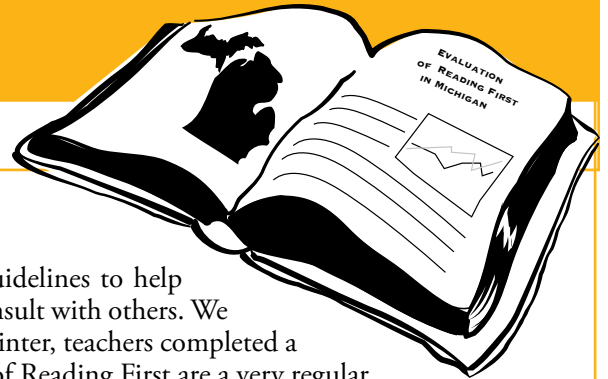


MICHIGAN READING FIRST NEWSLETTER

Spring 2008

A Publication of the Reading First Evaluation Team Vol. 4, Issue 3



KEY FEATURES OF THE READING FIRST PROGRAM

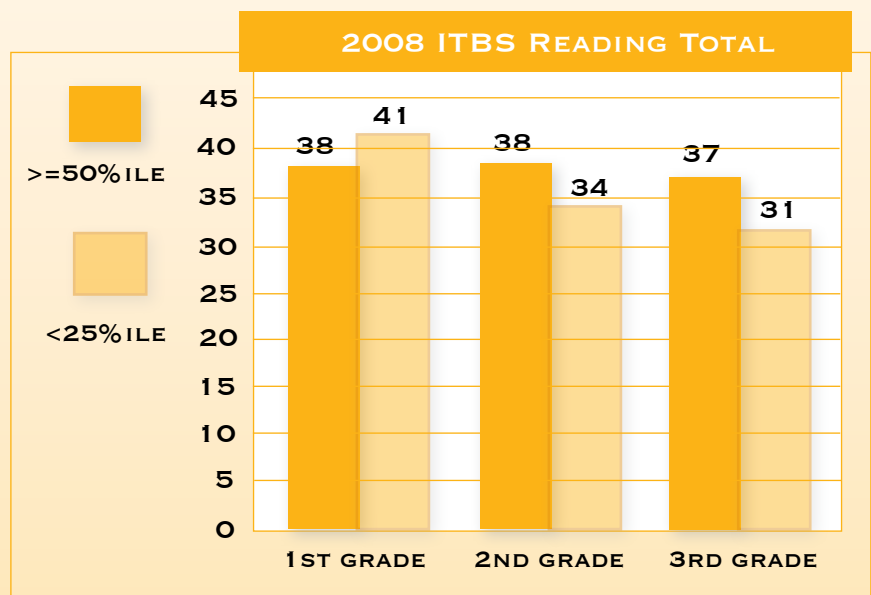
The Reading First program in Michigan has provided resources and guidelines to help teachers organize their instruction and to make it possible for them to consult with others. We wondered how often teachers used these resources and guidelines. This winter, teachers completed a survey to answer this question. Their responses show that some features of Reading First are a very regular part of teachers' work—for example, 94% of the teachers said they provided explicit instruction every day. Others are not so regularly used by teachers—for example, a third of the teachers said they consulted with the literacy coach only 2 or 3 times a month.

The survey question asked: "In this school year, how often have you. . .?" The table shows the percent of teachers that selected each response option.

	NEVER OR LESS THAN ONCE/MONTH	2 OR 3 TIMES/MONTH	ONCE OR TWICE/WK	ALMOST DAILY
USED STUDENT DATA TO GUIDE LESSON PLANNING	2%	12	28	57
PROVIDED EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION (E.G., MODELING)	LESS THAN 1%	1	5	94
PROVIDED SYSTEMATIC, DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION TO TARGET STUDENTS' LEARNING NEEDS	LESS THAN 1%	5	31	64
CONSULTED WITH A LITERACY COACH ABOUT PLANS FOR INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	18%	32	35	15
SOUGHT ADVICE FROM ANOTHER TEACHER ABOUT ISSUES OF READING INSTRUCTION	8%	29	42	21
USED IDEAS FROM GRADE LEVEL MEETINGS TO TEACH READING LESSONS	10%	26	38	26

PRELIMINARY READING ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR 2008

Reading First legislation requires states to report the percent of students reading at or above grade level (the 50th percentile) and the percent of students substantially underachieving in reading (below the 25th percentile). The graph shows the percent of students in each category by grade level on a measure from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) called Reading Total. At each grade level, over a third of the students are reading at or above grade level. These results show that more students in Michigan's Reading First schools are acquiring good reading skills than was the case when the program started. In the spring of 2003, only 19% of the third graders were reading at or above grade level!



YOUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

In the winter, teachers completed a survey to indicate the involvement of parents in their school. The following table shows some of the results. About two-thirds of the teachers felt that the parents were interested in meeting with them and wanted to find out how their child was doing in school (based on the report card). On the other hand, most teachers felt that parents were not likely to volunteer to help in the classroom or attend school events.

The survey question was: “For the students you teach this year, how many of their parents. . .?” The numbers in the table show the percent of teachers who selected each response option.

	NONE OR SOME	ABOUT HALF	MOST	NEARLY ALL
VOLUNTEERED TO HELP IN THE CLASSROOM?	92%	5	2	LESS THAN 1
ATTENDED SCHOOL-WIDE SPECIAL EVENTS?	65%	22	11	2
ATTENDED PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES WHEN YOU REQUESTED THEM?	22%	11	34	33
PICKED UP THEIR CHILD’S LAST REPORT CARD?	26%	7	28	38



SPOTLIGHT ON.....READING FIRST

Dear Reading First Teachers:

We started preparing and sending out newsletters about four years ago, hoping to provide interesting information about Reading First for those who were doing the lion’s share of the work for this state and federal program: the teachers!!! We also hoped that these newsletters would provide a way for teachers to see their work as part of a state-wide project—to take pride in the work that teachers, coaches, facilitators, principals, special educators, program directors are doing to help children become excellent readers.

Now that we are finishing the formal evaluation of Reading First in Michigan, we will no longer be producing newsletters for you. This is our last chance to wish you all well. We hope you have a pleasant summer and a productive and gratifying year next year. As always, feel free to contact us if you have questions. And, again, thanks for your help and your dedication to the work of teaching children to read and write well.



Joanne Carlisle, for the Reading First Evaluation team