

Memorandum

Date: 1/19/11

To: Eric Witherspoon, Superintendent

Cc: Judy Levinson, Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment
Regina Armour, Literacy Coordinator

From: Diep Nguyen, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction

RE: Report on the Literacy Programs

One of the Board goals for 2008-2010 was to implement an ongoing evaluation of the two components of the Literacy Program at ETHS: Reading Intervention and Reading Across the Content Areas (Achievement Now). In the spring of 2009, the Board of Education received a report for the 2008-09 school year.

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Reading Intervention Program in 2009-10, using data collected on several aspects of student achievement, including reading performance data using multiple measures (SRI, PSAE and pre-post data on the Gates-Macginitie Reading Test) , student survey, literacy instructional strategy use, and course enrollment. Progress made in the integration of Literacy strategies across various content subjects in the Achievement Now program is also shared. The report concludes with changes being made based on our review of data results and program monitoring efforts.

Ms. Regina Armour, Literacy Coordinator, will present the highlights of the report and answer questions with the support of Dr. Judy Levinson, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment.

LITERACY PROGRAM AT EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Report to the Board of Education District 202

Regina Armour, Literacy Coordinator

Judith Levinson, Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment

January 24, 2011

PART I OVERVIEW

The district goals for 2010-2012 include a focus on improving literacy. Specifically, there are two aspects of this goal:

- Achieve measurable academic gains in reading across the curriculum;
- Improve student reading in academic courses.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the activities of the Literacy Program in 2009-10 and to provide 2009-10 evaluation data of the Reading Intervention program. In addition, we will report on changes made in 2010-11 as a part of our continuing effort to monitor and improve our literacy efforts.

Evanston Township High School's (ETHS) Literacy Program has two components:

Reading Intervention

Achievement Now or Reading in the Content Areas

The Reading Intervention Program consists of a sequence of classes intended for a small segment of students that enter ETHS with moderate to significant reading challenges. Achievement Now is an initiative started in the spring of 2006 designed to address the teaching of reading in all content areas by supporting and scaffolding the learning in each academic discipline.

ETHS systematically links its literacy instruction to findings in the growing research base, best practices and outcomes in adolescent literacy (Carnegie Corporation of New York's Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy, 2010; Ivey & Fisher, 2005; Jacobs, 2008; Moje, 2008; National Institute for Literacy, 2007; Tierney & Readence, 2004; Snow, Griffin & Burns, 2005; Tatum, 2005). We also have depended on the wisdom of our teachers and teacher leaders within the school to determine the most comprehensive approach to this complex issue. This report provides an overview of the two components, a review of our work this year, the results of our program evaluation and an outline of next steps.

PART II THE READING INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Course Descriptions and Demographic Data

The Reading Intervention Program is comprised of a sequence of courses that are designed to provide support for students who enter as freshmen reading below the national average. This program is focused on not only providing skill-based instruction to shore up students who are behind one or more grade levels, but to also "rescue" literacy learning so that students can build a repertoire and move from feelings of vulnerability to being resilient and confident as readers and writers.

Target Student Population	Course Description
9 th grade: 1% - 29 th percentile (placement determined by EXPLORE & MAP)	Reading Enriched/Read 180: Three credits Two-period class 1 Humanities Enriched: Two credits – one in English and one in history Two-period class
9 th grade: 30 th % - 49 th percentile (placement determined by EXPLORE & MAP)	Freshman Reading: Two credits One period class
10 th grade: (placement determined on performance in freshman humanities enriched)	2 Humanities Enriched: Two credits – one in English and one in History Two-period class
Special Education (placement determined by EXPLORE, MAP & IEP team recommendation)	Reading (System 44): Two elective credits Two-period class
	Reading (Read 180): Two elective credits Two-period class
	10/12 Reading: Two credits One period class

In 2009-10, there were a total of 173 students enrolled in reading programs (Read 180 = 45; Sped Read 180 = 34; Bilingual Read 180 = 8; Freshman Reading = 23; and 2 Humanities Enriched = 63). The percentage of freshmen in reading support was 15%; the percentage of sophomores in reading support was 7%. The majority of students were Black or Hispanic (91%) and from low-income households (89%). Approximately 31 percent had IEP's and five percent were bilingual students. These demographics are typical of past student cohorts in reading programs at ETHS (See Appendix A).

Professional Development for The Reading Intervention Program

Teachers were facilitated last year in small working groups, coached one-on-one and through PLCs. There was planned and coordinated professional development which included connecting teachers to resources both on-site at ETHS and outside school. There were also structured visits to neighboring secondary school districts and professional conferences. James "Jimi" Cannon is a nationally known literacy consultant who works on literacy reform and the building of reading development programs in the Chicago area and in other high need districts across the country. At ETHS he has worked with the teachers of the reading intervention classes for the last year and a half.

Listed below is a table of literacy strategies used in our Reading Intervention Program:

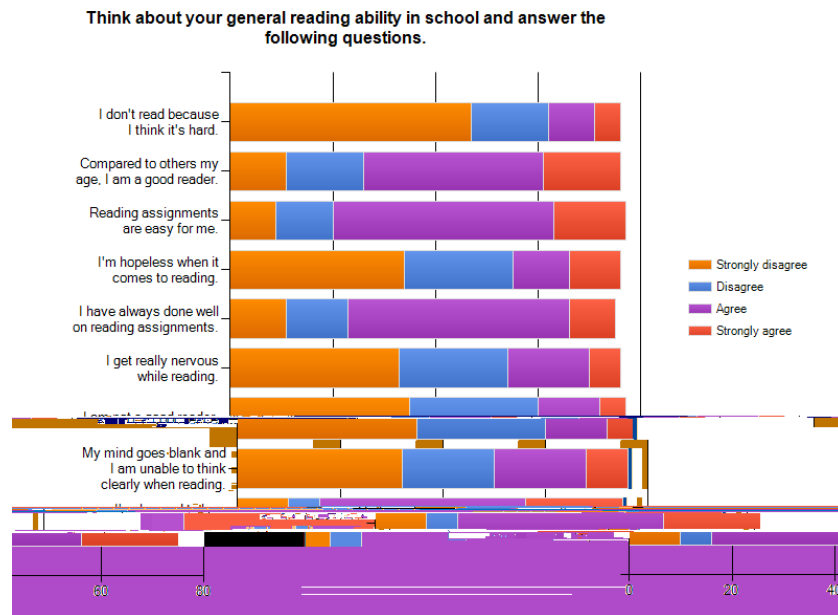
Department	Teachers using strategies	Strategies per department
Read 180	3/3	Skills-based mini lessons Small group guided reading Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading
Frosh Reading	2/2	Skills-based mini lessons Small group guided reading Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading
IP English (Spec. Ed)	8/8	Skills-based mini lessons Small group guided reading Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading Before, during and after reading strategies
10/12 Reading (Spec. Ed)	2/2	Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading Before, during and after reading strategies
Read 180 (Spec. Ed)	3/3	Skills-based mini lessons Small group guided reading Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading
Read 180 ELL	1/1	Skills-based mini lessons Small group guided reading Explicit vocabulary instruction Independent reading

Performance Data: 2009-2010

- o Thirty-three percent scored in the “Warning” performance level.
- o Table 1 shows the gain from EXPLORE to PLAN to PSAE/ACT. Students in reading intervention programs made an overall gain of 3.7 points from EXPLORE to PSAE/ACT. The overall gain for ETHS students from EXPLORE to PSAE/ACT in reading was 6.8 points.

Table 1. EXPLORE to PLAN to PSAE Gain for Students who had a Reading Intervention as Freshmen or Sophomores

Test	N	Scale Score
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Summary of Student Performance

Overall, performance on standardized measures for freshmen in reading programs remained relatively the same for mainstream students. Although there was some improvement for Freshman Reading students in comprehension, the number of students with pre-post scores was too low to determine if this improvement was significant. Students in 2 Humanities Enriched showed marked improvement in comprehension with almost three-quarters of students making more than a year's growth. More students were enrolled in 2 Humanities Enriched than in prior years. Students in special

coaching help and support. Some teachers have sought to expand their own knowledge in adolescent literacy by taking graduate level coursework. There are teachers in several departments who have acquired their reading credentials last year. Even more were interested in participating in a graduate class on reading across the curriculum provided by Loyola University of Chicago on-site here at ETHS in the evening.

Implementation of Literacy Strategies

Listed below is a table of professional development activities across departments:

Department	Teachers using strategies	Strategies per department	2009-2010 Priorities and Focus
English	25/35	Explicit vocabulary instruction Differentiation in content area reading	Accessing difficult texts Equitable materials, tasks and assessments Vocabulary development
History	15/25	Question-Answer Relationships ReQuest Semantic Map CLOZE	Accountable reading Accessing difficult texts Equitable materials, tasks and assessments Vocabulary development
Science	26/31	Annotation Double-entry journal Summaries Common literacy lessons (model)	Accessing difficult science texts "reading science" Vocabulary development Strategy proficiency Measuring efficacy of literacy tools Connecting fiction with non-fiction science text
Applied Sciences & Technologies	14/14	Explicit vocabulary instruction	Vocabulary development Accessing technical, quantitative, and document texts After reading, manage complex, technical tasks
Physical Education/Health	23/23	Explicit vocabulary instruction Accm 0 & Vocabulary development	

Student Survey Data

To monitor how students use literacy strategies in their content courses, five classes at the sophomore and junior level in both reading and history were surveyed on use of literacy strategies in spring of 2008-09 and 2009-10. Students were administered the same series of questions that were described in the earlier section on our reading intervention programs¹. These items focus on the use of several key literacy strategies. Results are provided in Appendix F. The student response rate for 2009-10 was 57% compared to 92% of students taking the survey in 2008-09. About 50% or more of students indicated they were using the following strategies:

- Using connections from life experiences or something read before to help comprehension or understanding
- Making predictions
- Finding the main idea
- Re-reading a passage to make sense of difficult text
- Using pictures, illustrations, and graphs
- Using headings and subheadings in textbooks
- Adjusting their reading pace
- Using the author's clues to make inferences

For five strategies, the percentages are higher than the previous year: Using connections; making predictions; finding the main idea; using pictures, illustrations and graphs; and making inferences.

PART IV CURRENT INITIATIVES

This school year, the focus of our work along with our outside consultant and critical colleague, Mr. Jimi Cannon, is exclusively on the Reading Intervention Programs in order to accelerate teaching and learning so that students will make significant gains in reading.

The specific steps are:

On-line student portfolios (Exhibit G) have been created to collect quantitative and qualitative data that measures student progress twice per quarter using multiple assessments that specifically address vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. The Gates-MacGinitie reading test will continue to be used to measure student achievement (pre & post)

Summary of student growth will continue to be shared with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment at the end of each semester

Appropriate interventions will be informed by the student portfolios. A case study approach in coaching sessions, professional development and quarterly review meetings will be utilized.

Summary of individual student's reading growth will be continuously reviewed by teachers, coaches, chairs of English, History and the lead teacher of special education at the end of each quarter

Explicit exit criteria is being clarified in order to transition students out of reading intervention when proficiency is reached and/or exceeded

Baseline data has been collected in all English and History courses with special attention to the reading classes on: what types of text are used in class; how text is used; how students are engaging text and how long students spend time reading independently, in small groups or in whole groups is being used to inform intervention strategy use and monitor progress

¹ These survey items were developed in consultation with Jimi Cannon, our literacy consultant.

Partnership with Literature for All of Us is being utilized to develop a broader reading selection for students and create supportive, communal literacy experiences to acknowledge the role powerful texts play in the lives of students.

The sequence of literacy support courses beyond the freshman year, including entry/exit criteria and transitional support for the students, will be examined to build a more cohesive literacy support program for students.

PART V

NEXT STEPS

Reading Intervention Program:

Collect data and maintain a comprehensive assessment profile for each student in each reading intervention class

Utilize the student portfolio to monitor progress and inform reading intervention support so that it is responsive to the changing needs of the students

Transition students sooner into mixed level classes who read at or above grade level with confidence and readiness

Reading in the Content Areas:

Begin to collect data on specific literacy strategies or “tools” each department is implementing in order to measure efficacy and use by students that supports the learning of content

As students achieve in the disciplines, implement more sophisticated strategies in each content area that aligns with higher level 21st century global skill acquisition

Conclusion

We have spent the last three years building capacity in literacy across the school so that students will have a broad repertoire of literacy skills when encountering high level, complex texts here and beyond. Priorities were set in each department, and content-specific literacy goals with accompanying professional development were created. The focus of this year is the assessment of students, with direct and focused interventions to shore up reading challenges, and the close monitoring of student progress, growth and program evaluation.

In continuing to construct a reading intervention and support program, we remain profoundly rooted in the effective effort model. We continue to offer students deep, explicit literacy instruction in complex reading strategies that accelerate their learning. We are building an arsenal of useful, differentiated assessment tools that provide multiple student data points in order to adequately inform instruction. In reading across the content areas, we are committed to intentionally personalizing all instruction for students with the understanding that social and emotional issues matter and impact the reading development process.

Appendix A

Reading Intervention Program Demographics

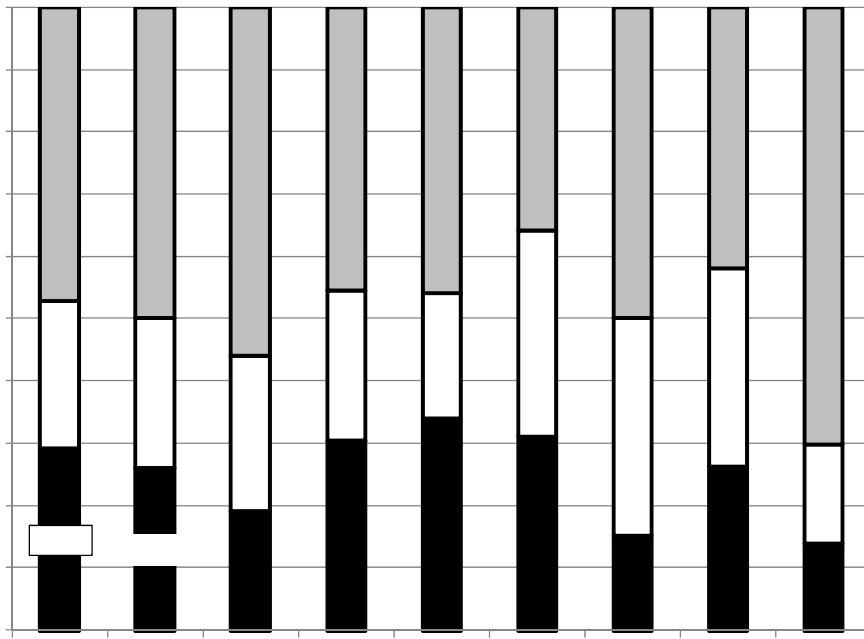
Literacy Program Demographics - READ 180, Freshman Reading, 2 Humanities Enriched

		2007-2008 (N=140)						2008-2009 (N=147)						2009-2010 (N=131)					
		1 Humanities Enriched/READ 180		Frosh Reading		2 Humanities Enriched		1 Humanities Enriched/READ 180		Frosh Reading		2 Humanities Enriched		1 Humanities Enriched/READ 180		Frosh Reading		2 Humanities Enriched	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sex	Female	22	40.7%	22	40.0%	14	45.2%	34	52.3%	28	50.9%	8	29.6%	24	53.3%	6	26.1%	33	52.4%
	Male	32	59.3%	33	60.0%	17	54.8%	31	47.7%	27	49.1%	19	70.4%	21	46.7%	17	73.9%	30	47.6%
Ethnic Description	Asian	3	5.6%	1	1.8%	1	3.2%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Black	41	75.9%	38	69.1%	21	67.7%	46	70.8%	32	58.2%	23	85.2%	32	71.1%	12	52.2%	43	68.3%
	Hispanic	7	13.0%	8	14.5%	4	12.9%	13	20.0%	12	21.8%	2	7.4%	9	20.0%	8	34.8%	17	27.0%
	Multiracial	1	1.9%	2	3.6%	1	3.2%	3	4.6%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	1	2.2%	0	0.0%	1	1.6%
	White	2	3.7%	6	10.9%	4	12.9%	3	4.6%	9	16.4%	2	7.4%	3	6.7%	3	13.0%	2	3.2%
Income Level	Low Income	43	79.7%	32	59.3%	26	83.9%	40	65.5%	40	74.1%	23	88.4%	41	91.1%	20	86.9%	53	84.1%
	Non-Low Income	11	20.4%	22	40.7%	5	16.1%	21	34.4%	14	25.9%	3	11.5%	4	8.9%	3	13.0%	10	15.9%
IEP		16	29.6%	11	20.0%	11	35.5%	14	21.5%	8	14.5%	9	33.3%	6	13.3%	2	8.7%	11	17.5%
Grade	9	54	100.0%	55	100.0%	9	29.0%	65	100.0%	55	100.0%	6	22.2%	45	100.0%	23	100.0%	16	25.4%
	10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	22	71.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21	77.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	47	74.6%
Total # students		54		55		31		65		55		27		45		23		63	

Literacy Program Demographics - Special Ed READ 180, Bilingual READ 180

		n	%	n	%	n	%
N5-77.810							

Appendix B



Appendix D

Appendix E

Special Reading Survey Results: 2008-09 vs 2009-10

Sometimes when I read, a portion of the text reminds me of something in my life or something I've read before . If this happens...

Number of Responses

I don't do anything.

I look for context clues to help my comprehension or understanding.

I use the connection to help my comprehension or understanding

2008-09
2009-10

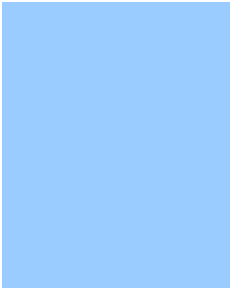
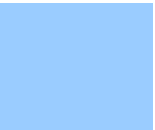
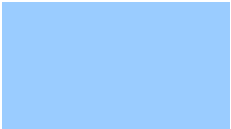
118
76

16%
15%

40%
43%

44%
42%

There are certain steps I do before reading to help me understand better what I'm about to read. One

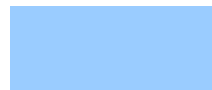
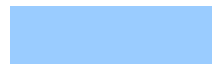
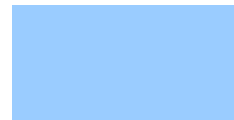
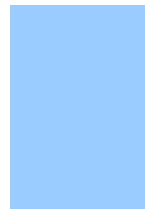
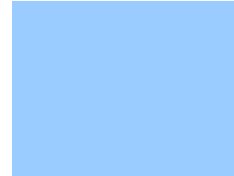
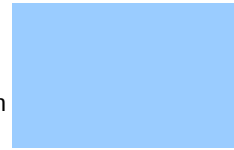


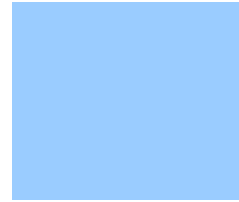
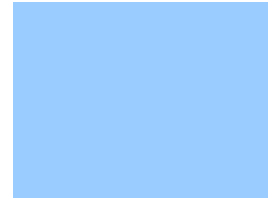
If I find words that I don't know...

I check to
see if I know
any of the
word parts

Number of
Responses

I check for clues in

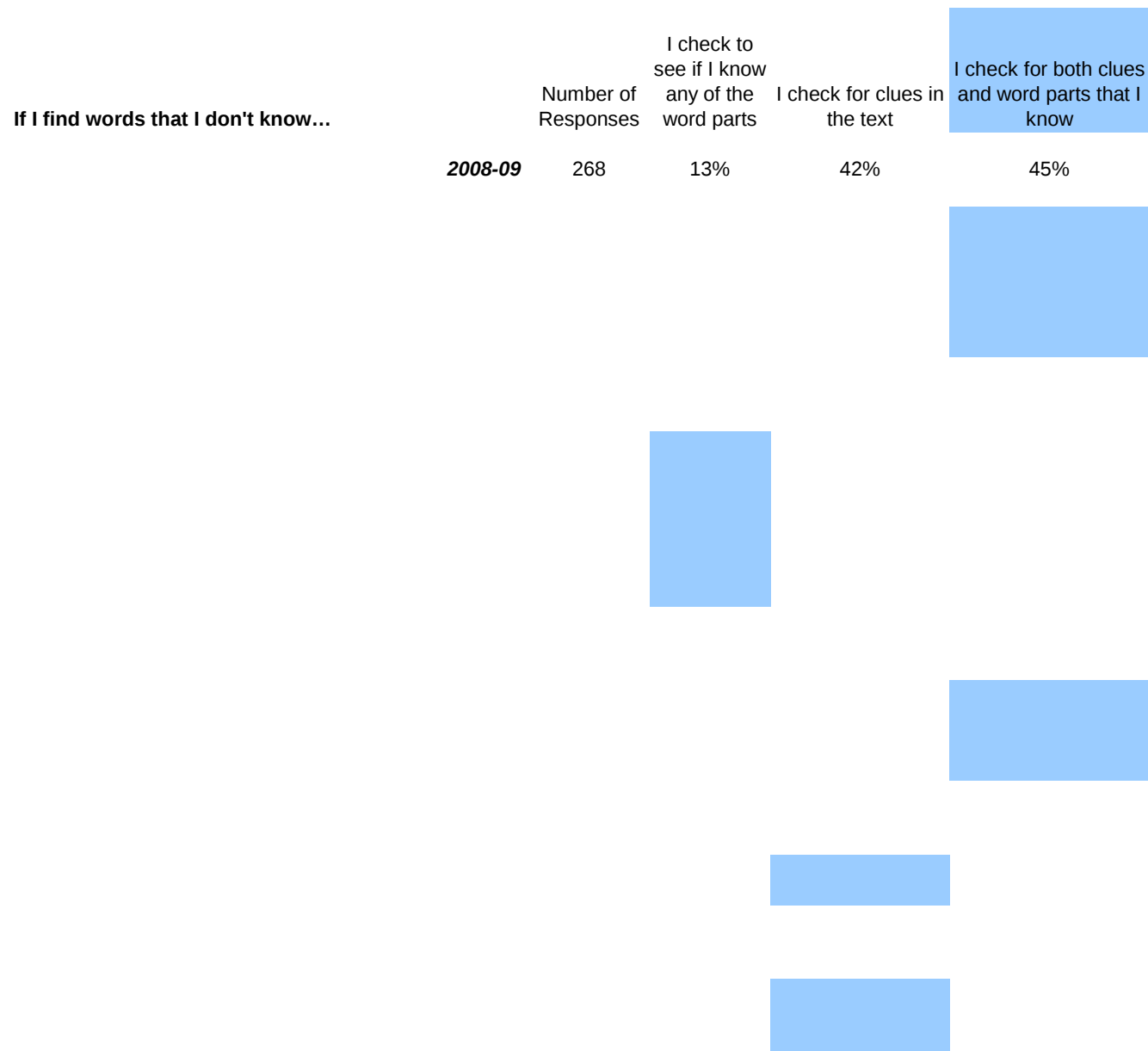


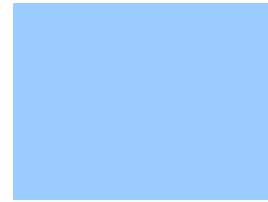


Appendix F

Student Survey on Literacy StrategiesResults: 2008-09 vs 2009-10

Sometimes when I read, a portion of the text reminds me of something in my life or something I've read before . If this happens...	Number of Responses	I don't do anything.	I look for context clues to help my comprehension or understanding.	I use the connection to help my comprehension or understanding
2008-09	276	21%	25%	54%
2009-10	151	21%	18%	61%
There are certain steps I do before reading to help me understand better what I'm about to read. One thing I do is...	Number of Responses	I re-read s		





Appendix G

In order to build a more “comprehensive student assessment profile” as Dr. Tatum recommended to us over two years ago, to track students’ progress more closely, student portfolios are being established for each student in the reading intervention classes. Those classes are: Read 180, SpEd Read 180, Fresh man Reading, 1 Humanities Enriched and 2 Humanities Enriched.

Data to be collected will show evidence of growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency skills. In some cases, assessments that are already administered will be used. In other cases, more standardized tools (i.e., AIMSweb oral reading fluency checks and CLOZE maze) will be included. The data will be collected twice quarterly to monitor how students are progressing through the reading intervention program.

Besides monitoring student progress, the data collected for the portfolios can be used for coaching conversations, instructional planning, and grouping for tracking reading progress. This information will also be used to transition students out of the program into mixed level classes at the semester endpoints. The data will be used to show growth of students through multiple data points and will take into account each student's starting point. -

Pivotal Portfolios are vehicles for data collection on student learning over time. It is a systematic collection of student work that provides

Achievement Now

Gates pre and post scores



References (cont'd):

National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2005). <i>Creating a Culture of Literacy: A Guide for Middle and High School Principals</i>. Reston, VA Snow, C. E., Griffin P.G. & Burns, M.S. (2005). <i>Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World</i>. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Tatum, A., (2008) Toward a More Anatomically Complete Model of Literacy Instruction: A Focus on African American Male Adolescents and Texts. <i>Harvard Educational Review</i> (pp 7 39). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Graduate School of Education Vacca, R. T. & Vacca J. L. (2005). <i>Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum</i> (8th Ed). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.	Chapter 6 in this publication specifically focuses on intervention strategies and meeting all middle and/or high school students' reading needs. This resource also presents a case study high school where 100 percent literacy passing rate is its goal. A resource used to identify specific components in the complexity of skilled reading. This resource also identifies common tools and methods that can be used to assess reading. Our model of literacy across the content areas at ETHS was developed from Dr. Tatum's research. Our core strategies and text selections to address students' multiple identities have come from his work with us. Teachers use his explicit instructional strategies to build vocabulary development and reading comprehension. This seminal text gives teachers and coaches a resource for the differentiation of reading skills needed across the disciplines.