice opportunities, aligned student material); must include a protected, uninterrupted block of time for reading instruction; include assessment strategies for diagnosing student needs and measuring progress; and provide a professional development plan for teachers.

Professional development is a key aspect of the Reading First program and the grant provides educational opportunities related to reading instruction and also supports Reading Coaches in schools to help teachers

translate their learning into practice. The goal of professional development is to increase teachers' knowledge, as well as to directly impact student learning.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) received a Reading First grant in February 2003. Between August and November 2003, the Oklahoma SDE awarded Reading First subgrants to Cohort 1 school districts. A second cohort of grantees was announced in July 2004.

The federal Reading First grant requires an annual external evaluation of the state's progress towards full implementation of the Reading First program and an assessment of the program's outcomes. The state issued an Intent to Bid (ITB) for the external evaluation in January 2006. Based on Censeo Group LLC's response, Censeo was hired as the external evaluator in spring 2006.

This report describes the evaluation activities that occurred between April 2006 and November 30, 2006. Evaluation activities included a review of grant elements and characteristics of participating schools, the examination of grant implementation through staff surveys and school self-assessments, the documentation of changes in learning of participants in the 2006 Teacher Reading Academies, and the analysis of student performance in Reading First schools on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy (DIBELS) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests over the course of the grant period.

Grant Components

The goals of the Oklahoma Reading First grant are to implement Reading First programs aligned with a framework embedded in scientifically-based reading research; to institute a seamless early reading curriculum; to provide Reading First staff with professional development; and to ensure positive student achievement in reading. The core requirements of the Oklahoma's Reading First program include:

- adoption and use of a scientifically-based comprehensive reading program to guide instruction in the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension);
- a protected, uninterrupted, 90-minute block of reading instruction daily;
- ongoing assessment of student progress through screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments;
- differentiated instruction that meets all students' needs;
- intensive instruction for all students in kindergarten through third grade who fail to make normal progress toward grade-level reading;
- professional development for teachers through protected professional development time, coaching, modeling, and attendance at professional development offerings; and

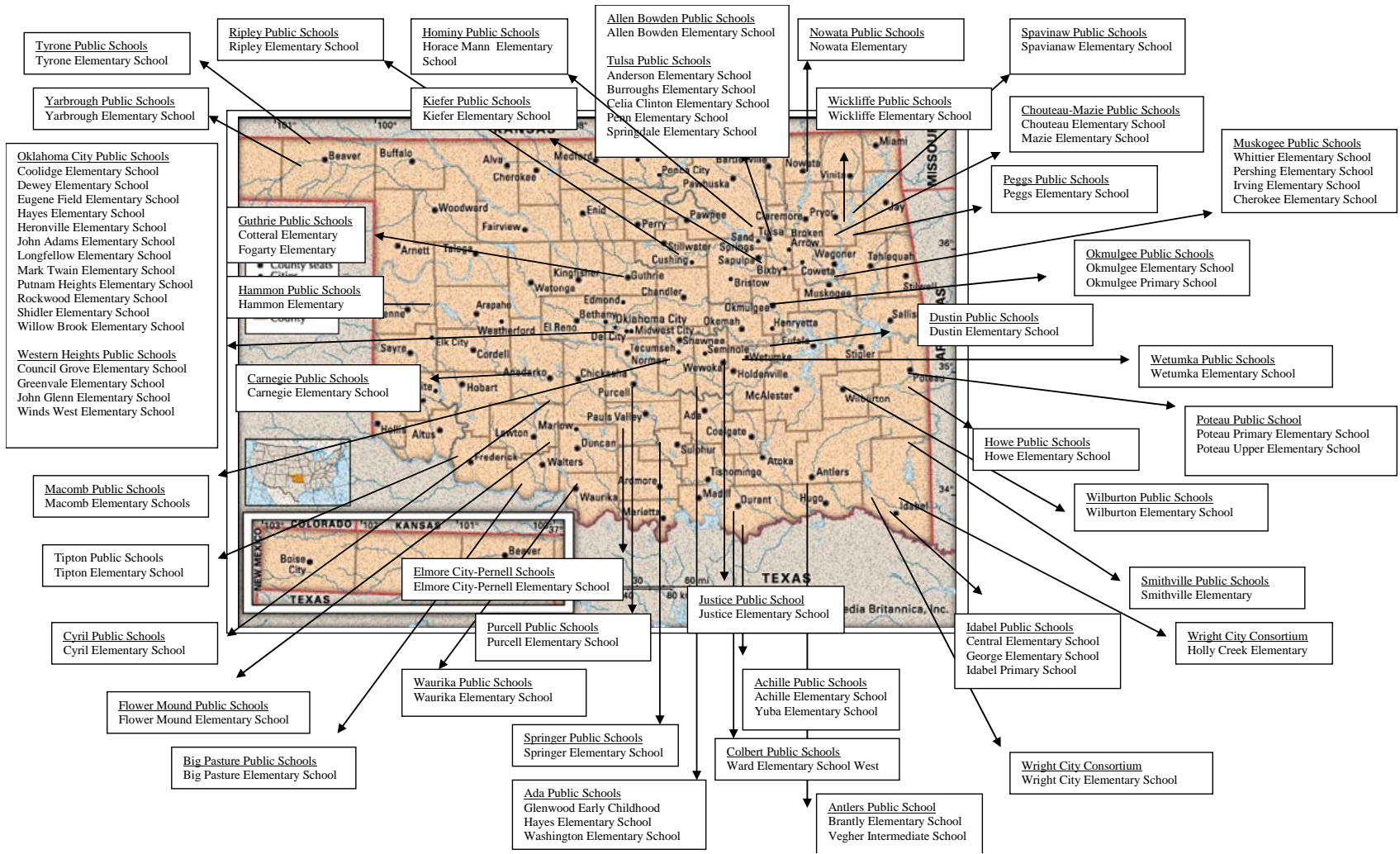
- technical assistance from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE).

Each participating school district submitted a grant proposal that outlined how the district would fulfill the requirements of the grant. As part of the grant, each Reading First school has engaged the services of a Reading Coach who has been supporting teachers in the learning of, and implementing of, effective reading instruction. In fall 2006 each participating school established a Leadership Team comprised of the Reading Coach, administrative staff, and teacher(s) to help support the implementation of the Reading First grant, monitor school progress towards expected outcomes, and develop plans for sustaining the work of Reading First after the completion of the grant.

Reading First Schools

During the 2005-2006 school year, 73 schools from 41 districts across the state of Oklahoma participated in Oklahoma Reading First. Figure 1 illustrates the location of the schools. In 28 districts, only one school in the district participated in the grant. In 13 districts more than one school participated. Twelve schools from Oklahoma City and five schools from Tulsa participated in the program. These two districts had the greatest number of participants in the grant.

Figure 1. Schools Participating in Oklahoma Reading First



The Reading First schools range in size from 26 students to 538 students in kindergarten through the third grade who tested with DIBELS in spring 2006. Of these students, approximately 42% were Caucasian, 20% Native American, 17% African American, and 16% Hispanic. The other 5% did not indicate a racial/ethnic category. In the 2004-2005 school year, of all the students in the Oklahoma public schools, 60% were Caucasian, 19% Native American, 11% African American, 8% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. A greater percentage of African American and Hispanic students than in the general population participated in Reading First. Participating Reading First students included approximately 67% of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). During the 2004-2005 school year, 54.7% of Oklahoma's public school students were eligible for the program.

METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Questions

This multi-year evaluation will focus on both the implementation and the impact of Oklahoma Reading First. The first year of the evaluation, which was begun in the third year of the grant, provides initial data regarding the extent and success of implementation to support the grant and monitor progress towards expected student outcomes.

Over the course of the evaluation, implementation will be assessed through a review of existing information, surveys of grant participants, site visits, and stakeholder interviews. In addition to implementation, the evaluation will also examine changes in teachers' literacy practice and student outcomes. Data to answer impact questions will be gathered through site visits, surveys, and student assessment data.

Evaluation Procedures

During the 2005-2006 school year, the evaluation used a mixed-methods design to gather and analyze data about program implementation and impact. Table 1 identifies the evaluation questions, data sources that provided answers to the questions, and data analysis methods.

Table 1. Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Question	Data Source	Data Analysis	Evaluation Timeline
Goal 1: Implementation of Reading First programs aligned with SBRR framework			
• Did Reading First classrooms implement high quality scientifically-based reading research programs that include content based on the five essential components of reading?	staff survey staff interviews observations	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• Did Reading First classrooms implement instructional designs that include explicit instructional strategies, a coordinated instructional sequence, ample practice opportunities, aligned student materials, ongoing assessment, small flexible groups, and dedicated blocks of reading time?	staff survey staff interviews observations	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• What changes in teachers' reading pedagogy are evident? What is the structure of the reading lesson? How is the classroom set up? How are students grouped?	staff survey observations	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
Goal 2: Institutionalizing a seamless early reading curriculum (coordinated literacy services) in Reading First Schools			
• Are Title 1, general education, and special education teachers using the same SBRR reading curriculum?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2006-2007
• Are site-based teams (principals, teachers, Reading Coaches, interventionists) meeting consistently to discuss students' instructional needs?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• Are the school Reading Coaches hired in a timely manner?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• Are reading and assessment materials purchased and training provided in a timely manner?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• How are principals supporting reading achievement in Reading First schools?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2005-2006
• Are school and local libraries used more since the inception of Reading First?	school self-assessment existing data	descriptive statistics	2006-2007

Evaluation Question	Data Source	Data Analysis	Evaluation Timeline
Goal 3: Professional development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What evidence is there that district and school level Reading First professional development is well-aligned with SBRR framework? 	extant data PD survey	qualitative analysis	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does teachers’ reading knowledge increase because of attendance at a Reading Academy? 	PD survey	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does school-level professional development, as well as opportunities to practice implementing effective reading strategies under the guidance of peer and expert mentors increase teachers’ knowledge of reading? 	staff survey staff interviews observations	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What evidence is there that teachers’ practice in teaching reading has changed as a result of teachers’ participation in Reading First professional development? 	extant data staff survey staff interviews	qualitative analysis, descriptive statistics	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the impact on school environment of teachers working and learning together? What changes are evident? 	staff survey	descriptive statistics	2005-2006
Goal 4: Impact of the instructional framework on student achievement			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What percentage of children in Reading First schools are reading on grade level, moving towards reading on grade level, or reading above grade level? 	extant data assessment data	chi square and/or ANOVA	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is significant progress being made by children from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, children served in special education, children in schools that are labeled Title 1 School Improvement Schools, children with limited English proficiency? 	extant data	chi square and/or ANOVA	2005-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do children in Reading First schools and classrooms make greater progress than children at the same grade level in low-achieving schools that are not receiving assistance from Reading First funding and resources? 	extant data	chi square and/or ANOVA	2006-2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have children in Reading First schools made significant improvements in their reading performance? 	extant data assessment data	chi square and/or ANOVA	2005-2006

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this report, the following definitions are used:

- SDE staff includes the Reading First State Director and state-level Reading Specialists.
- Administrative staff includes principals and assistant principals.
- Reading Coaches are school-based Reading First Reading Coaches.
- Reading First staff includes teachers and other school-based staff members involved in the implementation of the Reading First grant at school sites.
- Leadership Teams in each Reading First school include the school's Reading Coach(es), selected administrative staff, and selected teacher(s).
- Censeo Group staff includes evaluation staff.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Review of Extant Data

The evaluation reviewed documents related to project planning and implementation, including the state Reading First proposal, meeting notes, and other documents describing the work of Reading First in its first three years of implementation. The documents provided background information, context for participant comments, and a basis for developing interview and survey instruments.

Participant Interviews

Interviews with key stakeholders, including the Reading First State Director and Reading Specialists provided information about the planning and implementation of Reading First in Oklahoma's public schools.

Participant Survey

All Reading First staff – teachers, Reading Coaches and administrative staff - received an online survey in spring 2006 regarding their perceptions of Reading First implementation and outcomes. The survey asked about overall levels of participation in Reading First; successes and challenges of project implementation; and information about participants' self-reported changes in knowledge, attitudes, and literacy instruction.

Censeo Group developed a survey that included several unique questions for each respondent group (teachers, Reading Coaches, administrative staff), as well as several questions that overlapped the three respondent groups. The survey also included open-ended questions that gave respondents the opportunity to reflect on aspects of grant participation and describe their experiences with the project.

Oklahoma SDE staff provided Censeo Group with email addresses for all Reading First teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff. Censeo Group sent an email to each individual requesting their participation in the survey. Those who did not respond to the survey received two reminder email messages. Of the 972 Reading First staff with valid email addresses 43% (N=469) responded to the survey.

The evaluation contract was not awarded to Censeo Group until spring 2006 and the survey was designed and implemented in as timely a manner as possible. However, the timing of the survey was such that some schools had already recessed for summer break. Rather than wait to begin the data collection process in fall 2006, the survey was sent out even though some schools had already recessed.. The decision to begin to collect data as soon as possible was made in consultation with SDE staff.

All teachers, including classroom teachers, teachers who provided intervention, teachers of English as a second language, and special education teachers were asked to respond to survey items. Analysis of responses to the different categories of teachers indicated no significant differences between the groups. Therefore, all the teachers' responses were combined and represented as one group.

The survey data were coded, entered, and analyzed using Excel and SPSS software. Descriptive statistics, including frequency of responses and item means were calculated for each rated item. Kruskal-Wallis tests were conducted for survey items to determine whether differences in responses between teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff were statistically significant. Follow up 2 x 2 Whitney Mann tests were used to identify the differences between each pair of respondents. To control for multiple comparisons, a Bonferroni correction was applied setting the adjusted alpha to $p \leq .000$.

Two different methods were used to analyze the open-ended survey questions. First, the items were analyzed through the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM, Hoard, Rutherford, & Huling-Austin, 1987) framework. The model described in Table 2 includes the seven levels of concern about new programs.

At the lower levels of the model, Levels 0 - 2, there may be no awareness of the program, some awareness and interest in learning more, or a concern about one's ability to implement the program. Concerns at Level 3 are focused on managing the new program, including issues related to efficiency, organization, schedules and time demands. Levels 4 through 6 are focused on the program's impact and an analysis of how

to obtain greater impact from the innovation. The benefit of the CBAM model is that identifying levels of concern provides insight into strategies that might be useful for supporting those implementing a program.

Table 2. Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) Levels of Concern

Level of Concern	Description of Level of Concern	Focus
0 Awareness	I am not concerned about it.	Self
1 Informational	I would like to know more about it.	Self
2 Personal	How will using it affect me?	Self
3 Management	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.	Task
4 Consequence	How is my use affecting learners? How can I refine it to have more impact?	Impact
5 Collaboration	How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?	Self
6 Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.	Self

Note: Hoard, S. M., Rutherford, W. L., Huling-Austin, L., and Hall, G. E. (1987). *Taking charge of change*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum. Alexandria, VA.

Each concept identified in respondent statements was coded along the 7-point CBAM scale and the frequency of concerns at each level was calculated. The second step of the analysis was to identify the content of respondent statements. Each relevant concept was assigned a code (e.g., concern about vocabulary instruction, lack of time for intervention) and the codes were grouped into larger categories (e.g., instruction, intervention). The frequency of the codes and categories were calculated.

Teacher Reading Academy Pre- and Post-Assessments

The State Department of Education has conducted three four-day Teacher Reading Academies (TRA) during each summer of the Reading First grant to provide teachers with intensive professional development in reading instruction. Prior to summer 2006, the TRAs were not evaluated. For the summer 2006 TRAs, the Oklahoma SDE Education developed 20 multiple choice questions to measure the concepts that were taught in the TRA. This instrument was used as a pre- and post-assessment of knowledge of TRA content.

At the start of each four-day TRA, the instructor asked participants to complete the pre-assessment to measure their knowledge of the course content. Participants did not receive a score or feedback about their performance. The participants who finished the course completed the same assessment at the end of the course. The instructors collected the forms and submitted them to Oklahoma SDE staff and SDE staff

mailed the completed forms to Censeo Group. A total of 375 TRA participants completed both the pre- and post-assessment.

All data were entered into an Excel file for analysis. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each item and for overall performance on the pre- and post-assessment. The results of pre- and post-assessment were compared using a matched sample *t*-test to determine if participants' knowledge was higher after the four-day professional development experience than before the training.

School Self-Assessment

Censeo Group developed a school self-assessment form with which school Leadership Teams measured levels of implementation of their Reading First grants. The goal was for Leadership Teams to gain an understanding of grant implementation in fall 2006 to address areas of deficiency and improve program outcomes. The school self-assessment form was designed to determine the degree of implementation of the elements that districts had identified in their application for a Reading First grant: instructional strategies, programs and materials, intervention strategies, instructional assessments, instructional leadership, district and site-based professional development, and evaluation strategies and sustainability.

The school Leadership Team received the 26-item school self-assessment form at the September 2006 Reading Coaches' meeting. They were given instructions at the meeting and the form itself included directions for completing the form. Some statements asked for a "yes" or "no" response; others questions asked respondents to choose one of three statements (not at all, to some extent, consistently) to best describe the level of implementation. Respondents could provide comments or examples to support their ratings. A total of 67 of the 73 current Reading First schools returned a completed self-assessment form.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each item. Initial results were reported to Reading First Leadership Teams at the November 2006 Reading Coaches' meeting to help school Leadership Teams interpret their findings and use results to guide program implementation.

School Site Visits

Since the evaluation did not begin until spring 2006, there was not enough time to implement school site visits during the 2005-2006 school year. Censeo Group staff will conduct site visits during the 2006-2007 school year to measure implementation of Reading First grant activities. The site visits will include classroom observations, teacher focus groups, administrative staff interviews, and reviews of extant data. The results of site visit information will be described in subsequent evaluation reports.

Analysis of Achievement Data

As required by the U.S. Department of Education, the evaluation examined school-level achievement data. The SDE provided Censeo Group staff with ITBS and DIBELS data for each school for each year in which the school participated in the grant. For the current evaluation report, student progress was measured by the change in the percentage of students who met benchmark goals. Future evaluation activities will include, if possible, a comparison of student progress in Oklahoma's Reading First Schools with student progress in comparable non-Reading First schools.

A test of differences in proportion was used to test whether a greater proportion of students scored in the top two quartiles on the ITBS test and reached benchmark on the DIBELS in the spring of 2006 as compared to the proportion that passed in other years of Reading First participation. The test was conducted using the following formula:

$$z = \frac{(P_2 - P_1) - \left[.5 * \left(\frac{1}{N_1} \right) + \left(\frac{1}{N_2} \right) \right]}{\sqrt{\left[\frac{\left(\frac{N_1 P_1 + N_2 P_2}{N_1 + N_2} \right) * \left(\frac{N_1 (1 - P_1) + N_2 (1 - P_2)}{N_1 + N_2} \right)}{N_1} \right] + \left[\frac{\left(\frac{N_1 P_1 + N_2 P_2}{N_1 + N_2} \right) * \left(\frac{N_1 (1 - P_1) + N_2 (1 - P_2)}{N_1 + N_2} \right)}{N_2} \right]}}$$

Limitations

This evaluation used a non-experimental design to collect and examine observations and descriptions of participant experiences and behaviors related to the Reading First grant. Although the evaluation provides a detailed contextual view of Reading First, the design of the evaluation is descriptive rather than explanatory.

That is, without a more controlled design, conclusions cannot be drawn about cause-and-effect relationships or definitively link project activities to project outcomes. For example, while participants may attribute specific outcomes to the project, other non-project-related factors that may have contributed to the reported outcomes cannot be ruled out.

RESULTS

The core elements of Reading First program in the Oklahoma public schools are a protected, uninterrupted, 90-minute block of reading instruction daily; the adoption and use of a scientifically-based comprehensive reading program; ongoing assessment of student progress; differentiated instruction that meets all students' needs; more intensive intervention for students who are struggling with reading; and professional development for teachers, administrative staff, and Reading Coaches. The following section of the evaluation report examines the implementation of Oklahoma's Reading First program, including implementation concerns and success, a discussion of professional development, and analysis of student outcomes. Evaluation questions related to each area are identified at the start of each section. Conclusions and recommendations follow the results.

Implementation

Core Reading Program

Evaluation Question 1: Did Reading First classrooms implement high quality scientifically-based reading research programs that include content based on the five essential components of reading?

Oklahoma Reading First LEAs chose core reading programs through the subgrant review process. The subgrant competition requirements included guidelines for LEAs to choose core programs with conducted rigorous, systematic, and objective research to support their claims of effective instructional tools. None of the SDE Reading First staff were involved in the review and all core programs were chosen prior to Censeo Group's involvement with the project. LEAs chose core programs published by six different school

publishers. The names of the core program publishers and the districts that chose each publisher are included in Table 3.

Table 3. Core Reading Programs

Core Program by District	
Harcourt	
Achille Public Schools	Justice Public Schools
Allen Bowden Public Schools	Nowata Public Schools
Colbert Public Schools	Okmulgee Public Schools
Cyril Public Schools	Ripley Public Schools
Flower Mound Public Schools	Tyrone Public Schools
Howe Public Schools	Wright City Consortium
	Yarborough Public Schools
Houghton Mifflin	
Antlers Public School	Macomb Public Schools
Carnegie Public Schools	Oklahoma City Public Schools
Chouteau-Mazie Public Schools	Tipton Public Schools
Guthrie Public Schools	Western Heights Public Schools
Open Court	
Hominy Public Schools	Purcell Public Schools
Idabel Public Schools	Ripley Public Schools
Kiefer Public Schools	Smithville Public Schools
Peggs Public Schools	Spavinaw Public Schools
Poteau Public Schools	Waurika Public Schools
Reading Mastery	
Dustin Public Schools	Tulsa Public Schools
Springer Public Schools	Wetumka Public Schools
Scott Foresman	
Ada Public Schools	Hammon Public Schools
Big Pasture Public Schools	
Voyager	
Elmore City-Pernell Public Schools	Wilburton Public Schools
Muskogee Public Schools	

Instructional Strategies

Evaluation Question 2: Did Reading First classrooms implement instructional designs that include explicit instructional strategies, coordinated instructional sequence, ample practice opportunities, aligned student materials, ongoing assessment, small flexible groups, and dedicated blocks of reading time?

Teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff were asked to rate their agreement with the effectiveness of a variety of instructional methods on the spring 2006 survey. Table 4 illustrates the responses to the 18 survey items related to instructional strategies, providing mean scores for the items and the number of respondents who provided a rating. Results of Kruskal-Wallis tests to determine whether different respondents provided significantly different ratings are also included. For items with significant Kruskal-Wallis results, the table includes results of follow up 2 x 2 Whitney Mann that identified the differences between each pair of respondents. Items for which all three respondent groups had similar responses, that is, for which there were *no* statistically significant differences, are indicated on the table with NS.

No statistically significant differences in ratings were evident in the items that asked about literacy materials. Teachers and Reading Coaches indicated that literacy lessons include a variety of readability levels, are organized in a logical order, and support classroom instruction. Reading Coaches did not endorse strongly the items that asked about teachers' use of assessment which suggests that supporting teachers' use of data may be important in subsequent years of the grant.

For the items in which the differences were statistically significant, the responses by teachers and administrative staff were generally higher than the responses of the Reading Coaches. Teachers reported feeling confident that they are using explicit instruction, grouping students effectively, and differentiating instruction. Teachers and administrative staff also agreed that the components of Reading First are fully implemented. Although administrative staff and teachers were convinced that reading instruction was effective and followed the methods required by district grant agreements, Reading Coaches were less certain of this. They were less likely than the other respondent groups to agree that explicit and differentiated instruction is being implemented as fully as is possible.

Table 4. Spring 2006 Survey – Instructional Strategies

	Teachers	Reading Coaches	Administrative staff	Kruskal-Wallis test	Whitney Mann post hoc test
	Mean	Mean	Mean		
	(N)	(N)	(N)		
Materials					
Literacy materials include a variety of readability levels.	5.11 (N=348)	5.22 (N=65)	NA	NS	
The instructional elements in literacy lessons are organized in a logical order that teaches skills and knowledge necessary for each new task.	5.12 (N=347)	5.17 (N=65)	NA	NS	
Literacy materials support classroom instruction.	5.15 (N=345)	5.25 (N=64)	NA	NS	
Explicit/Differentiated Instruction					
Teachers are comfortable implementing the 90-minute uninterrupted daily reading block.	NA	5.29 (N=65)	5.90 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 24.68$, df=1, p= .05	Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
Your/teachers' reading instruction effectively includes all five essential components of reading.	5.32 (N=347)	5.19 (N=64)	5.59 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 24.83$, df=2, p=.05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches. Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
You/teachers effectively use the following steps in literacy instruction: explain/model skills, guided practice, supported application, students practice.	5.36 (N=346)	5.00 (N=65)	5.51 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 48.05$, df=2, p=.05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches. Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
Students have ample opportunities to practice new skills and concepts.	5.09 (N=348)	5.00 (N=65)	NA	$\chi^2 = 12.69$, df=1, p=.05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches.
You/teachers effectively group students according to shared instructional needs.	5.11 (N=346)	4.77 (N=65)	NA	$\chi^2 = 20.05$, df=1, p= .05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches.
You/teachers are able to differentiate instruction effectively to	4.97	4.45	5.31	$\chi^2 = 34.59$,	Teachers higher

meet all students' needs.	(N=347)	(N=65)	(N=39)	df=2, p=.05	than Reading Coaches. Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
Assessment					
Teachers are independently administering benchmark and progress monitoring assessments.	NA	4.98 (N=65)	NA	NA	
Teachers are using assessment results to differentiate instruction	NA	4.70 (N=65)	NA	NA	
Assessment results help you/teachers monitor student growth/Teachers use results to monitor student growth.	5.18 (N=345)	5.17 (N=64)	NA	NS	
Assessment results help you plan instruction.	5.07 (N=343)	NA	NA	NA	
Overall					
You feel as if you use reading instruction time wisely/Teachers use reading instruction time wisely.	5.19 (N=345)	5.03 (N=65)	5.59 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 19.82$, df=2, p= .05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches. Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
You feel as if you provide high-quality reading instruction/Teachers provide high-quality reading instruction.	5.24 (N=344)	5.18 (N=65)	5.62 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 18.13$, df=2, p= .05	Teachers higher than Reading Coaches. Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
Teachers have fully implemented the components of Reading First in their classrooms.	NA	5.03 (N=65)	5.56 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 15.58$, df=1, p = .05	Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
Reading First has affected the way you teach reading/reading is taught in your building.	5.06 (N=346)	5.65 65	5.84 (N=38)	$\chi^2 = 14.57$, df=2, p= .05	Administrative staff higher than teachers.
Reading First instructional strategies and methods provide an effective way to teach reading.	5.08 (N=332)	5.83 (N=64)	5.78 (N=37)	$\chi^2 = 32.85$, df=2, p= .05	

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Moderately Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Moderately Agree, 6=Strongly agree. NA indicates that the question was not asked of the category of respondent. NS indicates a non-significant response.

The final set of questions about this topic asked about general perceptions of the impact of Reading First on instruction. Teachers agreed that they were using Reading First strategies, fully implementing the grant, and providing high-quality instruction; they acknowledged that Reading First has affected the way that they teach reading. Nonetheless, they did not strongly agree with the question that directly asked whether Reading First instructional strategies and methods provide an effective way to teach reading. In fact, this was the only question in which teachers' ratings were lower than those of Reading Coaches and administrative staff.

Kruskal-Wallis tests conducted to identify differences in ratings based on the number of years that a respondent engaged with Reading First did not result in any significant findings for this set of survey items. This suggests that respondents' perceptions of materials, effectiveness of instruction, use of assessment, and overall feelings about Reading First are similar for those respondents who had just begun working with the grant and for those who had worked with the grant for three years.

Teachers, Reading Coaches and administrative staff individually responded to the survey items in spring 2006. A similar set of questions, included in Table 5, was asked of each school-based Reading First Leadership Team in fall 2006. The goal of the self-assessment was for the team to discuss differences in perceptions of implementation and to address areas of deficit.

Almost all of the school Leadership Teams indicated that teachers adhere to the core program, provide a 90-minute uninterrupted, daily, instructional block, use Reading First approved assessments, and have access to assessment data. The majority of teams also agreed that their reading materials are integrated into a cohesive program (1.82 on a 2.00 scale). The items that were ranked the lowest included teachers' use of effective classroom strategies and provision of differentiated instruction. These results are consistent with the survey results, in which Reading Coaches and administrative staff felt that differentiated instruction was not as well-implemented as it could be. Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated no significant differences between cohorts on their ratings of these self-assessment items.

Table 5. Self-Assessment – Instructional Strategies

Item	Average Rating	Possible Ratings
Core Program		
The core program is effective: all or most students who scored at benchmark levels at the beginning of the year remain at benchmark levels at the end of the year.	0.91	No (0) Yes (1)
All students are included in at least 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted classroom reading instruction.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)
All teachers follow the scope and sequence of the core program and only use materials and methods from the core program in their instruction.	1.69	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
All reading materials, including intervention materials are integrated into a comprehensive reading program.	1.82	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
Instruction		
Teachers provide differentiated instruction through flexible groups that change based on assessment results.	1.50	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
Teachers use effective classroom management strategies, including a quick pace of instruction, high levels of time on task, and clear schedules and procedures.	1.56	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
Teachers maximize student engagement by delivering interactive instruction that allows every student to participate and respond.	1.62	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
All teachers use explicit instructional strategies, including explaining and modeling skills, providing guided practice, and allowing students sufficient opportunities to independently practice skills.	1.70	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
Assessment		
The school reviews IEPs to determine which special education students should participate in assessment, which students should participate with accommodations, and which students should not participate.	0.96	No (0) Yes (1)
The school uses Reading First approved assessments, follows the assessment schedule, administers all student assessments, and submits data within the mandatory testing windows.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)
All teachers (including special education and ELL teachers, interventionists, etc.) have access to student assessment data.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)
Teachers use data to group students, plan instruction, and deliver targeted instruction and intervention to address each student's needs.	1.60	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)

Changes in Teachers' Reading Pedagogy

Evaluation Question 3: What changes in the teachers' reading pedagogy are evident? What is the structure of the reading lesson? How is the classroom set up? How are students grouped?

In an attempt to determine the extent to which instructional methods have changed from those used prior to the grant, teachers were asked to identify the strategies that they used prior to the implementation of Reading First. They were also asked to identify the frequency with which they used these strategies during the 2005-2006 school year. The results of the survey items are included in Table 6.

Only 35% of the teachers indicated that they taught reading during a daily, dedicated, 90-minute block prior to the Reading First grant. In the 2005-2006 school year, 91% of respondents indicated that they used such a 90-minute block for reading instruction daily. However, almost 10% of teachers indicated that they did not despite this being a basic requirement of Reading First.

Table 6. Spring 2006 – Teaching Staff Survey Results

	Pre-Reading First		2005-2006						
	N	%	N	Never	Several times per year	Every Day	One time per month	2-3 times per month	1-3 times per week
Taught reading during a dedicated, uninterrupted daily block of at least 90 minutes	364	35.4%	346	7.2%	0.3%	90.5%	0.0%	0.3%	1.7%
Used small-group, teacher-led reading instruction	364	67.0%	348	1.7%	0.6%	79.6%	0.6%	2.3%	15.2%
Provided students sufficient opportunity to practice new skills	364	73.1%	348	0.3%	0.3%	82.8%	0.3%	1.1%	15.2%
Used assessment to monitor student growth	364	69.0%	344	0.3%	6.7%	29.4%	7.8%	29.9%	25.9%
Used assessment to plan instruction	364	52.2%	337	1.5%	4.5%	38.9%	4.7%	23.1%	27.3%
Regrouped students based on instructional needs	364	56.9%	346	2.9%	23.7%	30.6%	9.5%	22.3%	11.0%
Received administrator walkthroughs during literacy blocks	--	--	346	6.4%	43.1%	7.8%	17.1%	16.8%	9.0%

A majority of teachers indicated that prior to Reading First they used assessment data to plan instruction (52%) and to monitor student growth (69%), used small group instruction (67%), regrouped students based on instructional needs (57%), and provided students with sufficient opportunities to practice new skills (73%). The results of these retrospective questions should be interpreted with caution, since teachers were asked to report on practices they used as many as three years prior to the survey and after having received extensive professional development and support to increase the frequency of those practices. Also, the survey asked participants whether or not they used these practices, it did not ask them to identify the frequency with which they used them. Teachers may have used these practices once or twice during the year, rather than as a part of their regular practice.

Teacher ratings suggested frequent use of these strategies in the 2005-2006 school year. Teachers reported that during the year they daily taught reading during a 90-minute block, provided students sufficient opportunity to learn new skills, used assessment to plan instruction, used small-group, teacher-led instruction, and re-grouped students based on needs. Approximately one-third of respondents indicated that they used assessment to monitor student growth 2-3 times per month and an almost equal percentage of respondents said that they used assessment in this manner every day. Administrative staff walkthroughs appear to be fairly rare, with the majority of respondents indicating that this occurred only several times per year. Future evaluation activities will include site visits and classroom observations, which will allow for a more objective analysis of the frequency with which these activities are evident in daily instruction.

Intervention for Students Struggling to Learn how to Read

In addition to differentiated instruction provided during the 90-minute reading block, Reading First requires additional intervention for students who are struggling with grade-level work. The three items related to intervention of the fall 2006 self-assessment are included in Table 7. As illustrated in the table, Leadership Teams reported that they successfully identified students who need intervention and provided those students with effective and regular support. The majority of schools were confident that their intervention program had decreased the number of students in need of intervention. Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated no differences in mean responses to these items based on number of years of Reading First implementation.

Table 7. Self-Assessment – Intervention Strategies

Item	Average Rating	Possible Ratings
In addition to the 90-minutes of reading instruction in the core program, at risk students receive additional intervention support.	1.90	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
The school has clear criteria for identifying and monitoring students who need interventions.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)
The intervention program is effective: the number of students who need intervention has decreased over the course of the Reading First grant.	0.89	No (0) Yes (1)

Institution of a Seamless Early Reading Curriculum

One of the goals of Reading First is to develop a long-term change in instructional methods and strategies through a comprehensive reading program. The ultimate goal is that the instructional strategies and methods will continue to be used after the completion of the grant. The evaluation includes six questions related to this area.

Evaluation Question 4: Are Title 1, general education, and special education teachers using the same SBRR reading curriculum?

Evaluation Question 5: Are site-based teams (principals, teachers, Reading Coaches, interventionists) meeting consistently to discuss students' instructional needs?

Evaluation Question 6: Are the school Reading Coaches hired in a timely manner?

Evaluation Question 7: Are reading and assessment materials purchased and training provided in a timely manner?

Evaluation Question 8: How are principals supporting reading achievement in Reading First schools?

Evaluation Question 9: Are school and local libraries used more since the inception of Reading First?

Questions four and nine will be addressed in subsequent evaluation periods. Since the evaluation began in the third year of Oklahoma's Reading First program, the SDE staff addressed questions six and seven in previous years of implementation. All schools have chosen, purchased, and begun to implement their core program. Similarly, all schools have submitted fall 2006 benchmark data, indicating that assessment materials have been purchased and staff trained in their use. All schools have Reading Coaches, several of whom have been with the program from the beginning.

Questions five and eight examine the support provided to staff to implement Reading First. The spring 2006 survey included a number of items that asked respondents to reflect on the sufficiency of the support that they received from campus, district, and state-level staff. Table 8 illustrates the patterns of responses to these items.

Table 8. Spring 2006 Survey – Leadership and Support

	Teachers	Reading Coaches	Administrative staff	Kruskal-Wallis test	Whitney Mann post hoc test
	Mean (N)	Mean (N)	Mean (N)		
Administrative leadership on your campus supports Reading First.	NA	5.27 (N=64)	NA	NA	
Administrative leadership in your district supports Reading First.	NA	5.00 (N=64)	5.82 (N=39)	$\chi^2 = 21.54$, df=1, p=.05	Administrative staff higher than Reading Coaches.
You have received the support that you need from the state Reading First team.	NA	5.54 (N=65)	5.64 (N=39)	NS	
You have had sufficient support to implement Reading First.	5.11 (N=330)	5.66 (N=64)	5.76 (N=38)	$\chi^2 = 13.40$, df=2, p=.05	No significant pairwise differences.

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Moderately Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Moderately Agree, 6=Strongly agree

As illustrated in the table, in spring 2006 Reading Coaches moderately agreed that school leadership supported Reading First, and were less likely than school administrative staff to agree that district leadership supported Reading First. Both Reading Coaches and administrative staff were consistent in their ratings of state-level support for Reading First. When asked whether they have sufficient support to implement Reading First, teachers' ratings were lower than those of Reading Coaches and administrative staff.

The fall 2006 self-assessment allowed school Leadership Teams to examine the support provided in the school building for Reading First implementation. The self-assessment asked about collaboration among teachers, administrative staff and Reading Coach support, coordination of programs and funds, and evaluation and sustainability of the work begun with the Reading First grant. The results of the ratings are provided in Table 9.

School Leadership Teams agreed that their school successfully supported teachers who are struggling with Reading First implementation and that teachers have collaborated together to improve instruction. The teams reported that collaboration between teacher teams and Reading Coaches occurred on average 2.73 times per month; in almost three of four weeks each month.

Table 9. Self-Assessment – Leadership, Evaluation Strategies, and Sustainability

Item	Average Rating	Possible Ratings
The school has had success moving teachers who are struggling with the requirements of Reading First to higher levels of Reading First implementation.	0.93	No (0) Yes (1)
Teachers meet as a group to review assessment results, plan instruction, and share progress. The coach collaborates with teacher teams.	1.66	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
Principals and Reading Coaches observe teachers in classrooms during reading instruction.	1.82	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
All school programs and funds are coordinated to have the greatest impact on school-wide literacy achievement.	1.76	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)
The school has evaluated grant implementation and the progress that all student groups are making towards meeting reading goals.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)
The school has a plan for maintaining effective reading instruction once Reading First funds decrease.	0.65	No (0) Yes (1)

Leadership Teams also agreed that principals and Reading Coaches observed teachers during reading instruction. According to the responses, Reading Coaches conducted observations more often than principals. Reading Coaches were reported to have conducted on average 169 observations during the 2005-2006 school year while principals 93. The range of observations was large. The school Leadership Team in one school indicated that the Reading Coach had conducted no observations in the 2005-2006 school. Six schools indicated that the Reading Coach conducted fewer than 10 observations and a total of 10 schools reported less than 20 observations. In contrast, one school indicated that the Reading Coach conducted 1,440 observations over the 2005-2006 school year. That suggests that this Reading Coach visited approximately 7 classrooms each day during the 90-minute reading block. The range of principal observations was similarly large. Three schools indicated that principals conducted no observations and 14 schools indicating that the principal did 10 or less observations. The greatest number of principal observations reported by a school was

800 observations over the course of the 2005-2006 school year. This suggests that in this school, the principal visited multiple classrooms daily during reading instruction.

School Leadership Teams rated highly the items on the self-assessment that asked about the extent to which literacy activities were coordinated into a seamless curriculum and their evaluation of grant implementation. Teams were less confident that their school has a plan for sustaining reading instruction after the completion of the grant. These areas will be examined in greater detail over the course of the evaluation to ensure that schools have, in fact, fully addressed these questions.

Staff Successes and Concerns Related to Reading First Implementation

The spring 2006 staff survey asked participants to reflect on (a) their greatest concerns, (b) their greatest successes and (c) ways in which they would change Reading First implementation during the 2006-2007 school year. Respondents could provide as many examples of successes or concerns as they wished. The total number of concerns and successes was greater than the number of respondents for each item.

Respondent comments were analyzed in two ways. First the successes and concerns were coded along the seven levels of the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM, Hoard, Rutherford, &, Huling-Austin, 1987) framework. The benefit of the CBAM model is that identifying levels of concern provides insight into the types of strategies that might be useful for supporting staff implementing a program. Table 2 on page 6 of this report illustrates the levels of the program and a description of the levels is provided below.

- Awareness – no concern about the program (Level 0)
- Informational – desire to know more about the program (Level 1)
- Personal – concern about how the program will affect the user (Level 2)
- Management – unease about the amount of time needed to prepare materials (Level 3)
- Consequences – interest in impact of program on learners (Level 4)
- Collaboration – desire to coordinate work with that of others (Level 5)
- Refocusing – ideas about how to improve the program or the outcomes (Level 6)

Table 10 presents the frequency of levels of concern for the 320 respondents who described their concerns and for the 361 who described their successes with Reading First. Sample respondent comments are also included in the table.

Table 10. Teacher Concerns and Successes Related to Reading First Implementation

Level of concern	Description of Level of Concern*	N Concerns	Sample Comments of Concern	N Successes	Sample Comments of Successes
0	Awareness – I am not concerned about it.	0		0	
1	Informational – I would like to know more about it.	0		0	
2	Personal – How will using it affect me?	232	<p>It would be nice if it could be geared to my specific needs.</p> <p>I always was led to believe that if anyone was caught outside of the room during the 90 minute reading block then I and the students would be in serious trouble. I did not like that.</p> <p>Because the change was mandated, even though they signed letters of support, teachers have been reluctant to fully participate in the implementation. They feel as if 'Big Brother' is watching them at all times. Many times this is coming from teachers who need additional support.</p> <p>I do not like the fact that you are limited to this one program and materials.</p> <p>In the beginning, the pressure on all teachers was great. It caused stress beyond belief.</p> <p>I felt as though I have lost my own identity as a teacher. The guidelines were too strict and did not allow for different learning styles of my students.</p>	46	I am not impressed with Reading First. The only real success is that everyone is teaching reading for 90 minutes.

Level of concern	Description of Level of Concern*	N Concerns	Sample Comments of Concern	N Successes	Sample Comments of Successes
3	Management – I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.	282	<p>The professional development was too time-consuming.</p> <p>The time we were forced to spend on the computer work. It took way too much of my time and energy that I really needed to be spending on my students and my planning on how to work with my students needs, and grading papers. By the time we finished all of the computer work necessary for each month, I was always way behind in other things really important to me and my classroom.</p>	160	<p>It has made organization and time management in the classroom easier for me.</p> <p>Systematic instruction is now easier for me to plan for and complete in the classroom.</p>
4	Consequence – How is my use affecting learners? How can I refine to have more impact?	90	<p>I think it has made a tremendous difference in our student's reading achievement. The teachers have gone kicking and screaming, but most have begun to see the improvements.</p> <p>I am concerned about the differentiated instruction in the classroom. The teachers are able to analyze the testing data, but are having difficulty setting up proper groups for individualized instruction. Teachers have been resistant to anything other than whole group.</p>	349	<p>I have become a great reading teacher. I was good before but I feel that now I have much more information about reading that I am a much, much better reading teacher.</p> <p>Students have begun to take ownership of their learning and try much harder. We are moving students out of intervention groups.</p> <p>... seeing those children progress who could not under the old way of teaching. When students test out of intervention, it is special for all of us.</p>
5	Collaboration – How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?	1	<p>Collaboration with other teachers could have been so much more. We did not use that opportunity as well as we could have. Our staff did not apply themselves, and therefore did not reap the benefits we could have.</p>	6	<p>All of our teachers and staff working to improve and meet the needs our students and school. Everyone being on the same page.</p>
6	Refocusing – I have some ideas about something that would work even better.	0		0	

*From: Hoard, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall, (1987).

Implementation Concerns

In spring 2006, participant concerns ranged from Level 2 (Personal) through Level 5 (Collaboration), with fewer responses at Level 5 than the other categories. No participant identified concerns at the two lowest (Level 0 and Level 1), which indicates that respondents were no longer concerned about the change or seeking additional information about it.

The greatest number of responses was evident in Level 2 and Level 3 of the model, with slightly more responses coded at Level 3. Concerns at Level 2 were focused on respondents' uncertainty about what would be expected of them within Reading First and their ability to meet the new expectations. The large number of respondents whose concerns fell within this level were confused about the changes that the grant required, suggesting the continued need to provide these staff members with information and personal support. A large number of staff members were still struggling with awareness of the grant and feelings of concern about their adequacy to implement the required changes. However, an even greater number of respondents' concerns fell within the Management category (Level 3). These respondents had managed their concerns related to uncertainty with the program, but were still struggling with managing time, organizing materials, and meeting the day-to-day requirements of the grant.

Relatively few respondents resolved their management concerns enough to focus on the impact of Reading First, Level 4 of the CBAM model. The concerns of the 90 respondents whose comments fell at this level of the model were related to student outcomes and continuing the focus on literacy in their school after the completion of the grant. These respondents commented that the instruction they provided to student in the strategic category was appropriate, but they were not certain that their instruction was differentiated enough to meet the needs of all students. Respondents questioned how to most effectively provide differentiated instruction for students in the DIBELS intensive category, students who met benchmark goals, students who were learning English as a second language, and students with disabilities. Concerns at Level 4 of the model were also related to whether and how the work that they had begun with Reading First would continue after the completion of the grant.

In addition to identifying the level of concern according to the CBAM model, the content of the concerns was identified. The concern comments fell within eight categories, which are illustrated in Table 11. The most frequently identified concerns were related to the core reading program, specifically, doubts as how to continue the program after the end of the grant period; concerns that the 90-minute block was too long for students; and concerns that the core program was too rigid, restrictive, did not meet the needs of all students, and conflicted with other programs. The second most frequently identified concern was related to professional development. The 102 concerns expressed about professional development included the perception that the sessions were too long and did not meet respondents' needs.

Table 11. Reading First Staff Concerns

Category	N
Program	139
Continuing program after grant period	(36)
Too rigid, fast-paced, restrictive	(33)
90-minute block	(32)
Doesn't meet needs of students including special education, kindergarten, gifted, students in higher grades	(29)
Conflicts with other programs	(2)
Professional Development	102
Too long, too much, too structured	(66)
Other (not grade specific, 9; not of high quality, 8; stipend “insulting”, 5; poor collaboration, 5; need professional development on differentiated instruction, 5; need more professional development, 2; moved too quickly, 2)	(36)
Management	77
Reading Coaches - Not helpful, unqualified, lacks authority, does not respect teachers, paid too much, should become interventionists	(39)
School and district administrators - Lack support and communication	(24)
SDE - changing expectations, lack of leadership, lack of communication, micromanagers, changing personnel	(18)
Curriculum	75
Need to teach other content areas	(40)
Concerns about five components (too much focus on fluency, 11; writing omitted during 90 minutes, 9; need more phonics, 9; comprehension neglected, 5; vocabulary development limited, 1)	(35)
Teachers Factors	54
Teachers overwhelmed by requirements, “traumatic” for some teachers	(22)
Reluctant teachers	(19)
Other (need for intensive Reading Teachers, 7; evaluation too frequent, 3; heavy staff turnover, 3)	(13)
No concerns	47
Materials	42
Weak materials (includes inappropriate stories and lack of age appropriate	(25)

Category	N
material N=11, lack of necessary components N=3, lessons too short N=1, desire to use other core program/supplemental program N=3, too many paper-and-pencil materials N=2, other N=4)	
Desire to expand use of materials	(17)
Instruction	23
Need to improve centers and small group instruction	(18)
Scheduling of intervention problematic	(3)
Teacher don't use data to drive instruction	(2)
Students	16
Difficult to motivate students	(12)
Other (disabled students not able to meet requirements, 2; disruptive students, 2)	(4)
Assessment	9
(Too much weight placed on DIBELS/Testing; one minute test too short, not appropriate for all students, takes too much time	

A category identified by 77 respondents was a concern with support and management of Reading First. Within this category, a number of respondents described a perceived lack of support by the Reading Coaches. Teachers who commented about this concern felt that the Reading Coach could have a greater impact on the school. Some respondents described Reading Coaches who have few years of teaching experience, while other respondents described the lack of skill in coaching techniques. A number of respondents also identified concerns with the support of school and district administration (N=24) and State Department of Education staff (N=18).

Other categories of concern included a perception that the chosen curriculum was not effective, of being overwhelmed by the requirements of the grant or a reluctance to engage in the grant, a perception that instruction was not effective, and concerns about student engagement with the project. Less than 10 respondents identified the assessment process as a concern even though survey ratings suggested that teachers may not be effectively using assessment to differentiate instruction.

Implementation Successes

In addition to identifying concerns, the survey asked respondents to identify successes. Comments related to the successes of Reading First were coded within the same framework as concerns to indicate whether the successes were related to self, management, or impact.

The pattern of successes was somewhat different than the pattern of concerns. The most frequently identified levels of concern were related to addressing personal concerns (Level 2) and management (Level 3). A number of successes were noted within these categories. However, perceptions of success of the grant were concentrated around student and teacher outcomes (Level 4), a level higher than the predominant concerns. In spring 2006, even though many respondents were struggling to understand Reading First and to implement all grant aspects, many participants had identified successful student outcomes resulting from grant implementation. Sample comments related to the success of the program are included in Table 10.

As with the concerns, statements of success were categorized in broader topics. This question generated fewer categories than the concerns questions, resulting in the five categories illustrated in Table 12: student outcomes, teacher outcomes, program, materials, and instructional methods. Consistent with the CBAM ratings, respondents' successes overwhelmingly focused on student outcomes. A number of respondents also identified positive teacher outcomes including systematic teaching and assessment of students, more frequent practice opportunities for students, focus on all five components of reading, increased intervention, and increased use of small group instruction. Respondents also commented that the Reading First grant provided schools with sufficient materials and improved instructional methods.

Table 12. Reading First Staff Successes

Category	N
Student Outcomes	312
Better readers, improved test scores, improved skills	(272)
Students take ownership for learning, have better attitudes, have improved confidence	(30)
Other (fewer special education referrals, 7, increased practice opportunities for students, 3)	(10)
Teacher Outcomes-	93
Willing to learn, change, improve instruction	(37)
Growth in teacher practice and knowledge	(18)
Availability of additional personnel	(11)
Other (Improved planning, and management, 8, consistent philosophy and materials, 8, improved collaboration among teachers, 7; improved professional, satisfaction among teachers, 4)	(27)
Program	85
Systematic way of teaching/assessing, using data	(62)
90-minute block	(15)
Focus on five components	(8)

Category	N
Materials - Abundance of materials including intervention materials	40
Instructional Methods	31
Increased access to intervention	(14)
Increased use of small group instruction (N=11) and centers (N=6)	(17)

The third open-ended question asked teachers what, if anything, they planned to do differently next year in implementing the grant. Table 13 includes the categories of response to this question. The majority of respondents appeared to be reflective about their work, and identified potential improvements in instruction, including an increased focus on all five essential components of reading, better use of assessment, and a hope to improve their leadership skills.

Table 13. Potential Changes to Reading First Practices

Category	N
Instruction	208
Provide more and better intervention	(66)
Increase focus on vocabulary (N=19), fluency (N=12), comprehension (N=9), phonics (N=5), and phonemic awareness (N=2)	(53)
Use more small group instruction (N=30) and learning centers (N=22)	(52)
Provide more effective differentiated (N=9) and strategic (N=5) instruction	(14)
Use more program materials	(12)
Incorporate reading into other subjects	(11)
Decrease involvement with Reading First	103
Retire, leave district, leave grade	(55)
Do less Reading First or follow Reading First requirements less stringently - negative statements	48
Professional Development	63
Better organize sessions	(20)
Communicate more effectively and facilitate closer contact between teachers and coach	(16)
Provide more modeling/coaching	(16)
Hold more meetings	(11)
Assessment/Testing	35
Use DIBELs and progress monitoring data more effectively	
Do the same next year as have been doing this year	30
Improve leadership skills	10

However, in addition to these positive comments, the second most frequent category of responses, approximately one-third of the total comments, was related to ways in which respondents would decrease their involvement with Reading First. Approximately one-half of these 103 respondents said that they would

retire, leave the district, or leave the grade that they had been teaching. The majority of these respondents cited Reading First as the reason for retiring or changing their job role. The other 48 responses in this category suggested a conscious avoidance or refusal to meet grant requirements. For instance, one respondent wrote, "I am going back to using assessments the correct way. I am not going to go on or keep children back just because the book says to go on to the next story. I am going to start where assessments tell me to start. I do not care what the coach thinks." Another respondent wrote, "I plan to bring in the science and social studies activities that were included with each story as a center, I plan to add English in with the centers as well. These were things we were told couldn't be done during our 90 minute block, yet were suggested in everything we read or planned." These respondents clearly communicated that they will consciously disregard grant requirements. A third respondent commented, "The whole school doesn't want to do this program any more. But we were convinced to try it again. I don't think the staff will follow the guidelines so strictly because everyone was under pressure and it became too much. The staff felt when the State Department observed they were very critical. . . . That was a major complaint of the staff. This year, if I think my students will benefit from a class project or some different kind of instruction, I will do it and try not to let the pressure make my neck hurt."

Finally, 30 respondents said that they would not change their practice. Some comments in this category were made by respondents who felt that their instruction was strong and that they were meeting the needs of their students. Other respondents were more negative in their responses. The negative comments suggested frustration among staff members regarding the grant and their involvement with grant activities. For example, "I have nothing planned differently. I will continue to do exactly what is in the book and work in my robotic mannerism. I will look forward to my classroom being observed daily and interrupted daily by adults to make sure I'm doing it right." These comments suggested disagreement with the grant activities and requirements, but resignation to its presence.

Professional Development

Teacher Reading Academy

Evaluation Question 11: Does teachers' reading knowledge increase because of attendance at a Reading Academy?

The Oklahoma Reading First grant requires and supports ongoing, imbedded professional development at the district and state level. School districts, in their Reading First subgrant proposals, identified the content and process of district-level professional development. In addition to district-level training, Reading First Specialists monitored and provided school districts with technical assistance, and SDE staff facilitated monthly meetings for Reading First Reading Coaches and conducted summer Teacher Reading Academies (TRA).

The TRAs are professional development institutes built on scientifically-based components that include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as well as the strategies of grouping, monitoring student progress to inform instruction, and providing interventions for struggling readers. The goal of the TRAs is to promote effective reading instruction by enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills so that teachers can effectively teach young students to read. The TRAs are based on the Texas Teacher Reading Academy model and incorporate information relevant for Oklahoma's Reading First teachers such as Oklahoma's state standards and assessments.

The academies include interactive sessions that provide the opportunity for teachers to discuss concepts, practice concepts, collaborate with peers, and design plans to implement the new practices with their students. According to the TRA webpage (found at: <http://www.sde.state.ok.us/home/>), the sessions allow participants to examine current, scientific research; link instruction to state standards (Priority Academic Student Skills – PASS); use formal and informal assessment data to group students, monitor student progress, and inform instruction; focus on effective instructional methods for the essential components of reading; discuss interventions for struggling readers; and consider diversity and English language learners.

The TRAs were first held in summer 2004 for all Reading First districts. All teachers, including those who teach special education, Reading First Reading Coaches, and principals in Reading First schools were required to attend a TRA. In an effort to increase the capacity of all teachers in the state, beginning with the summer 2005 session, any teacher of kindergarten through third grade students was able to attend the TRAs.

In 2006, the TRA instructors asked each attendee to complete a pre-assessment of content knowledge at the start of the four-day session and a post-assessment at the end of the week. The questions on the assessment were generated by SDE staff to include the content areas offered in each TRA. A total of 375 TRA participants completed both the pre- and post-assessment. The teachers represented 88 different school districts and many of the teachers were not from Reading First schools. Of the survey respondents, 92 were kindergarten teachers, 94 taught first grade, 83 taught second grade, and 100 taught third grade. Six respondents did not indicate the grade that they taught.

Three of the 20 TRA pre- and post-assessment items had very low correlations with the remaining 17 items. These three items were removed from this analysis due to their poor performance. The 17-item pre-assessment had an overall reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .57$ and the post assessment $\alpha = .55$. Lower reliability coefficients such as these are not unusual with a short assessment. This low figure may also suggest that the instrument is not measuring one solitary construct, which is not unexpected given that the 17 items of the assessment measure knowledge of five components of reading as well as of various instructional strategies.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of the pre-assessment scores of the 375 respondents from the 2006 summer Teacher Reading Academy. Both the pre- and post-assessments showed a minimum score of 4 and a maximum score of 17. The average score of the pre-assessment was 12.27 and of the post-assessment 14.54. The distribution of post-assessment scores is illustrated in Figure 3. The distribution of the post-assessment reflects overall higher scores and scores that are more tightly clustered.

The performance of TRA participants on the post-assessment was compared to their performance on the pre-assessment using a two-tailed paired sample *t*-test. The analysis indicated that the average 3.27 point gain from pre- to post-assessment among the participants who completed both was statistically significant

$t(374)=19.15, p=.000$. On average participants who completed the course correctly answered 72% of the content questions before the start of training and 85% of the questions after the completion of training.

In addition to examining differences in knowledge before and after attending the TRA, another goal of the study was to examine differences in knowledge between Reading First and non-Reading First participants. On the assessment form the respondents were asked to identify whether they taught in a Reading First school and if so, to identify the length of time that they worked with the Reading First grant. A substantial number of teachers in districts that did not have a Reading First grant nonetheless indicated that they were Reading First teachers. Given the unclear status of these participants, an analysis comparing knowledge of Reading First and non-Reading First teachers was not conducted.

Figure 2. Distribution of TRA Pre-Assessment Scores

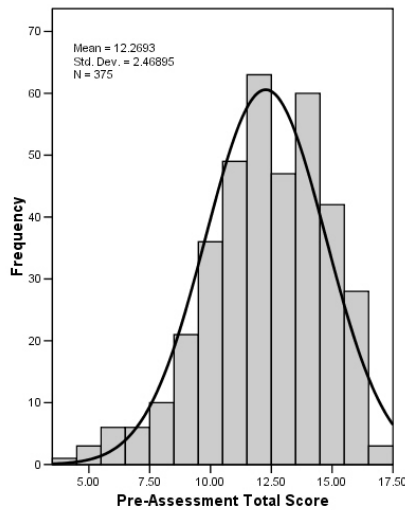
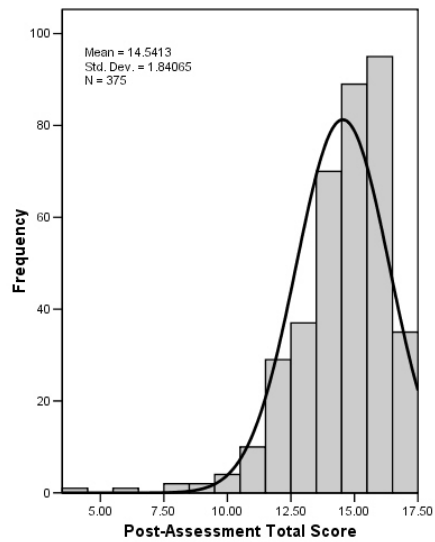


Figure 3. Distribution of TRA Post-Assessment Scores



District-Level Professional Development

Evaluation Question 10: What evidence is there that district and school level Reading First professional development is well-aligned with SBRR framework?

In addition to TRAs and participation in statewide professional development, Reading First teachers received professional development at the district level and were provided support by their school Reading Coach as well. In the spring 2006 survey, all categories of respondents agreed that the Reading First professional development provided them with the knowledge to implement the components of the grant (Teachers $M=4.81$, $N=346$; Reading Coaches $M=5.22$, $N=65$; Administrative staff $M=5.53$, $N=39$). A Kruskal-Wallis test among the three categories of respondents was not statistically significant indicating that the ratings of the three groups were similar.

Levels of participation in professional development and support of the Reading Coach were also assessed in fall 2006 with the self-assessment survey. The results of these items are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Self assessment – District and Site-Based Professional Development

Item	Average Rating	Possible Ratings
All required personnel have completed a minimum of 24 hours of Reading First professional development each school year.	1.00	No (0) Yes (1)1
Instructional programs, student assessment results, and teacher needs guide the professional development plan.	0.86	No (0) Yes (1)1
The coach provides feedback as teachers begin to use new instructional strategies and skills.	1.82	Not at all (0) To some extent (1) Consistently (2)

According to the school self-assessment, Reading First schools in Oklahoma have fulfilled their commitment to provide Reading First staff with professional development. Of all Reading First staff, 99.8% have completed the required 24 hours of professional development in each school year of the grant. Schools indicated that state requirements related to professional development guide their professional development plans, although teacher needs are also factored into planning sessions. The Leadership Teams generally agreed that Reading Coaches have supported teachers as they attempted to implement new instructional strategies.

An analysis of variance indicated no differences for any of the items by cohort suggesting that schools who have been implementing Reading First for different numbers of years are similarly successful in these areas of practice.

Support Provided by Reading First Reading Coaches

Teachers engaged in professional development to learn new skills and techniques and Reading First Reading Coaches were to support them in implementing these new skills in their classrooms. The Reading Coach's role also includes modeling instructional strategies and helping teachers to understand and implement the guidelines of the district's Reading First grant. The evaluation includes three questions related to the role and support of the Reading First Reading Coach.

Evaluation Question 12: Do school-level professional development and opportunities to practice implementing effective reading strategies under the guidance of peer and expert mentors increase teachers' knowledge of reading?

Evaluation Question 13: What evidence is there that teachers' practice in teaching reading has changed as a result of teachers' participation in Reading First professional development?

Evaluation Question 14: What is the impact on school climate of teachers working and learning together? What changes are evident?

In the spring 2006 staff survey, teachers and Reading Coaches were asked to estimate the frequency with which the Reading Coach provided different types of support in teachers' classrooms. Table 15 illustrates the results and compares teacher and Reading Coach responses. It should be noted that each teacher identified the frequency with which the Reading Coach worked with him/her. Reading Coaches, on the other hand, were describing the support that they provided to multiple teachers and in several cases Reading Coaches indicated greater frequency of support than did teachers.

Teachers reported that Reading Coaches interacted with them between two and three times per month to observe classrooms, provide feedback on observations, analyze assessment data and assist with instructional materials. The majority of Reading Coaches said that they provided some of these services more frequently than teachers reported, on average one to three times per week. The item with the greatest inconsistency

between teacher and Reading Coach ratings was in the frequency with which Reading Coaches modeled lessons. Teacher responses were almost evenly divided between a group for whom the Reading Coach modeled lessons several times per year and a group for whom the Reading Coach modeled lessons two to three times per month. The majority of Reading Coaches said that they modeled two to three times per month. The frequency and process of modeling by Reading Coaches will be examined in greater detail in subsequent evaluation activities.

Table 15. Spring 2006 Survey – Coach Support

The frequency with which the Reading First Coach....		N	Never	Several times per year	Once a month	2-3 times per month	1-3 times per week	Every Day
observed your classroom during the reading block	Teacher	341	2.9%	23.5%	17.3%	25.8%	20.5%	10.0%
	Coach	65	0%	0%	3.1%	3.1%	63.1%	30.8%
provided you with constructive feedback on your instruction	Teacher	345	5.8%	19.1%	17.7%	24.3%	22.3%	10.7%
	Coach	65	0%	0%	6.2%	21.5%	67.7%	4.6%
modeled effective lessons and strategies	Teacher	346	18.2%	25.1%	15.6%	21.7%	11.0%	8.4%
	Coach	65	0%	29.2%	26.2%	33.8%	10.8%	0%
helped you to analyze and interpret student data	Teacher	345	6.1%	23.8%	22.0%	27.2%	11.3%	9.6%
	Coach	65	0%	6.2%	16.9%	52.3%	23.1%	1.5%
provided professional development	Teacher	342	1.5%	9.9%	34.5%	30.7%	12.6%	10.8%
	Coach	65	0%	0%	21.5%	52.3%	21.5%	4.6%
helped you with instructional strategies	Teacher	343	7.3%	18.1%	22.4%	26.2%	15.7%	10.2%
helped you with instructional materials	Teacher	348	4.0%	22.4%	20.4%	27.3%	14.9%	10.9%
helped teachers with instructional strategies/materials	Coach	65	0%	1.5%	3.1%	29.2%	49.2%	16.9%

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Moderately Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Moderately Agree, 6=Strongly agree

Mann-Whitney tests showed that teachers ($N = 283$) reported being observed in their classrooms by Reading Coaches less often than Reading Coaches ($N = 65$) reported observing teachers in their classrooms, Mann-Whitney $z = -8.12, p = .000$, effect size $r = -.44$. Similarly, Reading Coaches reported that they provided teachers with feedback more often than teachers ($N = 286$) reported receiving feedback from Reading Coaches, $z = 4.27, p = .000$, effect size $r = -.23$.

Teachers and Reading Coaches both agreed that their relationships were marked with respect and trust. Teachers also agreed that the Reading Coach provided helpful assistance. Reading Coaches' perceptions of whether they were meeting teachers' needs were consistent with teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of the Reading Coach, suggesting consistent perceptions and understanding of teacher needs. Kruskal-Wallis analyses by role by year resulted in no statistically significant differences in agreement between years for teachers, Reading Coaches, or administrative staff.

Table 16. Spring 2006 Survey – Coach Support and School Climate

	Teachers	Coaches	Administrative staff	Kruskal-Wallis test
	Mean	Mean	Mean	
	(N)	(N)	(N)	
Coach				
Your relationship with the Reading First Coach (teachers) is one of respect and trust	5.13 (N=345)	5.28 (N=65)	NA	NS
The assistance you receive from the Reading First Coach is helpful	5.07 (N=343)	NA	NA	NA
Teachers have a clear understanding of your (the coach's) role	NA	5.28 (N=65)	NA	NA
Teachers are receptive to your help	NA	5.22 (N=65)	NA	NA
You feel as if you are meeting the needs of teachers in your building	NA	5.03 (N=65)	NA	NA
You feel as if you have been successful in effecting change in your school	NA	5.18 (N=65)	NA	NA
Climate and Morale				
Staff agrees about the value of Reading First	4.53 (N=331)	5.17 (N=64)	5.34 (N=38)	NS
Reading First contributes to positive morale among teachers and staff	4.14 (N=331)	4.86 (N=64)	4.76 (N=38)	NS
Reading First contributes to a sense of community at your school	4.23 (N=331)	4.97 (N=64)	4.95 (N=37)	NS

The final evaluation question related to the area of professional development asked what changes teachers made in their practice as a result of the professional development that they received as part of Reading First. On the spring 2006 survey, respondents were asked to describe how they have applied what they learned through Reading First professional development.

As indicated in Table 17, the majority of the responses to this question were related to improved instruction. Respondents said that their instruction was more strategic and effective, included more differentiated instruction, and was implemented during a 90-minute uninterrupted block. Respondents also commented that professional development increased their focus on the five components of effective reading instruction. Some respondents provided general comments that professional development was useful, but did not provide additional details. A number of respondents commented on the value of professional development in better understanding and using data, improving intervention, and increasing student outcomes.

Table 17. Changes in Practice due to Reading First Professional Development

Category	N
Improved instruction	153
Resulted in more strategic and effective instruction, including explicit and systematic instruction	(108)
Increased use of and comfort with learning centers, grouping, and differentiated instruction	(16)
Implementation of the 90-minute reading block	(15)
Modeling	(14)
Increased focus on five components of effective reading instruction	122
General comments about five components	(42)
Vocabulary	(27)
Phonemic Awareness	(18)
Fluency	(17)
Comprehension	(15)
Phonics	(3)
General comments about usefulness of professional development and coaching	68
Use and analysis of DIBELs and other assessments	47
Improved planning for and delivery of interventions for students	8
Strengthened leadership	7
Nothing changed, project has confirmed what I already knew	7
Increased student outcomes, motivation, self-directed learning	6

Impact of the Instructional Design on Student Achievement

Evaluation Question 15: What percentage of children in Reading First schools are reading on grade level, moving towards reading on grade level, or reading above grade level?

Evaluation Question 16: Is significant progress being made by children from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, children served in special education, children in schools that are labeled Title 1 School Improvement Schools, children with limited English proficiency?

Evaluation Question 17: Do children in Reading First schools and classrooms make greater progress than children at the same grade level in low-achieving schools that are not receiving assistance from Reading First funding and resources?

Evaluation Question 18: Have children in Reading First schools made significant improvements in their reading performance?

The first section of the report described the process of Reading First implementation in Oklahoma's Reading First Schools. Examining implementation is important because in order for the grant to have an effect and for effects to be attributed to the grant, the program must be implemented as planned. However, the ultimate goal of the grant is to improve student outcomes.

The evaluation examined the percentage of students who reached benchmark on the DIBELS and the percentage of students who scored in the top 50th percentile on the ITBS. A method by which to determine whether or not the changes in the percentage of students who met these goals is statistically significant is through a calculation that provides the z -score difference of proportion of students passing the test between two years. The z -score test allows comparison of performance across schools and across years using a common metric; Z-scores are standard scores with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Z-score tests were conducted for the DIBELS and ITBS data.

In addition to examining the magnitude of change in the percentages of students showing positive outcomes on the DIBELS and ITBS, the SDE is developing criteria that schools are expected to meet in order to continue their participation in the Reading First grant. Although the SDE has not submitted its proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, it is expected that the criteria will include a measure of implementation, as well as expectations for performance on the ITBS and/or DIBELS. When the SDE's

proposal has been finalized and submitted, Censeo Group’s evaluation will report on schools’ progress towards meeting the continuation goals. This section of the report summarizes staff perceptions of student outcomes and schools’ performance on DIBELS and ITBS tests.

Staff Perceptions of Student Outcomes

Teacher, Reading Coach, and administrative staff opinions about expectations for student outcomes and student progress were measured in the spring 2006 survey. The results of staff perceptions of student outcomes are presented in Table 18. Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated no differences in ratings among the respondents on the first item in the table. That is, teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff were consistent in their rating of student performance expectations.

Table 18. Spring 2006 Survey – Staff Perceptions of Student Engagement and Achievement

	Teachers	Coaches	Administrative staff	Kruskal-Wallis test	Whitney Mann post hoc tests
	Mean (N)	Mean (N)	Mean (N)		
Staff communicates high performance expectations for students.	5.13 (N=329)	5.11 (N=64)	5.51 (N=37)	NS	
Because of Reading First, students are more motivated to improve their reading skills.	4.56 (N=322)	5.43 (N=63)	5.26 (N=38)	$\chi^2 = 21.51, df=2, p=.05$	Reading Coaches higher than teachers
Reading First strategies have significantly contributed to students' reading achievement.	4.88 (N=332)	5.69 (N=64)	5.63 (N=38)	$\chi^2 = 25.58, df=2, p=.05$	Reading Coaches higher than teachers
Because of Reading First, students are more actively engaged in reading instruction.	4.84 (N=330)	5.79 (N=63)	5.68 (N=38)	$\chi^2 = 37.50, df=2, p=.05$	Reading Coaches higher than teachers Administrative staff higher than teachers

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Moderately Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly Agree, 5=Moderately Agree, 6=Strongly agree

However, differences among the respondents’ ratings were statistically significant on the remaining three items in the table, in that Reading Coaches reported higher agreement with the statements than did teachers.

Reading Coaches indicated that students were more motivated and more actively involved in reading because

of Reading First and that Reading First strategies have contributed to students' reading achievement. Administrative staff also agreed more strongly than teachers that students were more actively engaged in reading because of Reading First. Kruskal-Wallis tests showed no differences between respondents regarding student expectations based on the number of years in which staff members engaged in Reading First.

Student Achievement as Measured by DIBELS

In summer 2006, Censeo Group obtained the DIBELS testing data for the past three years from the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The data include information for all students who tested at each Reading First school site at the end of each school year. That is, the data set included students who were tested in the spring of the year, but who may not have attended the Reading First school all year. Table 19 provides information about the number of students and the percentage of students who reached benchmark on the DIBELS assessments in each spring in which the school participated in Reading First. The z -score differences for DIBELS performance between the years of grant implementation are also included the table.

Table 19. DIBELS Assessment Results

School Name	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % at Benchmark	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
Cohort 1 Schools									
Achille Elementary School	63	38%	64	55%	1.70	72	57%	0.09	2.01*
Allen Bowden Elementary School	136	54%	149	75%	3.55**	144	67%	-1.73	1.98*
Big Pasture Elementary School	70	50%	71	73%	2.67**	73	75%	0.10	2.96**
Carnegie Elementary School	185	43%	198	57%	2.71**	200	70%	2.47**	5.20**
Central Elementary School	106	48%	96	57%	1.16	95	59%	0.09	1.40
Cherokee Elementary School	212	46%	159	64%	3.41**	182	82%	3.71**	7.40**
Coolidge Elementary School	346	33%	347	42%	2.48*	359	49%	1.63	4.19**
Cotteral Elementary School	443	49%	498	66%	5.31**	496	71%	1.59	6.88**
Council Grove Elementary School	169	36%	180	40%	0.64	192	41%	0.12	0.87
Cyril Elementary School	94	38%	104	64%	3.53**	119	71%	0.84	4.58**
Dustin Elementary School	41	32%	34	50%	1.37	30	60%	0.55	2.13*
Elmore City-Pernell Elementary School	152	64%	164	68%	0.60	150	74%	0.99	1.67
Eugene Field Elementary School	356	43%	337	46%	0.65	301	56%	2.57*	3.30**
Flower Mound Elementary School	99	71%	124	73%	0.16	103	79%	0.90	1.14
Fogarty Elementary School	416	49%	418	54%	1.59	449	69%	4.40**	6.06**
George Elementary School	108	51%	90	47%	-0.74	113	83%	5.35**	4.97**
Glenwood Early Childhood	189	65%	179	66%	0.06	186	78%	2.57*	2.77**
Greenvale Elementary School	192	18%	187	36%	3.85**	189	39%	0.45	4.41**
Hammon Elementary School	48	73%	46	76%	0.12	48	79%	0.11	0.48
Hayes Elementary School	352	49%	360	56%	1.79	407	62%	1.71	3.62**
Holly Creek Elementary School	94	69%	91	79%	1.38	93	80%	-0.11	1.46
Horace Mann Elementary School	190	35%	170	58%	4.26**	177	73%	2.76**	7.11**
Howe Elementary School	98	40%	104	63%	3.22**	127	69%	0.79	4.29**
Idabel Primary School	230	44%	209	58%	2.83**	188	61%	0.56	3.41**
Irving Elementary School	239	52%	243	64%	2.55*	217	71%	1.65	4.18**
John Glenn Elementary School	337	34%	364	46%	3.08**	360	57%	2.91**	5.96**
Justice Elementary School	87	32%	81	47%	1.80	76	55%	0.89	2.81**
Kiefer Elementary School	109	29%	101	56%	3.83**	102	63%	0.77	4.73**
Longfellow Elementary School	94	16%	70	27%	1.55	70	23%	-0.78	0.91
Macomb Elementary School	92	30%	109	32%	0.10	100	27%	-0.96	-0.69

School Name	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % at Benchmark	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
Mark Twain Elementary School	183	15%	170	40%	5.09**	161	48%	1.44	6.53**
Peggs Elementary School	87	39%	100	49%	1.21	91	58%	1.13	2.41*
Pershing Elementary School	186	53%	187	68%	2.80**	207	72%	0.88	3.85**
Poteau Primary Elementary School	454	59%	489	60%	0.14	538	72%	3.93**	4.07**
Poteau Upper Elementary School	132	45%	134	62%	2.57**	152	61%	-0.25	2.53*
Purcell Elementary School	421	51%	416	58%	1.86	428	60%	0.62	2.56*
Putnam Heights Elementary School	172	23%	180	31%	1.66	159	63%	5.75**	7.30**
Ripley Elementary School	114	54%	100	73%	2.67**	100	63%	-1.67	1.14
Shidler Elementary School	159	30%	132	34%	0.70	176	51%	2.87**	3.90**
Smithville Elementary School	64	67%	67	75%	0.75	67	84%	1.06	1.98*
Spavinaw Elementary School	59	42%	50	50%	0.60	49	78%	2.64**	3.50**
Springer Elementary School	51	47%	44	48%	-0.14	44	52%	0.21	0.30
Tipton Elementary School	80	19%	65	45%	3.19**	102	60%	1.76	5.42**
Ward Elementary School West	202	48%	224	51%	0.59	226	66%	3.14**	3.74**
Washington Elementary School	161	52%	172	56%	0.56	158	68%	2.11*	2.72**
Waurika Elementary School	116	56%	133	61%	0.65	134	80%	3.26**	3.92**
Wetumka Elementary School	121	54%	126	69%	2.34*	139	59%	-1.83	0.73
Whittier Elementary School	188	59%	170	69%	2.03*	152	71%	0.20	2.28*
Wickliffe Elementary School	77	43%	68	65%	2.46*	77	62%	-0.47	2.26*
Wilburton Elementary School	307	39%	298	55%	3.85**	325	63%	1.96*	5.95**
Winds West Elementary School	257	37%	273	59%	5.07**	318	65%	1.37	6.65**
Wright City Elementary School	127	46%	135	70%	3.93**	138	75%	0.65	4.70**
Yarbrough Elementary School	27	59%	31	77%	1.21	26	81%	-0.02	1.41
Yuba Elementary School	46	65%	34	65%	-0.28	34	56%	-0.99	-1.08
Cohort 2 Schools									
Anderson Elementary School			185	28%		231	32%	0.79	
Brantly Elementary School			220	55%		247	62%	1.24	
Burroughs Elementary School			193	16%		168	22%	1.31	
Celia Clinton Elementary School			216	27%		211	46%	4.00**	
Chouteau Elementary School			248	57%		234	62%	0.95	
Dewey Elementary			141	26%		139	39%	2.12*	
Hayes Elementary School			194	45%		204	48%	0.34	
Heronville Elementary School			325	32%		364	46%	3.72**	

School Name	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % at Benchmark	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % Benchmark	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
John Adams Elementary School			305	36%		323	42%	1.47	
Mazie Elementary School			31	29%		40	45%	1.13	
Nowata Elementary School			329	53%		318	59%	1.59	
Okmulgee Elementary School			248	53%		240	60%	1.60	
Okmulgee Primary School			310	53%		327	67%	3.46**	
Penn Elementary School			143	32%		139	34%	0.17	
Rockwood Elementary School			315	35%		269	39%	1.11	
Springdale Elementary School			265	25%		251	41%	3.82**	
Tyrone Elementary School			75	72%		61	85%	1.64	
Vegher Intermediate School			66	53%		61	48%	-0.80	
Willow Brook Elementary School			266	39%		257	49%	2.29*	

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$

Figure 4 shows the number of schools that had specific percentages of students at benchmark levels in spring 2006. In the school with the lowest performance on the DIBELS, 22% of kindergarten through third grade students scored at benchmark while in the school with the highest performance, 85% of students at benchmark. In 19 of the 73 schools, less than 50% of students scored at benchmark levels.

Figure 4. Percentage of Students Meeting Benchmark Goals in Spring 2006

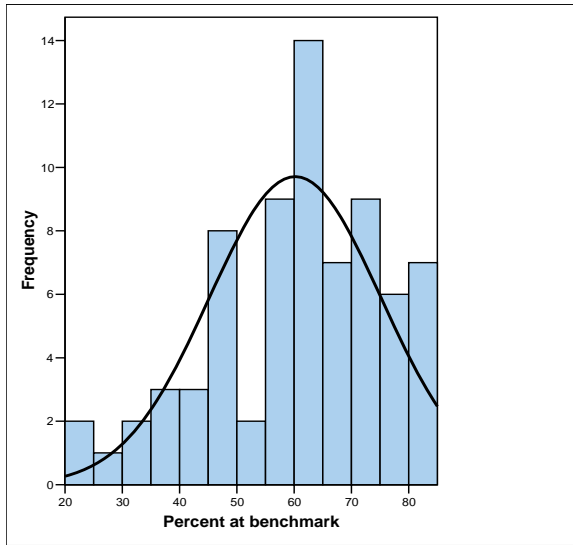
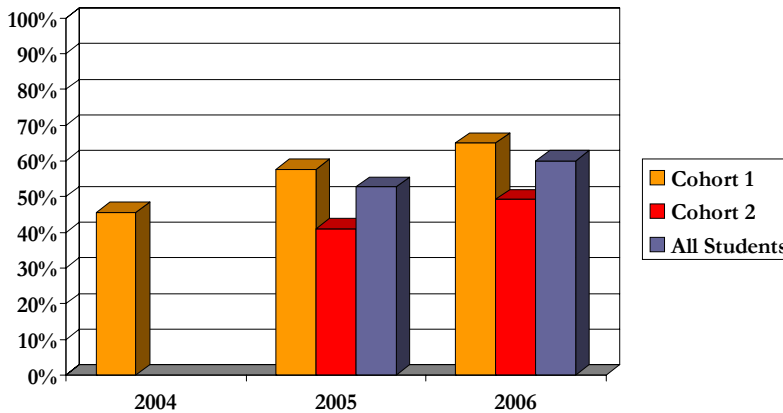


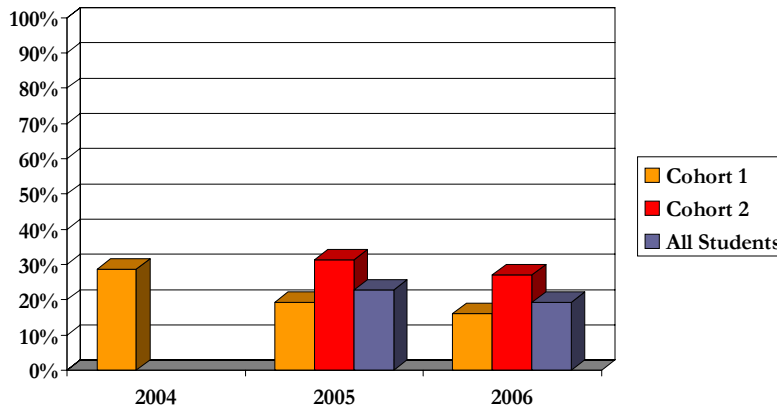
Figure 4 illustrates the performance of all Reading First schools on the DIBELS and Figure 5 shows the percentage of students who reached benchmark status in each grant year by cohort. At the end of their first and second years of the grant, Cohort 2 had a lower percentage of students at benchmark level. Even so, the percentage of students in both cohorts who reached benchmark at the end of each grant year increased.

Figure 5. Average Percentage of Students at Benchmark Category Spring 2006



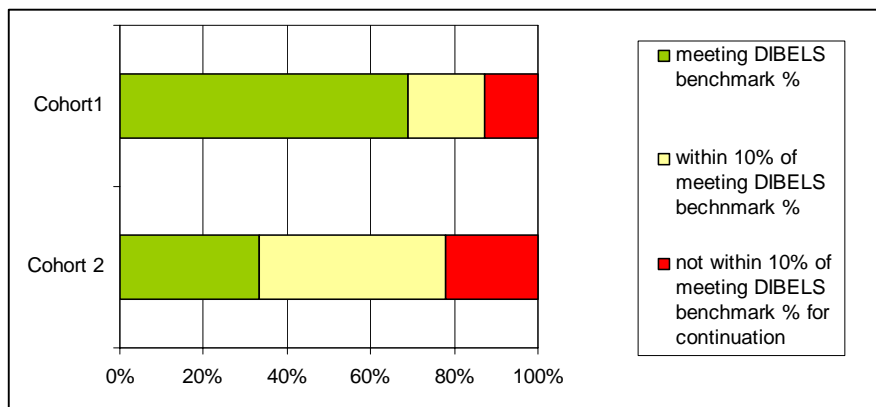
As the number of students who reached benchmark levels in each year increased, the percentage of students in the lowest category of the DIBELS system, intensive, decreased in each year of the grant. As shown in Figure 6, at the end of 2006 approximately 15% of students in Cohort 1 schools scored in the intensive category while 28% of Cohort 2 students scored in the intensive category.

Figure 6. Average Percentage of Students at Intensive Category Spring 2006



The final way in which DIBELS data are presented is by percentage of schools in each cohort who had 60% or more students at benchmark. Figure 7 illustrates that among Cohort 1 schools, 69% of schools met this goal in spring 2006. Only one-quarter of Cohort 2 schools met the goal in spring 2006. However, another 32% of schools were within 10% of meeting the goal; that is, more than 50% but less than 60% of students in these schools reached benchmark in spring 2006.

Figure 7. Percentage of Schools Meeting DIBELS Benchmark Criteria Spring 2006



Changes in Student Achievement as Measured by ITBS

A goal of Reading First is to increase the reading achievement of all students participating in the grant. The performance of the two cohorts of schools participating in Oklahoma Reading First, with Cohort 1 implementing the program for three years and Cohort 2 for two was examined for ITBS outcomes. ITBS data for each year of the grant are presented in Table 20. The table identifies the percentage of students who scored at or above the top 50th percentile in ITBS Total Reading in each year of the grant and also shows the z-score different between years.

As indicated in Table 20, in spring 2004, 49% of all students (consisting only of students in Cohort 1) scored at or above the 50th percentile. In spring 2005, the percentage of students (the second year of grant implementation for Cohort 2 students and the first year for Cohort 1) who scored at or above the 50th percentile was the same as that in 2004. This may have been due to the addition of a new cohort of students who had the benefit of only one year of implementation. In spring 2006, 53% of all students scored at or above the 50th percentile. The increase among students from 49% in 2004 to 53% in 2006 was statistically significant.

Among Cohort 1 students, boys, girls, students of all races, students in all grades, and students in 15 schools showed statistically significant increases in the number of students who scored at, or above, the 50th percentile on the ITBS. Only one Cohort 1 school had a significant decrease in performance during this time. Among Cohort 2 students, the only subgroup that had a significant increase in performance was students eligible for the National School Lunch Program. Only one school in Cohort 2 had a significant increase from spring 2005 to spring 2006.

Table 20. ITBS Assessment Results

School	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
ALL RF SCHOOLS	6,562	49%	9595	49%	0.59	9724	53%	5.43**	5.49**
Grade Levels									
grade 1	2,333	44%	3492	48%	2.80**	3498	51%	2.94**	5.46**
grade 2	2,119	51%	3080	48%	-2.18*	3201	54%	4.63**	2.01*
grade 3	2,128	52%	3023	52%	0.34	3025	54%	1.78	1.98*
Demographic Categories									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,387	50%	1895	57%	3.87**	1989	58%	1.13	4.98**
Asian/Pacific Islander	88	48%	91	53%	0.52				
Black or African American	763	32%	1628	35%	1.63	1642	40%	3.09**	4.09**
Hispanic or Latino	793	26%	1516	26%	-0.28	1584	33%	4.22**	3.21**
White	3,089	57%	3941	61%	3.69**	4060	65%	3.43**	6.95**
ELL	498	23%	1040	11%	-6.30**	952	24%	7.75**	0.44
Free/reduced lunch			7087	44%		6539	50%	7.57**	
Female	3,198	53%	4698	52%	-1.02	4685	56%	3.73**	2.35*
Male	3,335	45%	4852	46%	1.70	4989	50%	3.97**	5.30**
Migrant			50	44%		30	40%	-0.58	
Cohort 1 Schools									
Achille Elementary School	48	50%	46	46%	-0.63	50	50%	0.22	-0.20
Allen Bowden Elementary School	109	71%	114	70%	-0.22	105	69%	-0.40	-0.48
Big Pasture Elementary School	52	67%	55	84%	1.74	54	78%	-1.02	0.99
Carnegie Elementary School	143	56%	152	59%	0.33	133	71%	2.01*	2.41*
Central Elementary School	105	43%	88	53%	1.32	95	49%	-0.68	0.80
Cherokee Elementary School	151	32%	102	44%	1.75	133	59%	2.08*	4.31**
Coolidge Elementary School	248	33%	266	36%	0.44	254	35%	-0.16	0.37
Cotteral Elementary School	230	50%	232	59%	1.86	260	56%	-0.92	1.09
Council Grove Elementary School	120	41%	122	36%	-0.89	137	30%	-1.18	-1.96*
Cyril Elementary School	66	59%	71	59%	-0.17	89	57%	-0.40	-0.39
Dustin Elementary School	31	48%	27	37%	-1.14	22	64%	1.57	0.82
Elmore City-Pernell Elementary School	115	58%	118	60%	0.16	118	65%	0.67	0.96
Eugene Field Elementary School	248	37%	235	34%	-0.80	214	35%	0.12	-0.55
Flower Mound Elementary School	72	81%	78	71%	-1.62	79	78%	0.96	-0.52

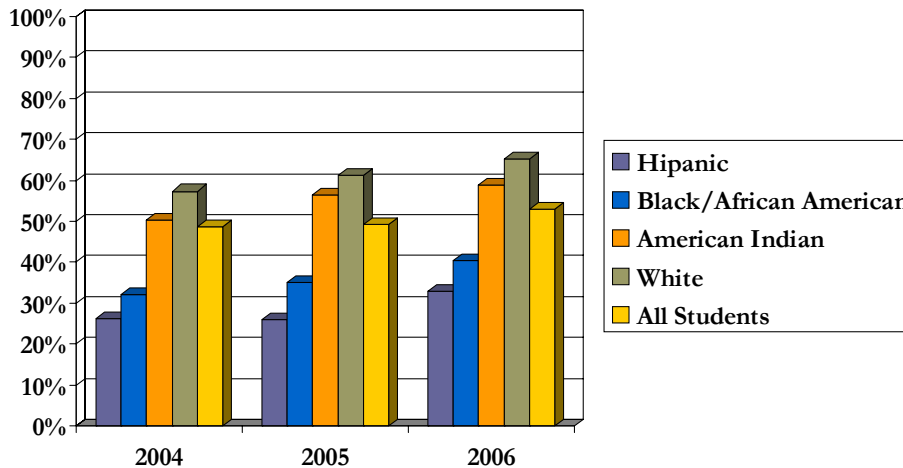
School	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
Fogarty Elementary School	416	57%	421	61%	1.13	450	59%	-0.79	0.43
George Elementary School									
Glenwood Early Childhood									
Greenvale Elementary School	129	22%	130	27%	0.83	129	24%	-0.68	0.30
Hammon Elementary School	33	82%	29	79%	-0.57	30	73%	-0.85	-1.11
Hayes Elementary School	343	57%	355	60%	0.54	403	64%	1.07	1.69
Holly Creek Elementary School	67	70%	70	70%	-0.21	70	67%	-0.55	-0.56
Horace Mann Elementary School	147	30%	124	56%	4.28*8	123	61%	0.59	4.99**
Howe Elementary School	70	30%	73	73%	4.93**	95	67%	-0.90	4.59**
Idabel Primary School	225	44%	208	58%	2.66**	187	71%	2.56*	5.23**
Irving Elementary School	173	41%	187	49%	1.45	161	56%	1.14	2.61**
John Glenn Elementary School	248	44%	252	47%	0.56	276	53%	1.22	1.88
Justice Elementary School	64	41%	53	36%	-0.72	51	76%	3.97**	3.66**
Kiefer Elementary School	78	37%	69	62%	2.88**	64	67%	0.41	3.39**
Longfellow Elementary School	68	15%	61	23%	0.97	49	29%	0.45	1.60
Macomb Elementary School	68	37%	85	46%	0.97	75	53%	0.78	1.82
Mark Twain Elementary School	125	10%	126	13%	0.56	114	30%	2.93**	3.61**
Peggs Elementary School	58	55%	63	57%	0.03	69	61%	0.26	0.47
Pershing Elementary School	126	54%	134	63%	1.30	150	66%	0.46	1.91
Poteau Primary Elementary School	267	70%	333	66%	-0.95	346	73%	1.83	0.85
Poteau Upper Elementary School	136	64%	135	76%	1.94	152	70%	-1.11	1.03
Purcell Elementary School	289	66%	293	61%	-1.25	314	59%	-0.55	-1.73
Putnam Heights Elementary School	117	41%	139	35%	-1.20	114	46%	1.80	0.70
Ripley Elementary School	88	67%	74	74%	0.84	70	69%	-0.95	0.03
Shidler Elementary School	97	22%	98	37%	2.16*	135	29%	-1.41	1.09
Smithville Elementary School	50	64%	50	54%	-1.22	48	73%	1.73	0.73
Spavinaw Elementary School	36	39%	37	92%	4.5288	38	82%	-1.65	3.52**
Springer Elementary School	37	51%	34	53%	-0.10	31	61%	0.43	0.58
Tipton Elementary School	62	27%	53	51%	2.39*	53	64%	1.18	3.76**
Ward Elementary School West	148	43%	164	51%	1.30	166	58%	1.10	2.47*
Washington Elementary School	159	65%	166	64%	-0.41	156	71%	1.28	0.97
Waurika Elementary School	83	59%	97	68%	1.10	102	76%	1.17	2.38*
Wetumka Elementary School	86	43%	82	49%	0.59	94	51%	0.15	0.93

School	Spring 2004 N	Spring 2004 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Spring 2005 N	Spring 2005 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2004-2005	Spring 2006 N	Spring 2006 % ≥ 50 th Percentile	Z-score change 2005-2006	Z-score change 2004-2006
Whittier Elementary School	133	38%	130	51%	2.03*	113	56%	0.65	2.72**
Wickliffe Elementary School	57	54%	54	59%	0.33	53	66%	0.52	1.05
Wilburton Elementary School	219	43%	214	52%	1.86	221	62%	1.94	3.91**
Winds West Elementary	183	46%	207	57%	2.09*	248	50%	-1.59	0.74
Wright City Elementary School	88	80%	104	77%	-0.61	99	74%	-0.69	-1.11
Yarborough Elementary School	17	35%	24	46%	0.35	21	62%	0.78	1.31
Yuba Elementary School	34	56%	22	73%	0.99	24	79%	0.17	1.56
Cohort 2 Schools									
Anderson Elementary School			143	27%		162	33%	0.91	
Brantly Elementary School			140	60%		137	55%	-0.88	
Burroughs Elementary School			152	24%		125	28%	0.68	
Celia Clinton Elementary School			160	36%		133	45%	1.42	
Chouteau Elementary School			165	55%		177	54%	-0.38	
Dewey Elementary School			102	28%		94	30%	0.05	
Hayes Elementary School			137	39%		134	49%	1.63	
Heronville Elementary School			234	19%		258	22%	0.57	
John Adams Elementary School			224	20%		235	27%	1.70	
Mazie Elementary School			21	24%		28	21%	-0.54	
Nowata Elementary School			239	57%		233	65%	1.67	
Okmulgee Elementary School			224	58%		234	67%	1.81	
Okmulgee Primary School			146	47%		163	48%	0.22	
Penn Elementary School			106	30%		96	29%	-0.31	
Rockwood Elementary School			222	17%		179	18%	0.33	
Springdale Elementary School			194	31%		201	46%	2.93**	
Tyrone Elementary School			61	74%		43	79%	0.39	
Vegher Intermediate School			66	67%		60	53%	-1.71	
Willow Brook Elementary School			203	28%		195	32%	0.81	

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$

The percentage of students who scored at or above the 50th percentile on the ITBS by the racial/ethnic categories included in the ITBS data set is illustrated in Figure 8. A significant increase between spring 2004 and spring 2006 can be seen among students of American Indian, African American, Hispanic, and White descent. Data were not available for children of Asian/Pacific Island descent. Although the performance of Hispanic students and African American students was stronger in 2006 as compared to 2004, the figure shows that the performance of students in these racial/ethnic categories still fell below the performance of American Indian and White students and below the average of all Reading First students.

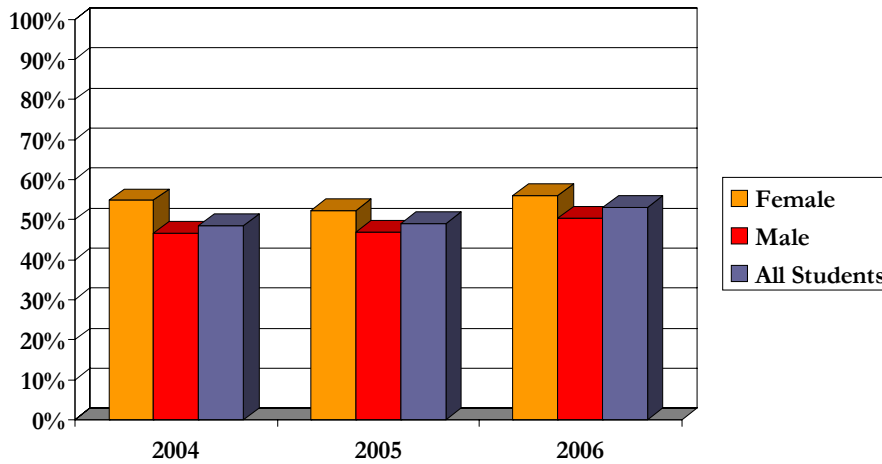
Figure 8. ITBS Total Reading - Percentage of Students at or Above 50th Percentile by Race



Among English language learners, a statistically significant increase in the percentage of students who scored at, or above, the 50th percentile was evident between 2004 and 2005. However, no statistically significant increase was evident between 2004 and 2006. Second language learners experienced success between the first and second year of the grant, however this success did not continue into third year of the grant.

Figure 9 illustrates differences in performance based on gender. A greater percentage of boys ($\bar{x}=5.30$) and girls ($\bar{x}=2.35$) scored at or above the 50th percentile on the ITBS in spring 2006 than in spring 2004.

Figure 9. ITBS Total Reading - Percentage of Students at or Above 50th Percentile by Gender



ITBS data were also analyzed by school. In the school with the lowest achievement on the ITBS, only 13% of students scored at or above the 50th percentile. In the most successful school, 92% of students scored at or above the 50th percentile on the ITBS. Figure 10 shows the frequency of different percentages of success on the ITBS. In 30 of the 73 schools, less than 50% of students scored above the 50th percentile while in two schools, 80% or more students scored above the 50th percentile.

Figure 10. Schools with Percentage of Students at or above 50th Percentile ITBS Spring 2006

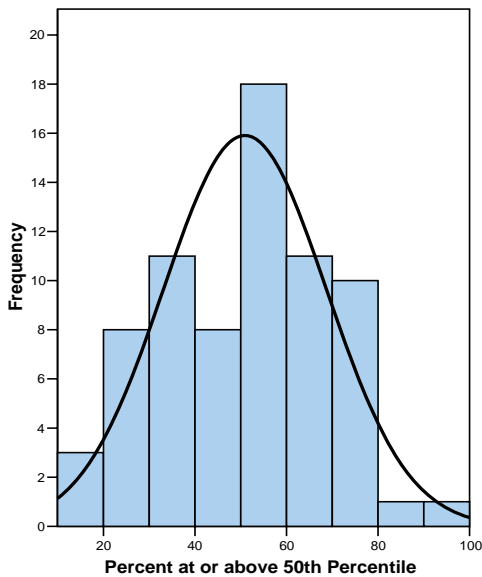
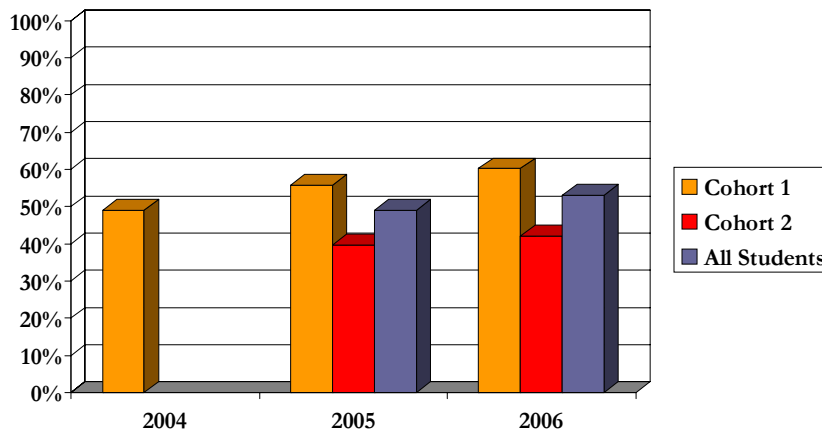


Figure 11 shows the percentage of students at or above the 50th percentile by cohort in each grant year. Cohort 1 schools had a stronger performance at the end of their first and second years of grant implementation than did Cohort 2 schools in their first and second years of grant implementation. As indicated in the figure, the percentage of students at or above the 50th percentile has increased over the course of the three grant years.

Figure 11. ITBS Total Reading - Percentage of Students at or Above 50th Percentile by Cohort



SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation examined the implementation and outcomes of Oklahoma's Reading First program, including implementation of core curricula, engagement in professional development, methods of instruction, use of student assessment, factors that influenced program implementation, and changes in student achievement. Information gathered through surveys, interviews, and a school self-assessment provided insights regarding participants' experiences in implementing Reading First. Oklahoma began to implement Reading First in the 2003-2004 school year. Censeo Group, the evaluation provider, was brought into the evaluation process in spring 2006. This goal of this first year of the evaluation was to identify baseline implementation among the participating schools and to provide initial analysis of outcome data.

Two cohorts of schools currently participate in the grant, with Cohort 1 schools having begun implementation in the 2003-2004 school year and Cohort 2 in the 2004-2005 school year. Over the two to three years of grant implementation, staff has become familiar with new curricula; developed, delivered, and

attended professional development; and implemented and used assessment to guide instruction. These are significant changes and schools seem to have embraced these basic elements of Reading First.

All districts chose core reading programs prior to Censeo Group's involvement in the project. Teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff agreed that the literacy materials that they chose include a variety of readability levels, are arranged in a logical order and support classroom instruction. Although the majority of teachers follow the core curriculum, school self-assessments suggest that teachers are using materials other than the core program. Also, even though overall satisfaction with the core program is generally high, some teachers expressed frustration in open-ended comments in the survey with the core program, indicating that strict adherence to the core program limits their ability to make professional judgments about how to present the curriculum. Teachers also commented that the programs they use are not providing sufficient instruction in all five components of reading. The teachers offered suggestions of how they could improve instruction in the areas that they feel are not a strength of the program that they are using.

Respondents were generally positive about the grant and willing to meet grant expectations. However, as is common with all implementation efforts, the evaluation identified several areas in which the grant is not being as fully implemented as is possible: explicit instruction, effective grouping, and differentiated instruction. On the spring 2006 survey, teachers and administrative staff felt that these grant components were regularly occurring. Reading Coaches were less likely to agree that these components were in place. Similarly, in fall 2006, school Leadership Teams indicated that explicit instruction and effective classroom management are not as well implemented as they could be. Although teachers rated levels of implementation and differentiated instruction highly on the survey, in open-ended survey questions teachers questioned how to best differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all of the students in their classrooms. Teachers seemed generally comfortable providing instruction to students in the DIBELS strategic category; they were less confident about their ability to provide instruction for students learning English as a second language, students with disabilities, and students who are reading far below grade level. No differences in ratings were noted based on the number of years that a respondent had engaged with Reading First, suggesting that all staff members would likely benefit from implementation support.

Self-reported changes in reading instruction from before Reading First to the 2005-2006 school year included increased use of a dedicated, uninterrupted 90-minute reading block. Of the teacher respondents, 91% said that they teach within the 90-minute block daily. However, this still suggests that almost 10% of teachers are not using the daily 90-minute reading block daily. Teachers reported that they used practices associated with effective instruction prior to Reading First. For example, more than one-half of respondents indicated that prior to Reading First they used assessment to monitor student growth and plan instruction; regrouped students based on students' instructional needs; and used small-group teacher-led instruction. The majority of teachers reported that during the 2005-2006 school year, they used these practices daily.

Future evaluation activities will include observational data to more closely examine the extent to which teachers are effectively applying the instructional strategies and providing students with differentiated instruction. Observations will also provide information about the depth of instruction, that is, the extent to which all students engage in activities and tasks to the degree that facilitates their learning and meets their needs. Finally, site visits will allow more in-depth discussions with school staff regarding strengths and deficits of implementation.

The majority of the teaching staff regards Reading Coaches, who are helping teachers learn about and implement effective techniques, as helpful and knowledgeable. Although the majority of teachers and administrative staff were satisfied with the support provided by the Reading Coach, several teachers commented that their Reading Coach was inexperienced, lacked coaching skills, or did not provide sufficient modeling and support. Future evaluation activities will examine the process and outcomes of coaching in greater detail, to better identify methods that are most effective in supporting instructional change.

The assessment component of Reading First requires that teachers learn about the assessment instruments, administration techniques, and use of data for instruction. In the 2005-2006 school year, after two years of implementation among Cohort 2 schools and three years of implementation among Cohort 1 schools, teachers reported being comfortable administering Reading First assessments. Self-assessment by the Leadership Team indicated that assessment systems are in place and teachers are trained in the systems. However, interpretation and use of assessment data continue to be a challenge. Teachers seemed unsure of

how the assessment results could be helpful in planning and differentiating instruction. Providing additional guidance to Reading Coaches, administrative staff, and teachers about effective data interpretation and analysis would likely be beneficial.

Staff described the Reading First professional development activities as beneficial. Teachers noted that they learned new concepts and skills and indicated that they have applied these new skills to their instruction. In addition to self-reported results of professional development outcomes, pre- and post-assessments of TRA content knowledge indicated that participants in the summer TRAs improved their knowledge of effective reading instruction over the course of the four-day session.

In the majority of schools, the Reading Coaches have led the Reading First initiative. In fall 2006, State leadership asked schools to develop Leadership Teams consisting of Reading Coaches, administrative staff, and teachers. These newly-formed teams attended a Reading Coach meeting in fall 2006 to learn about their role in the grant. The teams have conducted a self-assessment and received initial training on how to improve implementation based on their school's identified needs. They will receive additional support in monitoring Reading First implementation in their school and using data to ensure that all grant elements are in place and contributing to successful outcomes.

Support for Reading First is provided at the school level by Reading Coaches, the district level by district administrative staff, and the state level by SDE staff. Teachers were less likely than Reading Coaches and school-level administrative staff to say that they have received sufficient support to implement Reading First. Reading Coaches have been helping teachers learn new practices, but principals must set and reinforce expectations regarding teachers' involvement in the grant and use of instructional methods. The principal is the instructional leader in the building and must be aware of the extent to which students are receiving the instruction and intervention they need, teachers are receiving support they need, and strategies and methods that meet the requirements of the Reading First grant are being used. Principals' involvement in the grant has been variable. In some schools principals have taken an active role in observing instruction and supporting grant implementation. Principals' involvement in Reading First will be further examined in subsequent years of the evaluation.

When teachers were asked about the greatest challenges they face regarding implementing Reading First, they focused on the personal impact of Reading First and managing the demands of the grant. Specifically, their concerns focused on instructional materials, professional development, and Reading Coach and principal support. Although they had identified each of these elements as successful and helpful to them, they also identified aspects of the core program, training, and support that could be improved. Although some respondents' concerns fell at higher levels of the model, the number was not as many as would be expected for a program at this stage of implementation.

There are no clear guidelines for the length of time that it should take for staff to become comfortable with a new program and move from concerns related to the self to concerns related to outcomes. However, some teachers, administrative staff, and Reading Coaches had been with the program for two and three years at the time of data collection. It could be expected that these participants should have moved from the lower levels of the CBAM model to the higher levels and turn away from a focus on self and management to a focus on outcomes. These results suggest that teachers, Reading Coaches, and administrative staff might benefit from support focused on personal and management issues to help alleviate concerns at this level. Also, a statewide focus on expected outcomes and specific ways in which to reach expected outcomes would likely be beneficial.

With new staff entering Reading First schools, Reading Coaches and Leadership Teams will need to be aware that teachers in some schools will just be starting to implement the grant and may need support at the lower levels of the CBAM model. This will require additional attention from Reading Coaches and administrative staff. SDE staff may also need to provide more individualized technical assistance to participating schools. Table 21 provides suggestions about the types of interventions that might be appropriate at different levels of concern within the CBAM model. This framework might help the Reading First staff to design their support and address the underlying concerns that teachers express.

In addition to examining the implementation of Reading First, this evaluation also analyzed changes in student achievement over the course of grant implementation. DIBELS and ITBS data suggest that a number of schools have made significant gains in the percentage of students who have reached benchmark levels and

who have improved their performance on the ITBS. The successes are particularly evident among Cohort 1 schools. These schools have been implementing the program for one year longer than Cohort 2 schools, so it is not unexpected that their progress is greater. The gains among Cohort 1 schools include improvement among all racial and ethnic groups, both genders, and all grade levels.

Table 21. Suggested Interventions by Level of Concern

Stage	Suggested Intervention
Level 0	Involve teachers in discussions about the innovation.
Level 1 Informational	Provide clear and accurate information about the program and ways in which it might affect their work.
Level 2 Personal	Directly address staff questions about their concerns; encourage staff to implement changes progressively over time.
Level 3 Management	Provide help with specific “how to” questions; do not encourage staff to think about future impact, rather focus on helping them to deal with their management concerns.
Level 4 Consequence	Provide positive feedback and the opportunity for staff to share their learning and successes.
Level 5 Collaboration	Help staff learn effective methods and skills for collaboration, provide staff the opportunity to meet and a constructive way for them to work together to improve implementation.
Level 6 Refocusing	Respect and encourage suggestions and act on staff concerns.

Note: Hall, G., George, A., & Rutherford, W. (1979). *Measuring Stages of Concern about the innovation: A manual for use of the SoC Questionnaire*. Austin, TX: The University of TX at Austin, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education.

Some schools have shown significant positive changes in student achievement over the two or three years that they have participated in the grant, while other schools have not been as successful with the overall population and with specific subgroups. Although many schools made gains in student outcomes, these gains were not statistically significant in many schools. However, the majority of schools indicated on the school self-assessment that they are providing effective instruction and intervention for students. Similarly, many teachers suggested that student outcomes were a positive outcome of the Reading First grant. The variable overall performance of schools and the fact that not all schools showed significant increased in scores suggest that instruction may not be as targeted or intervention provided as regularly as necessary. As indicated in the summary of implementation data, using assessment data to differentiate instruction has not been a strong element with regard to grant implementation. Helping teachers to use data and to understand how the data can help to improve instruction and intervention may be a way to improve overall outcomes. Differential

outcomes should not be interpreted to mean that the teachers and students received no benefit from the project activities and materials. Many factors affected the overall grant implementation and it is expected that achievement will be impacted as staff becomes more skilled at the instructional methods used with Reading First.

In the 2006-2007 school year, SDE Reading First staff is examining student outcomes and, as required by the U.S. Department of Education, determining guidelines for continued involvement among schools in the Reading First grant. The state will identify schools that have not made sufficient progress to date and will provide these schools with additional support and technical assistance.

Evaluation has indicated changed instructional practices in Reading First schools, confidence among staff that student outcomes have improved, increased teacher knowledge about reading instruction, and higher percentages of students showing stronger DIBELS and ITBS outcomes. Future evaluation activities will include more in-depth analyses of instructional practices in Reading First schools, the support for long-term change in instructional practices, and the relationships between levels of implementation and student outcomes.

Recommendations

- The two primary areas of need among teachers and other school staff are in using assessment results to differentiate instruction and provide effective intervention. To address concerns about differentiated instruction, teachers must understand the benefits of effective small group work within the 90-minute reading block. Helping teachers understand how to connect assessment and instruction so that instruction is differentiated and meeting student needs is recommended.
- Teachers' concerns about the Reading First grant fall at the lower levels of the CBAM model. Staff members are still questioning how to manage assessment and differentiated instruction and how to manage student groups. Helping teachers to become more comfortable with these instructional strategies will be important to realizing the full benefit of the grant. Reading Coaches may need additional support to best understand how to help teachers change their practice. In addition to Reading Coach support, professional development and teachers learning from each other to improve practice may be beneficial.
- The principal, the instructional leader in the building, must be aware of teachers' instructional methods and set expectations for a minimum set of instructional practices in their school building. While the Reading Coaches can help teachers to change their practice, they cannot require teachers to change their

practice - this direction must come from the principal. For example, the principal must emphasize that the core program must be used and that teachers should be meeting with small groups of students for targeted reading instruction. With the direction of the Leadership Team and the school principal, Reading Coaches can help teachers to determine how to best implement these requirements in classrooms.

- Professional development in the area of classroom management and support for teachers in these methods as they begin to use centers would be helpful.
- A number of teachers expressed concerns that they were not able to teach composition and writing during the 90-minute reading block. It might be beneficial for Reading First staff to discuss ways to incorporate writing into content area instruction and to remind teachers that they can teach writing during different times in the day.
- Additional modeling and coaching, especially for teachers who do not yet seem comfortable with the program would be beneficial. To ensure that assistance is offered to teachers who may need help, Reading Coaches may wish to not only address the needs of teachers who have the confidence to volunteer for assistance. Reading Coaches may identify teachers with the greatest need through the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO), a standardized observational tool that might provide a way to begin conversations with teachers about their literacy classroom and literacy instruction.
- As indicated in the report, Censeo Group began this evaluation in the spring of the third year of Reading First implementation. The following recommendations are offered for the 2006-2007 evaluation: further examine the extent to which intervention is consistently provided; analyze the movement of students from the intensive and strategic categories into benchmark levels; identify whether schools are using a comprehensive set of materials and methods to provide effective intervention instruction; measure the extent to which teachers feel prepared to deliver the targeted instruction that students need; refine the TRA and school survey to measure elements of interest in the 2006-2007 school year; and further analyze the support of instructional leaders in the building - principals and school Leadership Teams.