Idaho Reading First Evaluations

2004-2005
2005-2006
2006-2007

Lead Evaluator: Roger A. Stewart, Ph.D.
2004-2005 Evaluation Design

Comparison group design with 26 schools in the comparison group.

Extensive teacher, coach, and principal surveys exploring the following:

• Knowledge of early literacy teaching;
• Perceptions of core programs;
• Professional development quality and additional needs; and
• School climate variables (not a significant portion of surveys).

Classroom observations followed a structured observation protocol that cataloged the number of minutes spent teaching phonics, comprehension, etc. Each observation was 45 minutes in duration and 118 IRF classrooms and 51 comparison classrooms were observed.
Highlights of 2004-2005 Evaluation

• Teacher, coach, and principal knowledge were good. There was no difference between IRF and comparison schools.

• Classroom observations revealed quite similar teaching between IRF and comparison schools.

• Test scores (ITBS, TPRI, IRI, and ISAT) revealed parity between experimental and comparison groups, but comparison group had higher SES level, fewer Hispanic students, etc.

• Teacher surveys revealed that teachers liked their core programs, appreciated and valued the professional development, and enjoyed working closely with colleagues.

• Principals evaluated coaches quite highly but teachers’ evaluations of coaches were mixed. Coaches were weak in conducting demonstration lessons, discussing individual struggling students, and experience with the core program.
2004-2005 Highlights continued…

• Teachers expressed concern about their core program’s capacity to meet the needs of ESL and Hispanic students.

• Workshop and intervention time were highlighted as problem areas by teachers, coaches, and principals.

• IRF schools exhibited a wide range in test performance within and between schools.

• Coaches believed that teachers needed more professional development than teachers believed they needed.

• Coaches rated their principal’s interpersonal skills and coaching abilities higher than teachers’ ratings of their principals.
2005-2006 Evaluation Design

• Dropped comparison group design in order to focus resources on explaining variability within and between IRF schools.

• Surveyed teachers, coaches, and principals using the following standardized instruments: Collective Teacher Efficacy, Omnibus Trust, and Organizational Health Inventory—Elementary.

• Collected and analyzed the following new data sources: Teacher turnover, principal turnover, student mobility, and special education referrals.

• Conducted extensive classroom observations in low performing, middle performing, and high performing IRF schools (15 schools observed by one or more observers. Total of 137 hours of classroom observation.)

• Longitudinal analysis of test score data.

• Linear regression analyses of all variables to explain school variability.
Highlights of 2005-2006 Evaluation

• Schools were above average on CTE, OT, and OHI. Some discrepancies existed between teachers’ and coaches’ perceptions.

• Teacher and principal turnover did not increase immediately before or during IRF implementation. But turnover is a challenge in IRF schools.

• Student mobility ranges widely in IRF schools (6% Archer—63% Sacajawea).

• Emerging evidence that special education referrals were decreasing.

• Variability in test scores within and between schools remained the same.

• No school had consistent, sustained test score growth at all grade levels.

• Overall network-wide averages held constant across the years.
2005-2006 Highlights continued……

Classroom observations revealed the following:

• Wide breadth in quality of delivery within and across schools;

• Some schools achieved outstanding levels of organization and team work that resulted in instruction focused on individual student needs;

• Academic press, enthusiasm, and energy were key variables in effective instruction;

• Fidelity to the core program was a common denominator but quality of delivery and energy level varied markedly;

• Workshop and intervention time improved from previous year but large variability in quality of delivery remained;

• Some teachers felt a high degree of pressure to conform to IRF “ways of doing things.” These teachers represented all levels of quality of delivery;

• The above variables explained much of the variation in school test score performance within and between schools.
2005-2006 Highlights continued……

Regression analyses revealed the following:

• No school climate or background variable consistently predicted a significant amount of test score variability across all grade levels and all assessments;

• But academic press and percentage of Hispanics in the school population were oftentimes significant predictors explaining substantial portions of variability (e.g., Hispanic percentage: 41-65% in all grades on the ITBS; and Academic Emphasis: 8-27% in all grades on the ITBS).

The coaches role remained variable and somewhat conflicted:

• Coaches varied in their effectiveness;

• Teachers had widely varying perceptions of their coaches and how effective and important they were to success in their school; and

• Higher performing schools did not always have the highest performing coaches.
2006-2007 Evaluation Design

Best practices exploration and synthesis:

• Identified 29 highest performing teachers based on ITBS scores (7 teachers at each grade level plus one special services teacher.);

• Identified teachers who had high relative success with their Hispanic students in addition to overall classroom scores.

• Extensive classroom observations and interviews with observed teachers, their coaches, and their principals.

• Continued longitudinal analysis of test scores (ITBS, TPRI, and IRI).

• Additional year of collecting and analyzing teacher and principal turnover data, student mobility data, and special education referral data.

• Surveyed 4th and 5th grade teachers concerning their perceptions of student preparation.
Highlights of 2006-2007 Evaluation

Observations and interviews revealed the following common characteristics among high performing teachers:

• Fidelity to the core program, but with strategic adjustments;
• Extensive knowledge of the core program including its strengths and weaknesses;
• Strong work ethic;
• High academic press in classroom;
• Enhanced vocabulary instruction;
• High-quality workshop and intervention periods;
• High expectations for all students with an intense focus on the individual student;
• Excellent classroom management; and
• Effective use of data.
2006-2007 Highlights continued…..

Observations and interviews revealed the following characteristics as important to Hispanic student success:

• High expectations for all students and a work ethic to diligently pursue this each day;

• An enhanced focus on vocabulary throughout the lesson cycle each day;

• High-quality supplemental programming such as ELL/ESL programs and curricula; and

• Effective workshop/intervention periods where individual needs of students are consistently addressed.
2006-2007 Highlights continued.....

• IRF schools continue to manifest substantial variability in test score performance both within and between schools. In other words, some grade levels within schools are doing substantially better than other grade levels and some IRF schools are doing better than others.

• No school has achieved consistent growth at all grade levels on multiple assessments.

• Overall averages for the network of schools have remained stable over time.

• Hispanic student performance continues to lag White student performance and achievement gaps are not closing but instead remain steady.

• The three evaluations taken in aggregate point to the fundamental importance of the quality of the teaching work force. Continued staff development informed by both the evaluation results and other sources of insight into how to overcome problems will be necessary if gains are to be made by the conclusion of the project.
2006-2007 Highlights continued…..

• Some high performing teachers are experiencing work-related stress caused primarily by the rigidity with which they have to implement their core reading program.

• Student mobility remains high in some IRF schools and there continues to be a wide range of mobility between IRF schools.

• Teacher turnover remains a significant but perhaps controllable factor but it does not appear to have increased as a result of IRF.

• Overall, there is a significant lack of parent involvement in IRF schools.
2006-2007 Highlights continued……

4th-5th grade teacher survey results (5=SA; 4=A; 3=N; 2=D; 1=SD):

In comparison to other similar students, my Reading First students are stronger…..

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. in their ability to read and comprehend narrative text.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. in their ability to read and comprehend expository text.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. in their reading fluency.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. in their word attack skills.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. in their use of phonics to decode words.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. in their phonics knowledge.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. in their ability to read and comprehend social studies content material.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. in their knowledge of social studies.</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. in their ability to read and comprehend science content material.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. in their knowledge of science.</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2006-2007 Highlights continued…….

4th-5th grade teacher survey results (5=SA; 4=A; 3=N; 2=D; 1=SD):

In comparison to other similar students, my Reading First students:

<p>| | | |</p>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have more positive attitudes about reading.</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Have greater interest in reading.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have greater desire to read.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Are better prepared to do 4\textsuperscript{th}-5\textsuperscript{th} grade level reading.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Have greater interest in writing.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are more creative in their writing.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Have better work habits.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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## Comparison of Non-Hispanic and Hispanic ITBS NCE Scores by Grade and Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>First Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>56.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>38.8</td>
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<td>Diff.</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Second Grade</th>
<th>Third Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff.</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations

• Web-based clearinghouse for materials and best practices;

• Teachers should be a consistent and significant part of calibration visits;

• Form best practice cadres of high performing teachers who travel from school to school modeling lessons, sharing materials, and infusing colleagues with energy, confidence, and enthusiasm;

• Very best teachers should be given permission to experiment and then report results to colleagues across network; and

• Collect and analyze, using cost/benefit analysis, consistent and comparable special education data across the network.