

Teaching All Students to Read: Is it Really Possible?

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Starting with the really large picture...

There have been at least three major reformations in American Education within the last century, and we are in the middle of the third one

1. The first started in 1900, and lasted about 30 years

School year increased from 144 to 174 days

Absences decreased by 19 days

Enrollment in 6-12 grew 15 times faster than 1-5

High school graduation grew from 6.8% to 28.8%

No. of college degrees grew from 27,000 to 122,000

There have been at least three major reformations in American Education within the last century, and we are in the middle of the third one

2. The second started after WWII and the Korean war
College enrollment grew from 2 million to 6.9 million
Community colleges doubled in number

There have been at least three major reformations in American Education within the last century, and we are in the middle of the third one

3. We are now in the third major educational reform

During the 1980's nearly every state raised its graduation requirements

In the 1990's almost every state adopted legislation mandating testing of students. Minimum standards were set, and schools were expected to make progress in improving the number of students meeting standards.

The "standards based education" reform matured in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

This standards based educational reform has not been driven by educators, but by legislators

And legislatures have been influence primarily by the business community

The business community's basic concern was that the bottom half of students graduating from high school were not prepared for the literacy demands of an increasingly technical workplace

Thus, the major focus of current reform is increasing the percentage of students that can meet grade level standards

Two important goals for improvement:

1. Increase the percentage of students reading “at grade level” each year at each grade level from kindergarten through third grade
2. Decrease the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties each year at each grade level

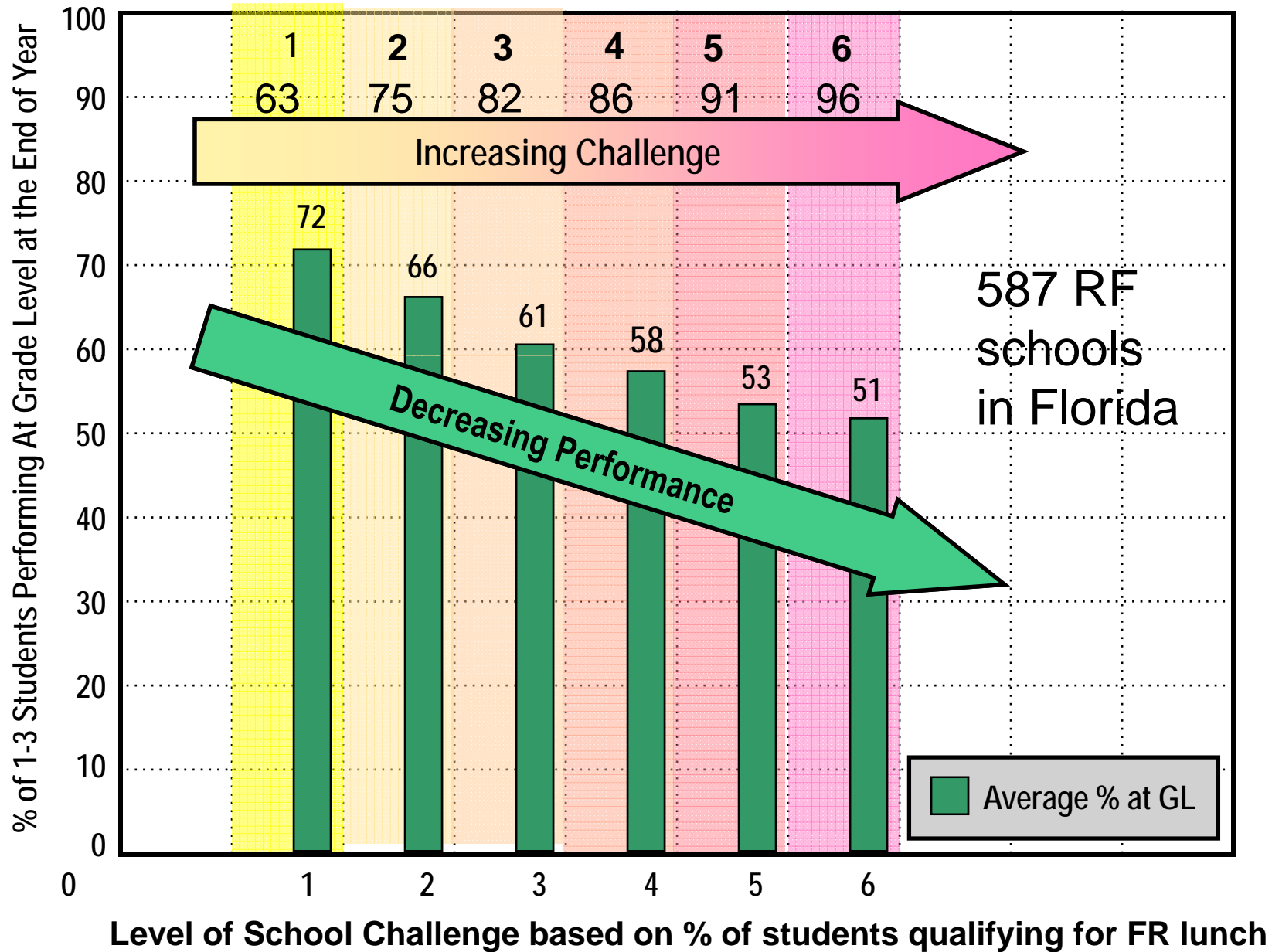
Our most important measures of success in doing this assess student performance on reading comprehension measures at the end of the year- particularly at end of third grade

We know that many schools must provide particularly strong instruction, because so many of their students are not strongly prepared for learning to read when they come to school.

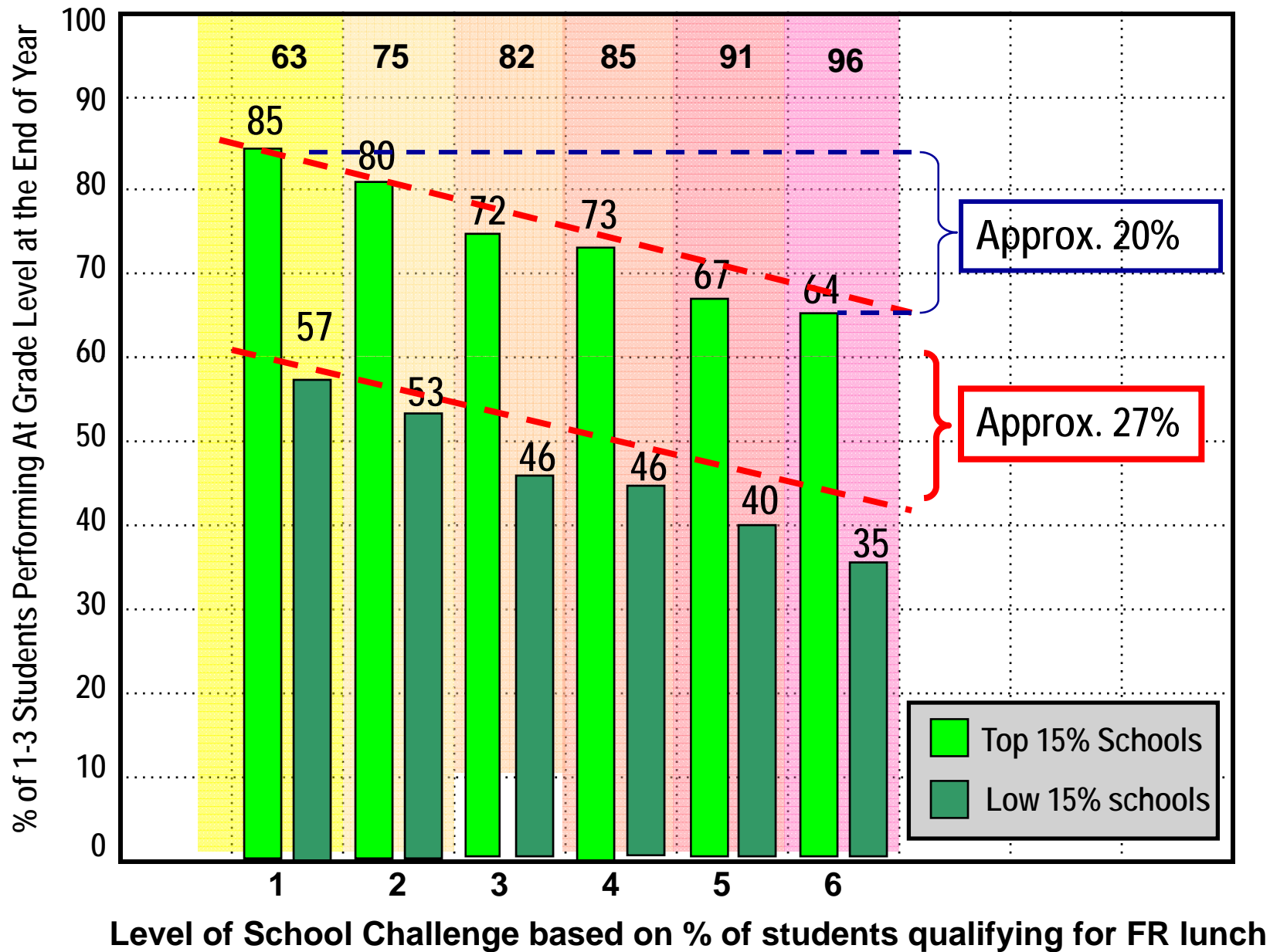
Most poor children:

- 1. Are delayed in the development of phonemic awareness**
- 2. Have had less exposure to print and the alphabet**
- 3. Have vocabularies that are usually less well developed –
1/2 size in poor children**
- 4. Have a range of experience and conceptual knowledge that is often limited or different compared to other students**
- 5. Frequently do not have good models of reading or support for academics in their homes**

Relationship of "school challenge" to student performance



The Adult Learning and Performance Gap



Whether or not we achieve these goals depends on the strength of our instruction to accomplish two things during the year

All students who begin the year meeting grade level expectations continue to meet grade level expectations at the end of the year-they make expected yearly growth

All students who begin the year reading below grade level accelerate their development so they make expected yearly growth plus catch-up growth

Whether or not we achieve these goals depends on the strength of our instruction to do two things during the year

Insuring all students make expected yearly growth

Strong core reading instruction for all students

Enough time spent to meet the needs of many students who do not typically receive powerful support at home

Enough quality so that the increased instructional time is spent effectively

Time X quality =

Whether or not we achieve these goals depends on the strength of our instruction to do two things during the year

Insuring students who are behind make expected yearly growth plus catch-up growth

Effective differentiated instruction by classroom teacher

Effective school-level systems and resources to provide additional intensive intervention in small enough groups for enough time, and with enough skill

In order to effectively prevent early reading difficulties, we need to apply two kinds of knowledge

From the “science of reading”

From effective schools

Information about the *individual* components of instruction and assessment that are most effective in raising literacy levels

Information about leadership, organizational, and classroom practices that are most effective in raising literacy levels

Understanding, and Motivation to Apply

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

Located in southeastern Washington

Has about 15,000 students – 13 elementary schools, four middle schools, and 3 high schools

25% of students are ethnic minorities, and 48% elementary school students qualify for free or reduced price lunch

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

In 1995, the school board in Kennewick challenged the elementary schools to have 90% of their students at grade level in reading by the end of third grade –within 3 years

The primary responsibility for accomplishing this was assigned to the school principals

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

From David Montague, a principal:

“We thought the board and the superintendent were crazy...I saw in the White Paper that elementary principals were responsible, and said ‘Why don’t they come down to our building and see the kids that come to our school?’ I mean, our kindergarten kids seem to enter school every year with lower skills...”

The District passed a bond that provided a district reading teacher for each school, and began to hold public meetings at a different elementary school every two weeks.

“After that, the whining died down. The goal started to grow legs....Principals are messengers. When you’re in the message business, it doesn’t help to criticize the message. It drives a wedge. It empowers those who don’t want to change. Since we’re responsible for implementation, it makes no sense to send a mixed message. Principals cannot play ‘loyal opposition’ harping against accountability and at the same time provide effective leadership for growth”

At the schools...

“We began to have serious staff meetings...we beganlooking at the test data to see how far behind some of our kids were. It was the first time Washington had ever had such precise data. In the fall of 995, 23% of our 3rd graders were reading at second grade level and 41% of our 3rd graders were reading at a kindergarten or 1st grade level.

School	2006 Free or Reduced	2006 Minority Enrollment	2006 Stability	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Washington														
Cascade	35	19	85	78	79	72	83	88	91	99	96	93	97	95
Vista	49	33	79	83	73	90	79	80	93	91	95	94	100	94
Southgate	30	18	79	92	80	81	86	88	82	90	93	91	86	94
Ridge View	22	20	70	80	69	78	88	79	84	94	90	92	91	92
Canyon View	51	31	74	71	66	78	65	83	76	90	90	90	88	93
Sunset View	16	16	77	82	86	92	85	84	87	89	95	93	94	91
Lincoln	38	23	77	79	75	73	85	87	86	78	99	92	94	92
Hawthorne	67	47	70	69	62	62	78	73	87	90	92	80	84	85
Westgate	88	52	72	58	55	47	51	57	49	55	76	82	82	85
Eastgate	94	77	74	53	55	52	40	53	54	67	68	80	68	85
Amistad	78	68	65	66	65	55	52	44	47	51	65	80	71	80
Edison	77	61	67	66	68	71	54	53	55	53	46	74	51	80
District	48	38	75	74	70	71	72	77	78	82	86	88	86	90

Washington Elementary School

Growth in % of 3rd grade students meeting grade level standards

School Year

95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06

Percent at Grade level

57 72 72 68 78 94 96 99 94 98 99 98

Working harder and more effectively at 3rd grade

Baseline year



From the Principal:

"By the 3rd year, we had exhausted our work-harder-at-third-grade strategy...More of the catch-up gain had to be made at second and first grade. Our first-and second-grade teachers realized that they had to become more accountable for their students' learning. Even our kindergarten teachers, who had spent most of their class time on social activities, began the transition to teaching phonemic awareness along with letter and sound recognition."

Washington Elementary School

Growth in % of 3rd grade students meeting grade level standards

School Year

95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06

Percent at Grade level

57 72 72 68 78 94 96 99 94 98 99 98

Working harder and more effectively at 3rd grade

Began providing intensive interventions in the afternoon to many students

Result of improvement at both 2nd and 3rd Grade

Baseline year

Began testing in 2nd grade and focusing on earlier improvement

“In the United States, public schools deliver 85% or more of their curriculum by reading textbooks, whiteboards, worksheets, and computer screens. Students must read well to do well. It matters little what else they learn in elementary school if they do not learn to read at grade level. Even math depends on reading. There are far more words than numbers in math books. As the math concepts become more complicated, the verbal descriptions become more involved as well. As Kennewick has focused on reading, our math scores have improved at a rate similar to our reading scores. The reading problem becomes more obvious in middle school where students who cannot read well struggle to absorb content in all other subjects.” P. 49

Fielding, L., Kerr, N., & Rosier, P. (2007). *Annual growth for all students, catch-up growth for those who are behind*. Kennewick, WA: The New Foundation Press, Inc.

Washington Elementary School

School Characteristics

55% Free/reduced lunch

28% Minority

85% Stability

Teaching Staff

2 half-day kindergarten teachers

3 classroom teachers each in 1-5

1 District Reading Specialist

3 Title I Teachers

1.5 Resource room/special ed teachers

1 PE teacher

1 librarian, 1 Librarian secretary

3 Specials teachers

9 paraprofessionals

Washington Elementary School

How they get additional instructional power in first grade

During the Morning Reading Block

Small group reading during 1st hour of the day

It puts 13 adults with 75 students during the first hour in first grade

Struggling students get 1:3 with most skilled instructor

Advanced students get 1:7 ratios with paras and others

In the afternoon

Many students get additional small group or 1:1 instruction time as interventions

Washington Elementary School

The reading block for 3 first grade classrooms

1st hour (8:45-9:45)

Small group instruction

3 classroom teachers

1 District Reading Teacher

2 Title I teachers

Specials teacher

PE teacher

6 paraprofessionals

The bell rings at 8:35 a.m. and a new school day begins in Stephanie Walton's first –grade classroom..

After the flag salute and lunch count, her 22 students swiftly break into six small groups for the first hour of the morning reading block.

Three students go to the district reading specialist, three to the Title 1 teacher, while four head next door to learn with other students of their ability level. The teacher in the neighboring classroom sends over three of her students, and they take their places with three of Stephanie's students.

In the back of the room, seven students gather for direct instruction with a para-educator who follows Stephanie's lesson plan as is within her listening range.

In the hall, two students join a small reading group with the P.E. teacher.

Washington Elementary School

The reading block for 3 first grade classrooms

1st hour (8:45-9:45)

Small group instruction

3 classroom teachers

1 District Reading Teacher

2 Title I teachers

Specials teacher

PE teacher

6 paraprofessionals

2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Whole group instruction

Its 9:43. Glancing up, Stephanie smiles at the students who are returning from other classes. "Your options are cards or workbook." They know exactly what to do, and get right to work. She continues teaching until the rest of the students are back.

At 9:47 Stephanie asks the entire class to come to the carpet area in the front of the room. In less than two minutes they are settled in the story area gazing at the cover of *Things that Go*.

In 25 minutes, they use the same thematic material to do five different exercises to build vocabulary and comprehension

Then the students move to their seats and spend the next 10 minutes on two workbook exercises reinforcing the meaning of five position words they just learned. They spend the rest of whole group time spelling on white boards

Ten years ago we would have seen three reading groups with seven students each. Stephanie would have been the only adult, except on the days when she was able to get a mom to volunteer to help with the art project that accompanied the reading unit.

Stephanie would have spent 20 minutes providing direct instruction to each group, while the other two groups did seat work or read silently.

The 60-minute reading block would have predominantly focused on comprehension utilizing whole-language techniques. Often the worksheets would be from yesterday's social studies, math, or health lesson, attempting to integrate reading instruction with other subjects.

Washington Elementary School

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Small group instruction

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1 District Reading Teacher

2 Title I teachers

Specials teacher

PE teacher

6 paraprofessionals

2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Whole group instruction

2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Also, during the second hour, paras, Title 1, and others work in small groups with 2nd-5th grades

In the afternoon, many students are provided an additional 40-90 minutes of intervention

Targeted Accelerated Growth

The TAG Loop

1. Diagnostic Testing
2. Proportional increases in direct instructional time
3. Teaching to the deficient sub-skill
4. Retesting to be sure the skill has been learned

Children vary enormously
in their talent and
preparation for acquiring
proficient phonemic
decoding skills





David



Alexis...

From David Motague

”By the fifth year, I was convinced high performance reading was about more time and better use of that time. Students who were behind needed more direct instruction. Some of them started getting 60 to 90 minutes extra each day for a total of 180 to 210 minutes a day. We spent that time on the sub-skills they hadn’t mastered.”

“For most of Kennewick’s high performance elementary schools, increasing the amount of time spent on direct reading instruction was an intuitive decision. They tried more time. It worked, and they kept on doing it. It was merely an extension of what remediation was about. Principals and many teachers at these schools saw the direct connection between increasing instructional time and increasing reading growth. Students who were a little behind needed a little more instructional time. Students who were a lot behind needed a lot more time.” P. 38.

“Growth is directly proportionate to the quality and quantity of instructional time. When we looked at our data student by student, we saw a painful fact with painful clarity. Most students who start behind stay behind. Time-starved reading programs that rely on sudden growth bursts from extraordinary instruction rarely move students from the 5th-30th percentiles up to grade level.” P. 48

“Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instructional time. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality instruction in great quantity.”

Teacher quality x time = growth

“Quantity of instructional time can be doubled or tripled in a semester. Quality of instructional time cannot. Improving quality occurs over extended periods of time, at different rates for different teachers in the same school, as a constant process of arduous, intelligent labor.

Teacher quality (1) x time (1) = growth (1)

Teacher quality (1) x time (2) = growth (2)

Teacher quality (1) x time (3) = growth (3)

Teacher quality x time = growth

“This is why the primary and immediate strategy for catch-up growth is proportional increase in direct instructional time.

Catch-up growth rarely occurs unless principals and teachers have good data, know each student’s learning needs, and schedule proportional increases in direct instructional time.”

School	% FR Lunch	% at Grade Level, 2003	1 st Grade Reading Block	1 st Grade Interventions	2 nd Grade Reading Block	2 nd Grade Interventions	3 rd Grade Reading Block	3 rd Grade Interventions
Canyon V.	38	90	195	25	135	24	150	32
Westgate	80	76	120	79	120	55	120	67
Cascade	35	96	120	51	120	55	120	55
Hawthorne	60	92	120	56	120	33	120	51
Amistad	76	65	120	25	140	27	125	33
Ridge View	23	90	120	51	120	34	90	42
Southgate	20	93	120	34	120	29	120	33
Washington	54	94	120	24	120	28	120	43
Vista	50	95	120	10	120	25	120	40
Lincoln	41	99	120	17	120	27	120	30
Sunset View	9	95	74	45	105	27	73	23

ANNUAL
GROWTH

FOR ALL STUDENTS,

CATCH-UP
GROWTH

FOR THOSE WHO
ARE BEHIND

Lynn
Fielding

Nancy
Kerr

Paul
Rosier

To Order:

Do advanced search in
Google for “Annual Growth
for all students”

Click on The National
Children’s Foundation

It is listed as one of the
books there.

Some important questions for reflection

What are the most important ways your school, or classroom is different now than three years ago?

If large numbers of your students continue to struggle to make expected yearly growth, have you considered increasing the length of the reading block?

Do students who struggle receive time for intervention instruction that is proportional to their difficulties?

Do some students receive as much as 60-90 minutes of intervention every day?

It matters little what else they learn in elementary school if they do not learn to read at grade level.



**The best reason for working toward
continuous improvement...**

Thank You