Introduction

After just one full year of implementing Reading Renaissance, students at East Valley Intermediate experienced accelerated growth in reading skills. In fact, the number of fourth-graders meeting or exceeding the state standard on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), increased from 56.6% in 1999 to 66% in 2000. This was the school's largest one-year gain.

School Profile

East Valley Intermediate School
Students: 587, Grades 4-6
Yakima, Wash.

Demographics:
Rural
Title I
Free or reduced lunch: 43%
Mobility: 31%

Race/Ethnicity:
American Indian or Alaska Native: 1%
Asian or Pacific Islander: 1%
Hispanic or Latino: 21%
White: 76%

Educator Backgrounds

Tom Wyman has 26 years of teaching and administrative experience. He received a bachelor's degree and his master's degree in Educational Administration from Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Wash.

Mary E. Stevens has 30 years of experience in the field of education. She received a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Marylhurst University, Portland, Ore. and a master's degree in Reading from Central Washington University.
Study Description


Schoolwide Reading Renaissance implementation continued during the 1999–2000 school year. Teachers used STAR Reading® reading test and database to determine students' zone of proximal development and devoted 60 minutes a day to reading practice. Teachers and students kept track of student reading in classroom reading logs and set goals. In addition, the school sponsored twice-monthly Family Reading Nights and created a Reading Wall of Fame to recognize students who achieved various reading goals.

To track student progress and evaluate the success of Reading Renaissance, Stevens used a variety of measures including reading scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) reading tests, which is administered to fourth-grade students. In addition, Stevens compiled reading practice data from Accelerated Reader and monitored library circulation.

Results

East Valley Intermediate students took 13,289 quizzes during the 1999–2000 school year—that's an average of 23 books read per student. In addition, 480 students (82%) qualified for the Reading Wall of Fame by accomplishing various reading goals. And, total library circulation averaged more than 1,200 books per month.

Growth in reading skills can be seen by the increasing percentage of fourth-graders who met the state standard on the WASL. In 1999, 56.6% of students met or exceeded the state standard. In 2000, the percentage rose to 66% (see Graph 1 on the front). This is the largest single-year gain that East Valley experienced and coincided with the school's first full year of Reading Renaissance.

In addition, students at East Valley are improving more rapidly than students across the state. In 1998–1999, East Valley experienced a 3.9% change in the number of students meeting or exceeding state standards, compared to the state, which experienced an average change of just 3.5%. In 1999–2000, the change in number of students meeting or exceeding state standards at East Valley increased to 9.4%, whereas the state's average change was just 6.7% (see Graph 2 on front).

Conclusion

The implementation of Reading Renaissance has led to improved student reading achievement at East Valley Intermediate. In fact, WASL scores indicate that students at East Valley have improved more rapidly than students across the state.

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