

Super Stars Literacy Annual Evaluation Report - 2010-11

Catherine Miller, Evaluator

CONTACT

For more information or an electronic copy of this report, please contact the Super Stars Literacy office, <http://www.superstarsliteracy.org/>, (510) 777-0870.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Outcome 1: Student Literacy Indicators	3
Outcome 2: Social-Emotional Indicators	5
Outcome 3: Home Literacy Environment Indicators	6
Recommendations for Program Improvement	6
Context of the Report	8
Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development.....	8
Student Demographics	9
Program Outcomes and Evidence-Based Practices.....	9
Program Outcome 1: Early Literacy and Reading Comprehension	10
Program Outcome 2: Socio-Emotional and Behavioral Skills.....	11
Program Outcome 3: Home Literacy Indicators	12
Program Outcomes	14
Outcome 1: Student Literacy Indicators	14
Outcome 2: Social-Emotional Indicators	18
Analysis.....	19
Outcome 3: Home Literacy Environment Indicators	19
Analysis	20
Process Outcomes	20
Process Outcome 2: Effective Instruction	21
Recommendations for Program Improvement	23
Appendices	25
Bibliography	29
About the Evaluator.....	30

Executive Summary

Super Stars Literacy (SSL) provides intensive literacy instruction combined with social/behavioral skill development five times weekly, for two to three hours each day after school. During 2010-11, the SSL program operated at six Title I elementary schools in low-income communities in Oakland, CA.

For its 2010-11 annual evaluation, Super Stars Literacy retained Catherine Miller, an educational researcher, with 15 years experience, whose work focuses on literacy intervention in low-income public schools.

Curricular changes for 2010-11 included an increased emphasis on read aloud strategies that build comprehension and vocabulary through inquiry and student talk. To support this emphasis, SSL adopted new assessments in reading comprehension and piloted a new vocabulary assessment tool. SSL also adopted a new assessment to measure growth in social-emotional behavior and changed its goal around parental involvement from attendance at events to improvement in the home literacy environment.

A key element of Super Stars Literacy's success continues to be the intensive and on-going training and professional development it provides to the AmeriCorps members who serve as its class instructors. This intensive training ensures effective implementation of the comprehensive instructional program. For 2010-11, new training content included observational data collection strategies and reading comprehension skills.

This year, Super Stars Literacy exceeded all of its literacy outcome goals. SSL students scored well above the 80% goal for improvement in all literacy growth indicators. In fact, 60 – 70% of first and second graders improved by **two or more grade levels** in the critical skills of word identification, oral reading, and comprehension.

Goals for improvements in student social/emotional skill development and in home literacy environments were not fully met. However, this may have more to do with the implementation of these new assessments than with the success of the program in these areas.

The following summarizes the achievements on outcome goals, and evaluator recommendations for the 2011-12 school year.

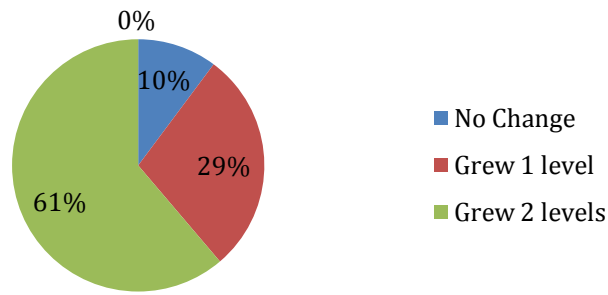
Outcome 1: Student Literacy Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of Students who attend the program regularly will show at least 1 level of growth on essential literacy indicators.

Kindergarten: *Phoneme Segmentation Fluency*

The goal was met. 87% of students increased at least one level in need for instruction in phoneme segmentation fluency.

Change in Kindergarten PSF Levels

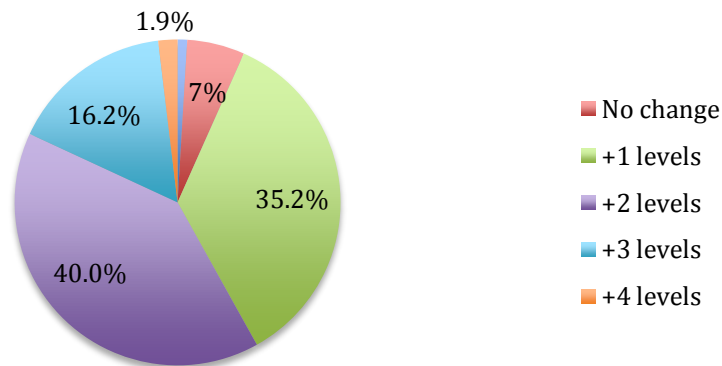


Grades 1-2: Word Identification, Oral Reading and Comprehension

Word Identification.

Status: Goal was met. 90% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Word Identification.

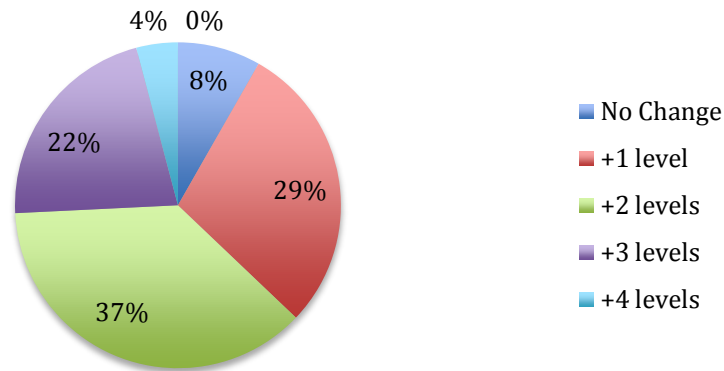
Growth Levels in Word Identification: 1st and 2nd Grade



Oral Readings.

Status: Goal was met. 95% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Oral Reading.

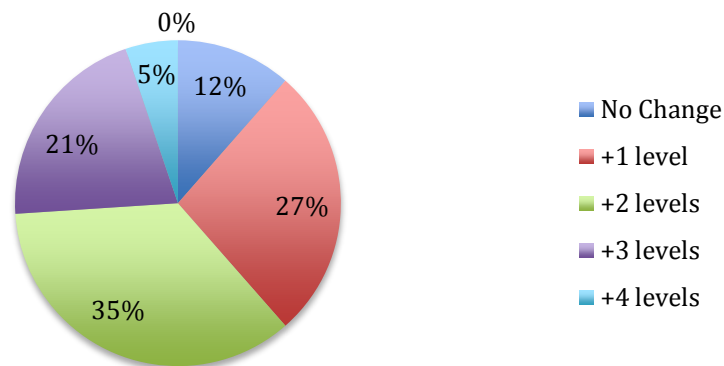
Growth Levels in Oral Reading: 1st and 2nd Grade



Comprehension.

Status: Goal was met. 96% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Comprehension.

Growth Levels in Comprehension: 1st and 2nd Grade



Outcome 2: Social-Emotional Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of students who attend the program regularly will further develop appropriate social-emotional skills

Progress Toward Goals

Empathy: Goal was not met. 45% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Empathy.

Impulse Control: Goal was not met. 47% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Impulse Control skills.

Conflict Negotiation: Goal was not met.

37% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Conflict Negotiation skills.

Student Change in Social Emotional Skills by DRDP-r Level

Levels Changed	Empathy n=177		Impulse Control n=180		Conflict Negotiation n=186	
	%		%		%	
0	47		44		58	
1	35		43		32	
2	8		4		4	
3	1		0		1	

Outcome 3: Home Literacy Environment Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of student homes will show indicators of improved literacy environments.

Status: The goal was not met

Home Literacy Questionnaire Comparison - Percentages of winter and spring

	Rarely*		Sometimes		Mostly to Always	
	Winter	Spring	Winter	Spring	Winter	Spring
I receive information about my child's progress in this program.	5	**	20	20	75	80
I read with my child at least 2 times each week.	3		37	41	60	59
I talk with my child about books or television programs.	7		29	34	64	66
I take trips to the library with my child.	21	14	53	46	26	34
We have books for my child to read at home.	16		17	15	80	80
I would recommend the SSL program to another family.	17		22	21	60	79

Recommendations for Program Improvement

1. Continue emphasizing reading comprehension

Professional development should focus on both the how and the why of reading comprehension through read-alouds.

2. Implement training by grade levels for specific reading skills

While all Group Leaders should have an understanding of literacy skills and pedagogy, each grade level can productively focus on specific areas, relative to the reading goals for their grade.

3. Implement the PPVT assessment as a standard assessment for kindergarten.

Oral language skills are strong indicators of reading ability, especially with young students who may have had limited exposure to books or language in the home. The PPVT was used as a pilot assessment this year, and results informed the program on the needs of the

students. Fully implementing the PPVT and addressing this area with targeted instruction and assessment is recommended.

4. Continue to refine social-emotional skills instruction and assessment through training and coaching

Super Stars Literacy might consider changing their goal from level changes in Social Emotional Development to a goal of monitoring and responding to needs in social-emotional development, informed by the DRDP. At the very least, Group Leaders should be provided with additional training and coaching on how to appropriately observe and document evidence of student actions in behavior categories.

5. Implement Basic Control Group Mechanism

Since SSL Group Leaders support classroom teachers during the class day, it may be possible to obtain consent from each school for the Group Leaders to provide the PPVT and QRI-5 assessments, on a pre and post basis, to 3 students, not in the SSL program, from each class (K-2nd) at each school. This should provide a reliable control group to compare student growth.

6. Revise Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire

The survey showed that all parents were providing certain home literacy supports for their students in the fall assessment. In order for the survey to inform how best to guide parents, SSL should choose different indicators to explore what supports parents need.

7. Reduce the Teacher:Student Ratio in the Classroom

Smaller classes should reduce the time Group Leaders spend on classroom management techniques and allow them to focus more on building literacy and social/behavioral skills. If budget constraints limit the ability to reduce actual class sizes, an alternative would be to bring more volunteer tutors into the classroom to support the Group Leaders.

Context of the Report

Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

Super Stars Literacy provides intensive literacy instruction combined with social/behavioral skill development five times weekly, for two to three hours each day after school. The Super Stars Literacy model draws on the cultural and economic assets of the surrounding communities and is adaptable to a variety of school settings and collaborative approaches.

The program provides:

- Whole group and small group literacy activities (including Read Alouds, Guided Reading, Phonics, and Phonemic Awareness instruction as well as literacy through music, art or science instruction)
- Literacy Extension Activities (independent learning centers based on reading, math, science, and art themes/skills)
- One-on-one Instruction on specific skills appropriate to the needs of each child
- Family Events (family field trips to local museums and science centers and parent education)

Super Stars Literacy Group Leaders model social behaviors and encourage students to understand social-emotional problems and develop empathy. SSL curricula explore themes of pro-social behavior, impulse control and anger management. Children are encouraged to express their feelings and grapple with their fears and concerns through discussion, drama, art, movement and writing.

Intensive and on-going professional development was provided to SSL instructors to ensure effective implementation of the instructional program.¹ The training plan included two weeks of pre-service training and orientation; weekly in-service training for the first four months and monthly professional development for Program Coordinators (PCs) and Group Leaders (GLs), thereafter; weekly meetings between SSL central staff and PCs which included mini-professional development; and classroom coaching. Program Coordinators provided weekly coaching to their Group Leaders, which included a pre-conference, classroom observation, and debrief. The SSL Program Director provided regular one-on-one coaching to the PC's to improve their practice and provide them with coaching and management skills.

Curricular changes for 2010-11 included an increased emphasis on read aloud strategies that build comprehension and vocabulary through inquiry and student talk. Additions to the program structure included the adoption of new assessments in reading comprehension, oral language development, and social-emotional behavior. Additional surveys to assess parent home literacy environments as well as teacher knowledge of early elementary literacy skills were also given. New training content included read aloud

¹ The primary class instructors, known as Group Leaders, are recruited from the AmeriCorps national service program and generally serve a one or two-year term. While this staffing option provides SSL with motivated, service-oriented college graduates at an attractive cost, it also results in a high annual staff turnover. This turnover puts an emphasis on SSL's ability to develop and implement rapid, intensive and effective staff training.

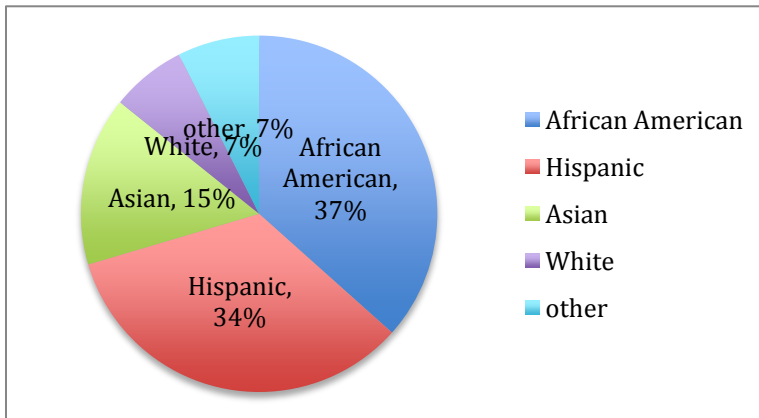
strategies, oral language development strategies, reading comprehension skills, and social-emotional observational data collection strategies.

Student Demographics

Super Stars Literacy (SSL) currently serves six high poverty schools in the Oakland Unified School District. The program began at one Oakland school in 2002, Hoover Elementary, with a second school, Parker Elementary, added in the spring of 2006. During the 2008-09 school year, a total of six elementary schools were served.

Figure 1

Demographics of the Oakland Unified School District



Within this group of students, 48% of students speak a language other than English as their first language, and 68.5% qualify for free and reduced lunch (a primary indicator of income level). n= 38,826

The following table lists the total number of students enrolled by site during 2010-11, including students who added or dropped the program:

Table 1

Students Enrolled in SSL 2010-2011 by Grade and School

School Name	Grade		
	1	2	K
Brookfield	17	9	15
EOP	22	20	20
Hoover	23	24	27
ICS	6	1	13
Parker	10	3	12
TCN	16	20	5
Grand Total	94	77	92

Note. These figures include all students in the program, including those who did not stay for the entire year. Only students who completed 132 hours of program were included in the evaluation data.

Program Outcomes and Evidence-Based Practices

Super Stars Literacy contracts with independent consultants to conduct ongoing evaluation of their program both to guide continual formative improvements and determine if they have

met their program goals. The annual evaluation plan, developed in collaboration between the outside consultant and SSL staff maps out goals, timelines for data collection, data tools used for goal evaluation and the format and lens to interpret data. The 2011 evaluation activities included development and implementation of the home literacy questionnaire; changing assessments to match revised goals; two rounds of classroom observations; data collection on all assessments; as well as analysis of program data, parent participation, and planning documents. New for 2010-11 was a pre-post assessment of the academic, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills of individual SSL students using an observational rubric; a reading comprehension assessment; and an oral language assessment. On an annual basis, the evaluators present their findings and analysis to both the Board and the SSL Program Committee.

In addition to the three main program outcomes listed below, the evaluation plan examines process objectives related to the effectiveness of staff training and instruction.

Program Outcome 1: Early Literacy and Reading Comprehension

By June 2011, 80% of Students who attend the program regularly² will show at least 1 level of growth on essential literacy indicators.

SSL has taken research on best practices in early literacy and reading comprehension to develop its desired outcomes. Outcome #1 articulates the stepped growth needed for children at each grade level in order for them to be ready to read on their own by grade 3. SSL understands the nature of learning to read is multifaceted, and one assessment tool, such as DIBELS, is not adequate to capture the range of skills required to read fluently and with comprehension. SSL emphasizes the first three years of schooling (K-2), based on overwhelming evidence that children who enter school at risk of academic failure need systematic support in specific reading skills. Early literacy research demonstrates that a beginning reader must acquire and apply the alphabetic principle, the ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to form words, early in his or her reading development in order to ensure future success in reading and long term benefits. (Lonigan, et al., 2000). SSL partners with schools to provide explicit support in the requisite skills they will need to comprehend text.

DIBELS. The DIBELS assessment focuses on foundational literacy skills critical to each grade level such as phonological awareness for Kindergarten, phonics for 1st grade and oral reading fluency for 2nd grade. This assessment is used in an ongoing fashion (formatively) to help teachers adjust their instruction throughout the year to meet student needs. In the past, Super Stars Literacy has used the DIBELS assessment to determine growth and reading ability for grades 1-2. The most recent research on DIBELS, and on early literacy skills in general, show that the predictive power of early literacy skills drops off after the middle of 1st grade (Riedel, 2007; Wanzek, J. et al., 2009). Though it is still useful as a formative assessment during the school year, it is not as useful as a summative assessment to measure growth at the end of the year. As a response to this information, a reading comprehension

² Beyond being taught reading skills explicitly, students must attend the program regularly in order to benefit from their instruction. For this reason, the student scores included in this evaluation are taken from participants who attended at least 132 hours of program in the academic year.

inventory (QRI-5) was adopted this year to measure reading skill growth in grades 1-2.

Qualitative Reading Inventory. The QRI-5 focuses on reading comprehension skills such as oral reading and answering inferential and explicit questions from stories. This assessment can be used throughout the year to help teachers understand what their students need to learn, and as a pre- post-assessment to measure how much students gained in reading comprehension from the start of the year to the end of the year (summative).

While the QRI-5 lowest reading levels are three levels below kindergarten, kindergarten students in SSL do not read well enough to register on this scale. That is to say, most kindergarten students in this program at the start of the year are reading below preschool level. As a response, the program adopted an additional assessment, which did not require students to read, instead focusing on their oral language development. Research on low-income populations (Hart and Risley, 1995) indicates the need for extended and intentional oral language development in the early grades, which can be measured by an oral language assessment, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT). The PPVT is an individually administered assessment for oral language development used specifically with the kindergarten students placed in the SSL program, who generally test below the floor level of the QRI-5. This assessment is used to measure change in student oral language from the start of the year to the end of the year. The PPVT was used in a pilot capacity, meaning that this year was an experiment to see how to administer it and use the results. The results from this assessment are included in the appendix.

By second grade, those who have attained the necessary reading skills continue to grow more and those who do not fall further behind as textual demands become more complicated and the total amount of exposure to text dramatically decreases in a cycle generally known as the *Mathew Effect*, “The combination of lack of practice, deficient decoding skills, and difficult materials results in unrewarding early reading experiences that lead to less involvement in reading-related activities” (Stanovich, 1986). The gap between those students who are now focusing cognitive efforts at comprehension and vocabulary acquisition and those students who are slower to access meaning in text begins to widen at a rate which seldom is narrowed later in their school career and, in turn, has adverse effects for overall academic progress.

Program Outcome 2: Socio-Emotional and Behavioral Skills

By June 2011, 80% of students who attend the program regularly will further develop appropriate social-emotional skills

Research has shown that a child’s academic success is closely linked to his or her social-emotional and behavioral skills. Children who enter Kindergarten with high levels of activity and aggression, or display inappropriate social behaviors, appear to be at greatest risk for having negative social outcomes and academic failure (Stormont, 2002). Classroom relationships, however, can be powerful social influences in all children’s lives, as teachers can influence these relationships greatly (Pianta, 1999). A curricular focus on enhancing appropriate social-emotional behavior, therefore, has shown to elevate a student’s chances of success in relationships with students, parents, teachers, and other adults and promote their chances of greater academic competency.

Desired Results Developmental Profile. This year, SSL adopted a new social-emotional assessment tool, the Desired Results Developmental Profile for Children and Families. The Desired Results (DR) system is designed to improve the quality of programs and services provided to all children, birth through 12 years of age, who are enrolled in early care and education programs and before-and after-school programs, and their families. Desired Results are defined as conditions of well being for children and families.

The centerpiece of the DR system are the Desired Results Developmental Profile© (DRDP©) assessment instruments. The DRDP© assessment instruments are designed for teachers to observe, document, and reflect on the learning, development, and progress of all children, birth through 12 years of age, who are enrolled in early care and education programs and before-and after-school programs. The DR system consists of three DRDP© assessment instruments (infant/toddler, preschool, and school-age). The assessment results are intended to be used by the teacher to plan curriculum for individual children and groups of children and for program administrators to guide continuous program improvement. SSL adopted three assessment areas (empathy, conflict negotiation and impulse control) in the school-age level DRDP assessment instrument for implementation in the 2010-11 school year.

Program Outcome 3: Home Literacy Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of student homes will show indicators of improved literacy environments

Research has shown that one of the primary influences on shaping a child's academic and social-emotional behaviors comes directly from the home and the community (Stormont 2002). Additionally, research also shows that when school and home influences align, children are more likely to demonstrate stronger academic and social-emotional gains (Stormont 2009). The earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effects (Cotton and Reed Wikelund, 2001). To this end, SSL seeks to offer parents opportunities to participate in the afterschool life of their children. Creating opportunities for home-after school interaction, such as showcases, family events, and field trips, provides parents and after school providers greater opportunities for alignment and for student academic and social-emotional gains.

Home Literacy Survey. The home literacy survey helps inform the Group Leaders and program staff about the literacy environment and habits in student's homes. This survey is also used as a pre- post assessment to determine if there has been any change in the home environment during the course of the year. This survey is an assessment change from 2009-2010, when home environment was measured by parent attendance in program events. Program staff reflection determined that the home literacy environment was a more lasting indicator than parent attendance.

Change in Program Outcomes for 2010-2011

Schools now spend more time on discrete skills of early literacy, like phonological awareness and phonics, than they have in the past. Super Stars Literacy has found that the organization has both the capacity and capability to focus now not just on early literacy skills, but on comprehension as well, which is neglected during the school day. This refinement of focus required the program to revise its outcomes and assessments.

Another change in goals is ending the explicit measurement of progress for students who

were in the program for three years. Because of the transiency of the student population in the schools in which SSL works, the number of students that can be tracked for three years remains a relatively small percentage of the students that SSL annually serves. Thus any calculation of three-year improvement based on this small *n* value has not been shown to be representative of the entire student population. However, Super Stars Literacy continues to pursue its goal that, by the end of second grade, students in its program will be reading at benchmark levels.

As described above, the DRDP was implemented in 2010-11 to replace prior pre- and post surveys of parents, classroom teachers and SSL instructors to measure improvements in social/behavioral skill development. Also as noted above, the Home Literacy Questionnaire replaced parent attendance at field trips and events to measure the home literacy environment.

Evaluation Methods³ and Assessment Tools

The methods used in gathering the content of this report were both qualitative and quantitative. Student literacy data was collected by Group Leaders (SSL class instructors) and the evaluator. DIBELS data was collected by Group Leaders. The Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 (QRI-5) data was also collected by Group Leaders. The PPVT (a pilot set of data) was collected by the program evaluator and staff. Home literacy survey data were collected by the Group Leaders from parents in the program. The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) was collected by Group Leaders. All data was analyzed by both the program evaluator and program staff.

Report Structure

The structure of the report first shows how much students learned this year, in the context of the program outcomes, 1-3. Next, this report provides an analysis of classroom activity, based on an observation rubric designed in concert between the program staff and the evaluator. Classroom observation is designed to assess the effectiveness of staff training as well as the Group Leader ability and effectiveness to instruct students. Last, recommendations for program improvement are provided, based on how best to meet the goals of the program while working with the strengths and limitations of the Group Leaders.

³ Evaluation Process

All data were presented to the SSL Program Committee for their interpretation and analysis in an evaluation process commonly referred to as *collaborative* or *utilization focused*³ evaluation. Sharing data and analyzing the results as an internal team allows the evaluation report to more closely align with the needs of the group, and increases the likelihood that productive adjustments in the program will take place. The evaluated group develops a greater understanding of how assessments work to address their goals, how to gather and organize data, and how to take charge of data analysis. This skill development of program staff increases the likelihood of productive evaluation in the future.

Program Outcomes

1. Student Literacy Indicators
2. Student Socio-Emotional Indicators
3. Home Literacy Environment Indicators

Outcome 1: Student Literacy Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of students who attend the program regularly⁴ will show at least 1 level of growth on essential literacy indicators.

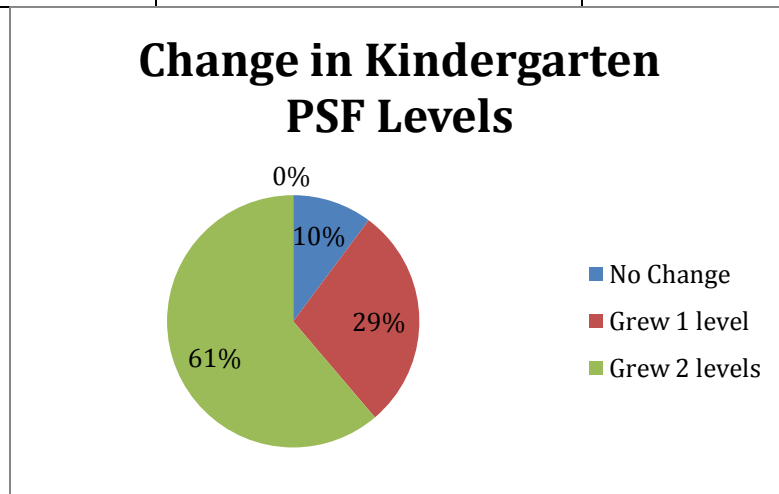
Kindergarten: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency

The goal was met. 87% of students increased at least one level in need for instruction in phoneme segmentation fluency.⁵

Table 2

Level Changes in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency Fall-Spring

Level Change	n	%
No Change	5	10%
Grew 1 level	14	29%
Grew 2 levels	30	61%
Grand Total	49	100%



⁴ Regular attendance is defined as the student having received at least 132 hours of meaningful literacy instruction in the Super Stars Literacy Program.

⁵ Phonemic awareness is the ability of children to determine that a spoken word consists of a series of sounds, and to be aware of what those sounds are. When a child is aware of the individual sounds, and is also able to segment a word into its individual sounds, he or she has 'fluency' with phoneme segmentation. It has been suggested that training in phoneme awareness, including segmentation, blending, onset-rime segmentation (initial sound fluency), and nonsense words (nonsense word fluency) is an essential step in progress toward reading fluency (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998).

Grades 1-2: Word Identification, Oral Reading and Comprehension

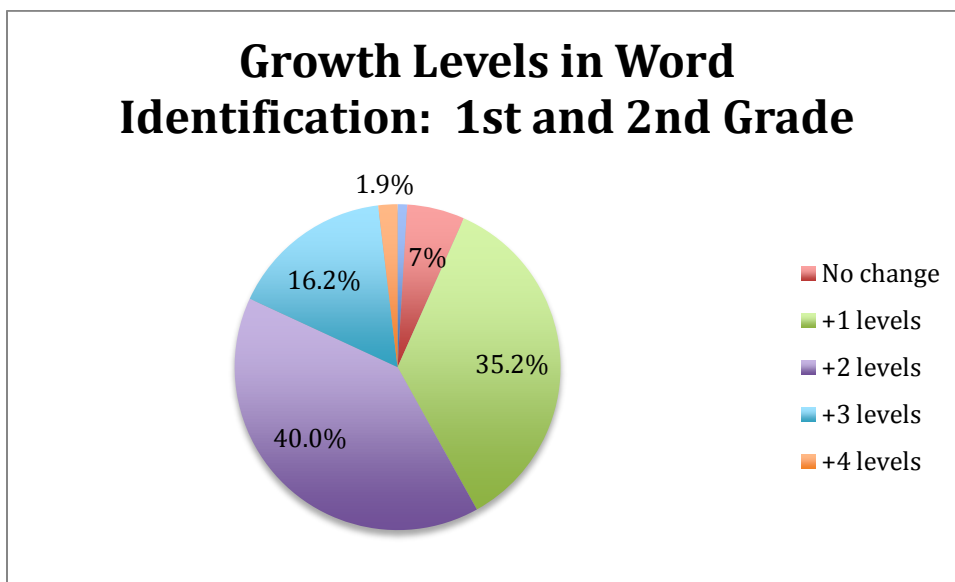
Word Identification. Word Identification is a primary indicator of reading skill. Students read graded lists of words, meaning that they read a list of words most students in their grade can read. If they cannot read that list, they are given a list from the grade below them, and so on.

Status: Goal was met. 90% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Word Identification. Table 3 shows a range of growth, from no growth to 5 grade levels.

Table 3

Level Changes QRI: Word Identification

Levels	<u>Grade 1 n=47</u>	<u>Grade 2 n=58</u>	<u>Total n=105</u>
	%	%	%
0	0	11	7
1	36	35	35
2	38	41	40
3	21	12	16
4	5	0	2



Oral Readings. Once their grade level of reading has been established, students are asked to read a story orally. Oral readings show student ability to decode and read with fluency. However, many low-income at risk students learn to decode words before they learn what the words mean, so this measure alone will not provide a complete picture of reading skill.

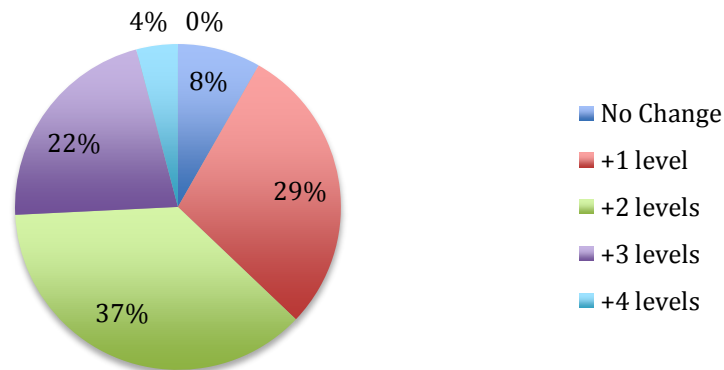
Status: Goal was met. 95% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Oral Reading. Table 4 describes the range of levels, from 0 to 6, that students grew this year.

Table 4

Level Changes QRI: Oral Reading

	<u>Grade 1 n=46</u>	<u>Grade 2 n=51</u>	<u>Total n=97</u>
Levels	%	%	%
0	6	10	8
1	24	33	29
2	37	37	37
3	26	17	22
4	7	2	4

**Growth Levels in Oral Reading:
1st and 2nd Grade**



Comprehension. To assess a student's understanding of what he or she has read fluently, the last task is comprehension. Students are asked questions about the reading, and are allowed to look back in the story to find the answers. Comprehension questions include "right there" questions for literal understanding, and questions that are implied but not explicitly stated, to assess their ability to make connections from their prior knowledge.

Status: Goal was met.

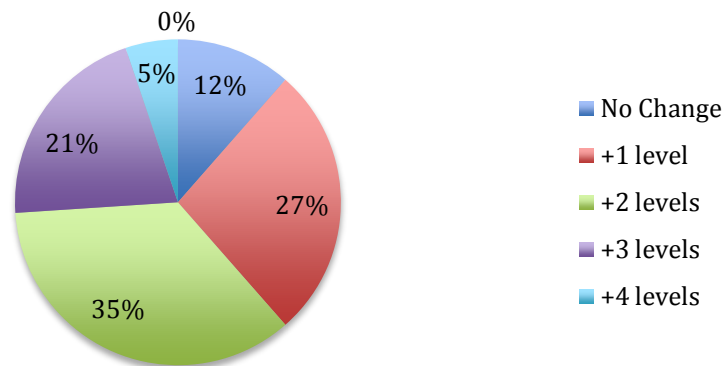
96% of the students assessed grew at least one level in Comprehension. Table 5 shows the range of levels, from 0 to 5, students grew this year.

Table 5

Level Change QRI: Comprehension

	<u>Grade 1 n= 45</u>	<u>Grade 2 n=51</u>	<u>Total n=96</u>
Levels	%	%	%
0	13	10	12
1	20	33	27
2	38	33	35
3	20	22	21
4	9	2	5

Growth Levels in Comprehension: 1st and 2nd Grade



Student Skills Vary. Many students have different grade levels of competency between these three measures, Word Identification, Oral Reading, and Comprehension. It is not possible to construct an accurate picture of a student's reading ability or growth over time without looking at these three areas. Teachers may use this nuanced information to guide their instruction. A teacher who sees a student can decode (Oral Reading) but cannot comprehend, might begin to ask the student more questions about stories, or teach him or her more vocabulary words to help with their understanding.

Analysis

The percentages of SSL students who improved their skills on essential literacy indicators by one, and often two or more, levels is impressive. As in the past, Kindergarteners in the SSL program improved significantly in the key Kindergarten indicator of phonemic segmentation fluency. The dramatic improvements of 1st and 2nd graders in word identification, oral reading, and comprehension are both satisfying and reflective of the refocus, for 2010-11, of both instructor training and curriculum on these higher literacy skills. 60 – 70% of 1st and 2nd graders improved by **two or more** levels on these indicators.

Group Leaders were provided with professional development and support from program staff for six months in the following areas:

- Phonological awareness
- Differentiating instruction
- Site word recognition and decoding
- Oral and written vocabulary
- Comprehension strategies

Additionally, Group Leaders were given coaching weekly by Program Coordinators who supervised their skill development and gave them resources and model lessons about how to build each of the above mentioned categories.

Outcome 2: Social-Emotional Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of students who attend the program regularly will further develop appropriate social-emotional skills

Progress Toward Goals

Empathy. Child shows increasing awareness of others' feelings and experiences and responds appropriately through words or actions.

Status: Goal was not met.

45% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Empathy.

Impulse Control. Child shows ability to regulate responses to internal and external stimuli in increasingly broad settings.

Status: Goal was not met.

47% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Impulse Control skills.

Conflict Negotiation. Child resolves conflicts by proposing solutions that consider the needs of others and extends concept of negotiation beyond his/her community.

Status: Goal was not met.

37% of the students in this sample changed at least one level toward the program's goal of further developing Conflict Negotiation skills.

Table 6

Student Change in Social Emotional Skills by DRDP-r Level

	<u>Empathy n=177</u>	<u>Impulse Control n=180</u>	<u>Conflict Negotiation</u> <u>n=186</u>
Levels Changed	%	%	%
0	47	44	58
1	35	43	32
2	8	4	4
3	1	0	1

Note. 25 students without complete pre- post-test scores were cleared from this sample.

Analysis

As noted above, for 2010-11, Super Stars Literacy replaced its prior use of parent and teacher surveys with the DRDP-r to assess Outcome 2. One explanation for these scores is that, over the course of the school year, Group Leaders acquired greater knowledge and skill to effectively administer this assessment. 2010-2011 is the first year of using a true observational rubric in social-emotional growth for Super Stars Literacy. Adults who use observational assessments must practice 'seeing' students in behavior categories (a skill qualitative researchers develop over years of practice), and an understanding of a range of likely student behavior. Group Leaders in Super Stars Literacy are new to the classroom, and by the end of the school year likely refined their ability to 'see' student behavior and match what they saw to a rubric. The results in the table may reveal more about the skills acquired of Group Leaders in this area of assessment than the change in student behavior.

Outcome 3: Home Literacy Environment Indicators

By June 2011, 80% of student homes will show indicators of improved literacy environments.

Status: The goal was not met

Table 7

Home Literacy Environment (short form⁶)

Questions	Yes		No*	
	n	%	n	%
I receive information about my child's progress in this program.	29	100		
I read with my child at least 2 times each week.	30	100		
I talk with my child about books or television programs.	29	100		
I take trips to the library with my child.	20	66	10	33
We have books for my child to read at home.	27	87	4	13
I would recommend the SSL program to another family.	29	90	3	10

Note. "Don't Know" received less than 1% of responses.

* Numbers less than 1% have been omitted.

Table 8

Home Literacy Questionnaire Comparison - Percentages of winter and spring

	Rarely*		Sometimes		Mostly to Always	
	Winter	Spring	Winter	Spring	Winter	Spring
I receive information about my child's progress in this program.	5	**	20	20	75	80
I read with my child at least 2 times each week.	3		37	41	60	59
I talk with my child about books or television programs.	7		29	34	64	66
I take trips to the library with my child.	21	14	53	46	26	34

⁶ This is a new assessment for Super Stars Literacy, and two forms of the same questions were produced and used. The difference in the forms did not effect the outcomes of the survey.

We have books for my child to read at home.	16	17	15	80	80
I would recommend the SSL program to another family.	17	22	21	60	79

Note. These are not numbers, they are percentages. Both the winter and spring response numbers were so close to 100 that including the n was both redundant and confusing.

*"Don't Know" was less than 1% and so omitted.

** Numbers less than 1% were omitted.

Analysis

This survey was subject to “ceiling effects”. In other words, at the beginning of the year, parents had already indicated, with one exception, that they were either “sometimes” or “always” doing the recommended behaviors. Thus, there was not enough room for improvement, in order to meet the goal of 80% of homes showing improvement over the course of the year. This questionnaire will likely be reworked for 2011-12 to elicit information more relevant to SSL’s impact on improving home literacy environments.

Process Outcomes

1. Effective Staff Training
2. Effective Instruction

Process Outcome 1: Effective Staff Training

Staff will perceive the following as contributing to their increased effectiveness and competency:

- Fall program orientation and training
- Site training activities
- Ongoing professional development
- Effective Training-Coaching Support: all the program coordinators and group leaders will participate in observation-debrief cycle

Data Analysis and Discussion: Staff surveys regarding effective staff training and developing competencies were collected in April 2011. One hundred percent of Program Coordinators (5) and Group Leaders (9) completed a staff survey.

Awareness of Literacy and Classroom Time Allocation. Most staff felt that socio-emotional development and phonological awareness were the most important areas of literacy to focus on. They allocated their time in the classroom, by self-report, mainly on small group phonics and read-alouds. The trend in time spent on independent reading in the classroom was two or three times a week in small group centers. When asked what professional development they would like more of, staff responded they would like more reading skills and small group phonics help, closely followed by conflict resolution.

Training and Support. Staff were also asked to rate the supports they received this year by what teaching skills the supports addressed. All staff unanimously agreed that the SSL trainings supported their understanding of literacy concepts, that their large and small group discussions helped them to reflect on their teaching, and that the collaborative sharing protocol helped them learn from their peers.

Use of Assessments. Most staff agreed that reading assessments helped them plan for

instruction (92%) and were useful in learning about how children learn to read (77%).

Knowledge and Skills. Most staff commented that they learned that phonological awareness is the basis for literacy skills, and that assessments can drive instruction productively. The skill many staff cited they would take away with them was how to manage a classroom through effective lesson planning and how to differentiate student learning. The most popular response when asked the open-ended question about what they would change about the program was to reduce the class sizes.

Process Outcome 2: Effective Instruction

Staff will deliver effective literacy instruction by showing indicators in the following areas:

- Group Leaders will implement classroom behavior management by review/reinforcing rules and procedures, enforcing consequences, and using positive reinforcement.
- Group Leaders will use state standards so that their lesson plans state the standard at the appropriate place, activities reflect objective clearly, and students can easily demonstrate the standard once the activity is done.
- Group leaders effectively use a range of teaching strategies including Think-Pair-Share, Echo-Talk during shared reading, community circles and/or shared writing, and using Graphic Organizers and Realia
- Group Leaders will use DIBELS and QRI-5 data to guide instruction.

The evaluator visited each classroom twice (November 2009 and May 2010), spending approximately 20 minutes per classroom. The evaluator used the *Classroom Observation Rubric* (please reference Appendix C) to assess the instruction on a 4-point scale. This Classroom Observation Rubric was developed in collaboration with the SSL program administrators to reflect the February 2009 program rubric draft and then modified in Fall 2010.

Indicator 1: *Group Leaders will implement classroom behavior management by review/reinforcing rules and procedures, enforcing consequences, and using positive reinforcement.*

Most instructors were observed implementing classroom management behavior in the prescribed manner. Most of the instructors effectively managed the behavior issues that arose. Most had rules and consequences posted at least somewhat and almost all had a positive reinforcement system in evidence.

Indicator 2: *Group Leaders will use state standards so that their lesson plans state the standard at the appropriate place, activities reflect objective clearly, and students can easily demonstrate the standard once the activity is done.*

All group leaders used state standards to plan their lessons, as demonstrated by lesson plans and classroom observations.

Indicator 3: *Group leaders effectively use a range of teaching strategies including Think-*

Pair-Share, Echo-Talk during shared reading, community circles and/or shared writing, and using Graphic Organizers and Realia

The following instructional strategies were observed during the May 2010 observations:

Table 9

Count of GLs Observed Using Strategies

Benchmark	Not Observed	Observed
1. Teacher uses open-ended questions both within and between activities (i.e., questions which elicit extended student responses)	2	9
2. There is a higher percentage of (structured) student talk vs. teacher talk	3	8
3. Vocabulary instruction is clearly linked to student prior knowledge	1	3
4. Small group or individual instruction appears differentiated to meet learning needs.	1	5

Classroom observations of instructional strategies in the spring focused on read alouds this year, as fall observations showed that most instructors consistently implemented classroom management skills. The mid-year observations showed that most teachers were not engaging students in rich discussion or asking open-ended questions. By the spring observations, most teachers had advanced in their teaching skills enough to skillfully engage students in rich discussions about the stories they were reading and introduce new vocabulary and assess student comprehension of vocabulary. Gains were also observed in instructor ability to structure small groups by skill level and use targeted literacy based activities.

Indicator 4: *Group Leaders will use DIBELS and QRI-5 data to guide instruction.*

Group Leaders indicated they learned to use both DIBELS and the QRI to guide their lesson planning and instruction. Observations of small group differentiation and whole group instruction showed instructors understood and applied data to guide their work.

Recommendations for Program Improvement

Continue emphasizing reading comprehension

This year instructors implemented read-alouds more comprehensively than in previous years, a productive direction to support reading comprehension. There is still some confusion about the efficacy of this method, however, so professional development should focus on both the how and the why of reading comprehension through read-alouds.

Implement training by grade levels for specific reading skills

While all Group Leaders should have an understanding of literacy skills and pedagogy, each grade level can productively focus on specific areas, relative to the reading goals for their grade. For example, Kindergarten Group Leaders could have instruction in phonological awareness and oral language development, First Grade Group Leaders could focus on comprehension and fluency, and second grade Group Leaders could focus on comprehension.

Implement the PPVT assessment as a standard assessment for kindergarten.

Oral language skills are strong indicators of reading ability, especially with young students who may have had limited exposure to books or language in the home. The PPVT was used as a pilot assessment this year, and results informed the program on the needs of the students. Fall 2010 pre-assessments showed that nearly all Super Stars Literacy students entered kindergarten well below grade level; in fact, of the 25 students assessed in the pilot, 91% needed to gain oral vocabulary skills equivalent from one to five years of experience by June 2011 in order to fall within the language skill range of average kindergarten students. Post assessment, given six months after the pre-assessment, showed an average growth in language skills of 9 months.

Oral language development is a challenge to address in a school setting. Most studies show that the home environment is the most significant source of oral language development, and school efforts to develop oral language must be focused and deliberate to make a difference to individual students. With that in mind, we also know that oral language is necessary for reading comprehension, the goal of the Super Stars Literacy program, so addressing this area with targeted instruction and assessment is recommended.

Continue to refine social-emotional skills instruction and assessment through training and coaching

The reflection and analysis of this data has given rise to the question of how to best quantify "further development." Concern over this goal might be due to the large percentage of "0" and negative scores, indicating no change or regression in behavior. However, no growth or regression should be contextualized for deeper analysis.

Measuring the social-emotional development of young children is necessarily qualitative; children cannot take a test of knowledge to show how they have learned to behave. Adult observers document further development of their students through observation and comparison of past habitual behavior, categorized in the observation rubric (See Appendix B). Further development, therefore, is measured by adult judgment on what is now typical behavior for the child.

With this in mind, Super Stars Literacy might consider changing their goal from level changes in Social Emotional Development to a goal of monitoring and responding to needs in social-emotional development, informed by the DRDP. This approach takes away a quantitative goal for evaluation while emphasizing planning and response to student needs. At the very least, Group Leaders should be provided with additional training and coaching on how to appropriately observe and document evidence of student actions in behavior categories.

Implement Basic Control Group Mechanism

Since SSL Group Leaders support classroom teachers during the class day, it may be possible to obtain consent from each school for the Group Leaders to provide the PPVT and QRI-5 assessments, on a pre and post basis, to 3 students, not in the SSL program, from each class (K-2nd) at each school. This should provide a reliable control group to compare student growth.

Revise Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire

The survey showed that all parents were providing certain home literacy supports for their students in the fall assessment. In order for the survey to inform how best to guide parents, SSL should choose different indicators to explore what supports parents need.

Reduce the Teacher:Student Ratio in the Classroom

Classroom observation and Group Leaders reflections point to a need to reduce the teacher:student ratio in Super Stars Literacy. Novice Group Leaders currently work hard to master classroom management techniques necessary with large groups of students, which limits their initial ability to focus on literacy skills. Smaller classes should reduce the time Group Leaders spend on classroom management techniques and allow them to focus more on building literacy and social/behavioral skills. If budget constraints limit the ability to reduce actual class sizes, an alternative would be to bring more volunteer tutors into the classroom to support the Group Leaders.

Appendices

Appendix A

PPVT Count: Grade K Winter Assessment

Age Equivalent in yrs.months	% of Students	# of Students
0-2.11	21	8
3-3.11	23	9
4-4.11	26	10
5-5.11	21	8
6-6.5	7	3

Average change in PPVT scores between December and June: 9 months

Appendix B

DRDP-r Adapted Observational Rubric: 2010-2011

SSD3 Empathy		
Developing	Understanding	Integrating
<p>Demonstrates awareness of own feelings</p> <p>“I feel really happy (sad, calm, thankful).”</p> <p>“I’m excited about our trip to the tide pools.”</p> <p>Draws picture to show how he feels.</p>	<p>Shows awareness of feelings of others with appropriate words or actions</p> <p>“She’s happy because her grandma is coming to visit.”</p> <p>Points out a picture in a book and accurately identifies a feeling to match the facial expression (happy, mad, sad).</p>	<p>Shows understanding of how someone else might feel in a certain hypothetical situation</p> <p>Says her sister must be getting excited because her birthday is coming up.</p> <p>“My mom would be so proud if I won this contest.”</p>
SSD9 Impulse Control		
Developing	Understanding	Integrating
<p>Responds to adult reminder or direction to control inappropriate impulses</p> <p>“I want to play with this now.”</p> <p>“I got to the swings first, so I get to go first.”</p> <p>Uses nonverbal communication, such as pointing or gesturing, to show the toy she wants to play with.</p>	<p>Applies known rules to manage frustrating situations</p> <p>“If you give me a turn, I’ll give it right back to you.”</p> <p>“His dad is picking him up in ten minutes, so he should go first.”</p> <p>When playing with dolls, shares the clothing.</p>	<p>Controls impulses independently, understanding the other person’s point of view</p> <p>“Let’s vote on this, but when Susana gets back she gets to vote too.”</p> <p>“We need to save some for David because he’s out sick today, but he worked for this too.”</p> <p>When playing basketball game of HORSE with younger children, gives them two tries per turn instead of one.</p>
SSD4 Conflict Negotiation		
Developing	Understanding	Integrating
<p>During a conflict with another child, expresses own needs and desires</p> <p>Expresses her anger or frustration by using words instead of hitting or throwing toys when reminded by staff.</p> <p>During circle time, if reminded to raise hand, child does so rather than call out to make comment or answer a question.</p>	<p>During a conflict, listens to desires of another child and suggests or accepts a mutually agreeable solution</p> <p>When frustrated by the actions of another, refrains from hitting and instead seeks help from an adult.</p> <p>Raises hand and waits to be called on to make a comment or ask a question.</p>	<p>Resolves conflicts by proposing solutions that address the desires or rights of everyone in the group</p> <p>Suggests a reasonable compromise between what he wants to do and what peer wants to do.</p> <p>While waiting for a staff person, sits down to draw, read, or play something without being directed to.</p>

Super Stars Literacy 2009-10 Classroom Observation Rubric

Date		Time: Start ____End _____				
Site/Teacher		Observer Catherine Miller				
Activities Observed (circle all) and identify times of observation						
Read Alouds <small>(Example: Outdoor activity)</small>	Opening Circle <small>(Examples: Read Aloud, Second Step, Kidzlit, TRIBES, Phonemic Awareness)</small>	Teaching/Instruction of Small Groups	Centers	Closing Circle <small>(Examples: Read Aloud, Second Step, Kidzlit, TRIBES, Phonemic Awareness)</small>	Independent Reading	Other (List):
Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:
Description:	Description:	Description:	Description:	Lesson Type:	Comments	Comments

NA=Not Applicable, 0=Not Observed, 1=Partially Observed, 2=Somewhat Observed, 3=Fully Observed

Benchmark	NA	0	1	2	3
5. Teacher uses open-ended questions both within and between activities (i.e., questions which elicit extended student responses)					
6. There is a higher percentage of (structured) student talk vs. teacher talk					
7. Vocabulary instruction is clearly linked to student prior knowledge					
8. Phonological Awareness instruction focuses on sounds, not letters (K-1 only)					
9. Small group or individual instruction appears differentiated to meet learning needs.					
10. Students demonstrate their learning (written, oral, visual, kinesthetic)					
11. Rules and consequences are enforced in a consistent manner.					
12. Teacher provides positive reinforcement.					
Instructional Strategies Observed (check all observed) <input type="checkbox"/> Think-Pair-Share <input type="checkbox"/> Echo-Talk <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Organizers <input type="checkbox"/> Realia <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Reading/ Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Community Circles Total Instructional Strategies Observed: _____					

Notes (continue on back):

Total points: _____

Scoring: 20-30: Proficient

15-19: Beginning Proficiency

8-14: Novice

0-7: Pre-Novice

Bibliography

Riedel, B. W. (2007). The relation between DIBELS, reading comprehension, and vocabulary in urban first-grade students. *Reading Research Quarterly, 42*, 548-587.

Hart, T. R., & Risley, B. (1995). *The Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. Baltimore: PH Brooks.

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21*, 360-407.

Wanzek, J., Roberts, G., Linan-Thompson, S., Vaughn, S., Woodruff, A. L., & Murray, C. S. (2010). Differences in the relationship of oral reading fluency and high-stakes measures of reading comprehension. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 35*, 67-77.

About the Evaluator

Catherine Miller is a Bay Area native who has worked as an educational researcher in low-income public schools for the past 15 years. Her work has focused on literacy intervention for ethnically and culturally diverse populations, mainly in low-income schools in the Oakland Unified School District and the Franklin McKinley School District. This work has included literacy coaching for Early Reading First coaches, principals and school administrators, instruction in how to use data to change school literacy outcomes, professional development for teachers in oral language development and phonological awareness in Pre-k and reading comprehension for grades K-5, and whole program improvement for the Oakland Unified School District. She has worked as a collaborative partner with over 50 schools, with a successful track record working with teachers and administrators to reflect on and change literacy instruction with working teachers. She holds a B.A. in Literature and a Master's degree in Education Research from UC Santa Cruz, a graduate degree in composition and a graduate degree in reading from San Francisco State University, and is currently enrolled as a Ph.D. student under the instruction of David Pearson and Anne Cunningham at UC Berkeley's School of Education. Her current work includes curriculum development for the Pearson-Gates Digital Learning Program, designed to meet the new common core state standards, and the evaluation of a reading comprehension program, Literacy Navigator, under the direction of David Pearson and Walter Kintsch.

About the report

The data collection and analysis for this report was a cooperative effort between the evaluator and the program staff. The evaluator is responsible for findings and conclusions based upon such data.