Memorandum

Date: 10/22/2009

To: Eric Witherspoon, Superintendent

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

From: Laura Cooper

READING PROGRAMS AT EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Report to the Board of Education District 202

Regina Armour, Literacy Coordinator

Judith Levinson, Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment

October 26, 2009

Course Grades

Appendix B provides the percentage of D/F/NC grades from 2005-06 through 2008-09 for READ 180, Freshman Reading, and 2 Humanities Enriched.

- In English:
    - The percentage of D/F/NC's increased from 2007-08 to 2008-09 for READ 180, Freshman Reading and 2 Humanities Enriched.
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Based on feedback from Jimi Cannon, our literacy consultant, we revised a series of questions from prior surveys to collect more focused feedback (Appendix C, Part 3). About 50% or more of students indicated they were using the following strategies:

- Finding the main idea
- Re-reading a passage to make sense of difficult text
- Adjusting their reading pace
- Using pictures, illustrations, and graphs
- Using headings and subheadings in textbooks
- Using the author's clues to make inferences
- Asking themselves questions to help stay involved and check their understanding
- Setting a purpose before reading

The responses to the remaining items suggest that the majority of students have not yet learned to self-monitor in these areas:

- Using connections in their lives to help them understand
- Thinking about what they already know to help them understand
- Monitoring themselves for words they do not understand
- Checking for both clues and word parts they know
- Taking notes or highlighting important information and then writing a brief summary

Part IV: Looking forward to 2009-2010 – An Action Summary

All of the student data collected was shared with the teachers and department chairs in a meeting over the summer and in a follow-up this fall. These data are driving the specific changes in our program already made for this year; these data are also being used to focus our professional development work and program development with Jimi Cannon. This information has the following implications:

- Reading instruction should be more directly connected to the classroom instruction in English and History. For example, pre-teaching of the reading content might help to improve course grades and reduce the large percentage of D/F grades**.**
- We are making progress on student strategy use. This year we should focus more on the five strategies that the data indicated the majority of students reported not utilizing.
- The data provide confirmation that students have difficulty reading science material and that our literacy efforts in the science department are important to continue.
- We need to continue to find opportunities for students to read in school and to encourage reading outside of school. Students indicate they like to read and have reading materials at home. It may be that students do not put time aside to read.

From what we have learned from the data, national research and teacher experiences, we are already implementing the following:

- A new Scholastic program called *System 44* (named for the 44 sounds in the alphabet) that address the small percentage of students who need explicit instruction in phonics and basic word identification
- More intensive coaching support to the reading program teachers by the literacy coordinator and by Jimi Cannon on strategies and methods for one-on-one student interventions
- A newly revised Freshman Reading curriculum to more closely support students in being successful in 1 Humanities

More explicit instruction that does not just teach students reading comprehension skills and build vocabulary, but also pushes them to identify themselves as *readers*. (Teachers and coaches will explicitly model what good readers and writers do.)
More reading time in all reading classes to further develop the independent reader by having students wrestle with challenging questions while teachers monitor student comprehension

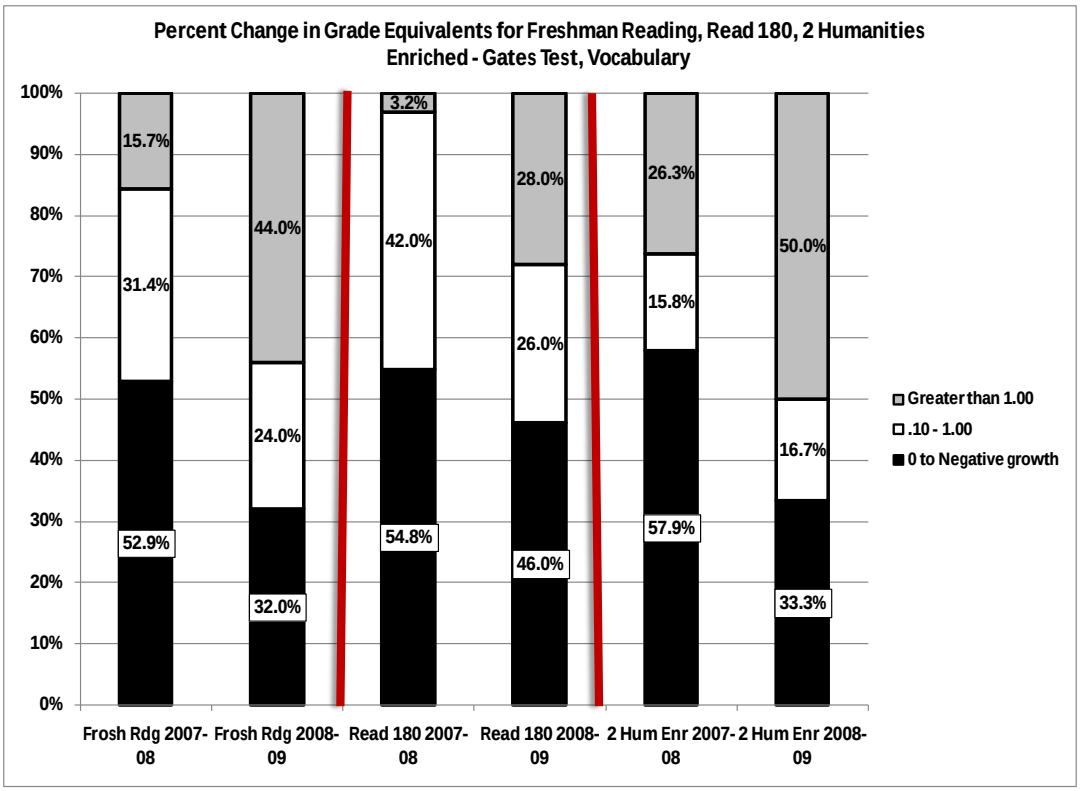
Over the course of this year, we will be taking the following actions:

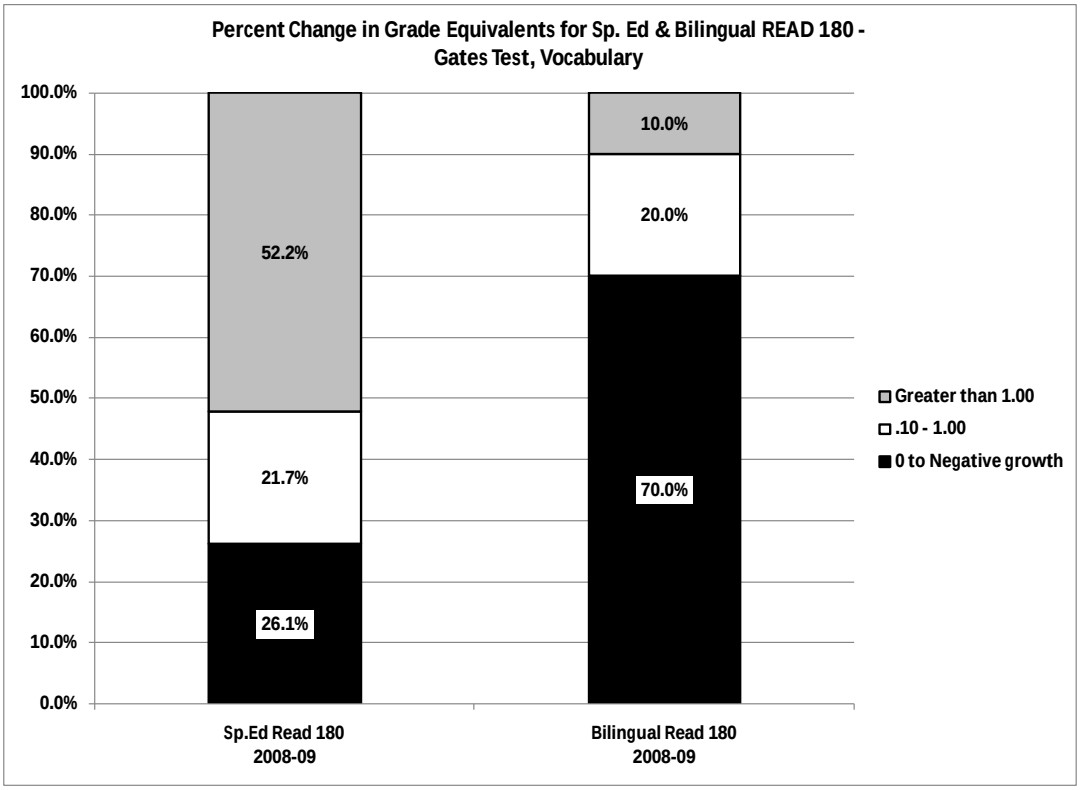
What	**Who Develops**	**Who Uses**	**Completion Timeline**
Refine classroom **observational rubric** with explicit literacy markers to identify good instruction or gaps in instruction	Literacy Coordinator with input from School Administrators, Coaches, Chairs, Reading Teachers, J. Cannon	School Administrators, Chairs, Coaches, Literacy Coordinator, J. Cannon	Fall 2009
Select and develop **monitoring tools** that provide more frequent, more discrete measures of students' reading growth (e.g., formative assessments, individual reading inventories, running records)	Literacy Coordinator, Coaches, Reading Teachers, J. Cannon	Literacy Coordinator, Coaches, Reading Teachers	Currently in use
Set **short-term targets** in addition to annual targets for students in the reading programs	Literacy Coordinator, Coaches, Reading Teachers, J. Cannon	Literacy Coordinator, Coaches, Reading Teachers, J. Cannon	Currently in use
Investigate the **needs of our junior and senior** students and design new support mechanisms for readers who are not yet proficient at those level Cann5stig1 45239h20(s)-3(t7430.32 0.48 0.2-6(n)-2(i)-3(o)-10(r)]TJo)-8(nn5)-20(s)-3(t)-5(iu42 0.			

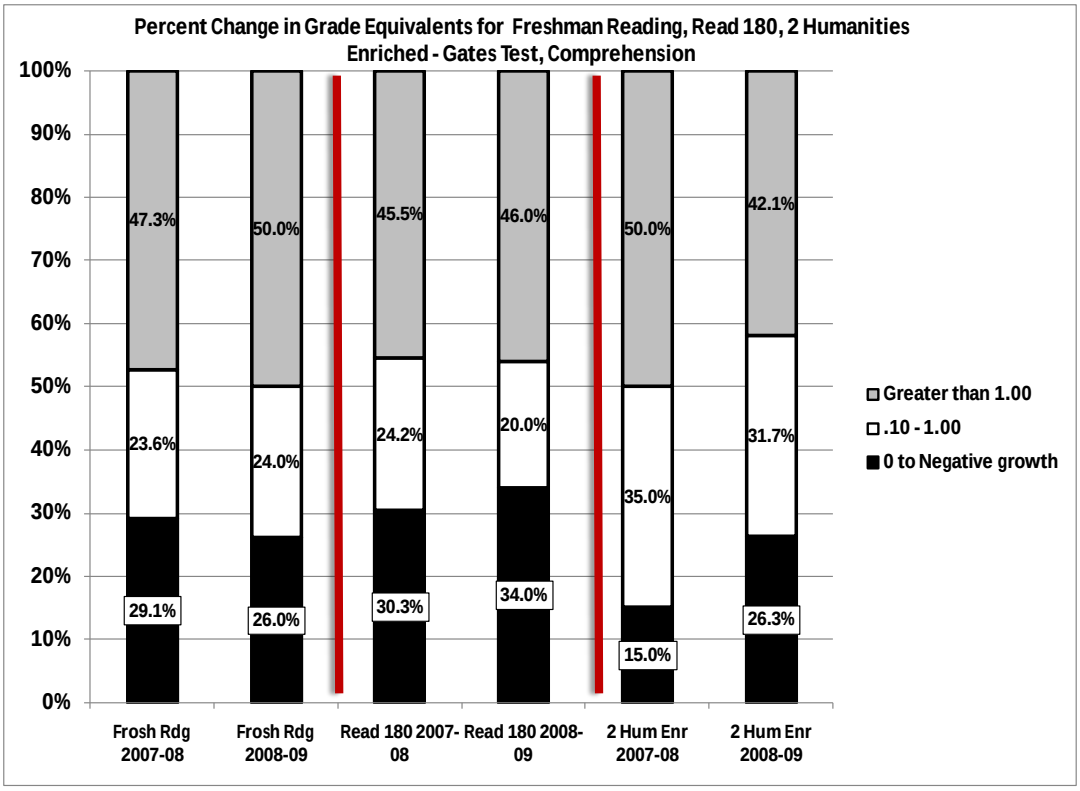
We are currently receiving support, but continued support is needed. We specifically request:

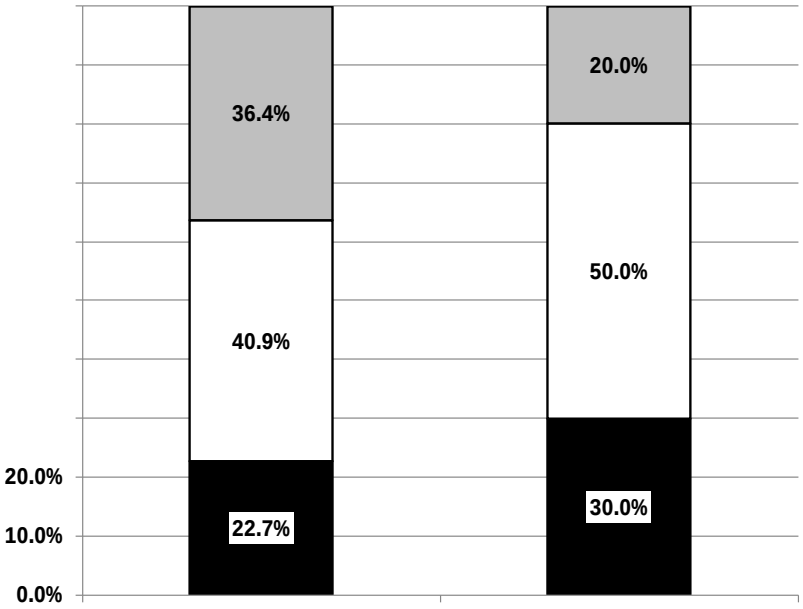
The committed leadership from administration, chairs, coaches and teacher leaders as this is not a quick project
Time and resources for continued, intensive professional development
Understanding and patience as we are use this information to address this daunting problem

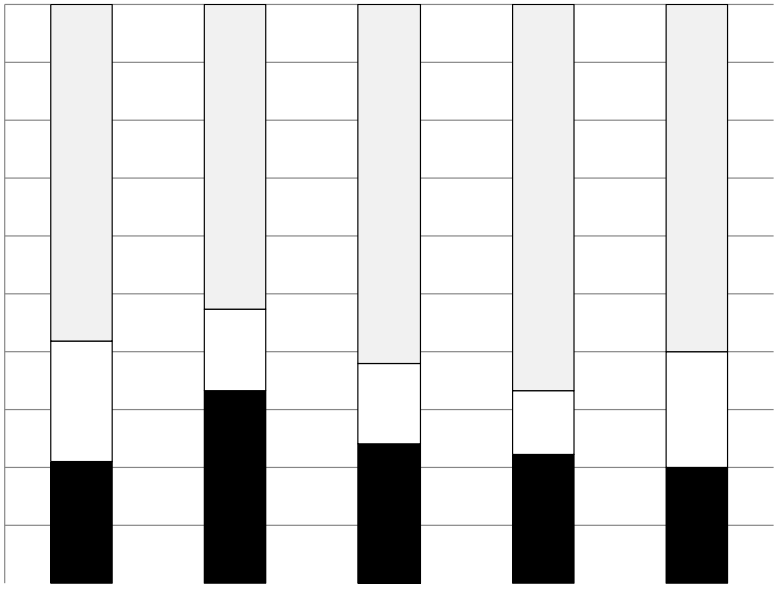
Gates McGinitie Pre-Post Test Data





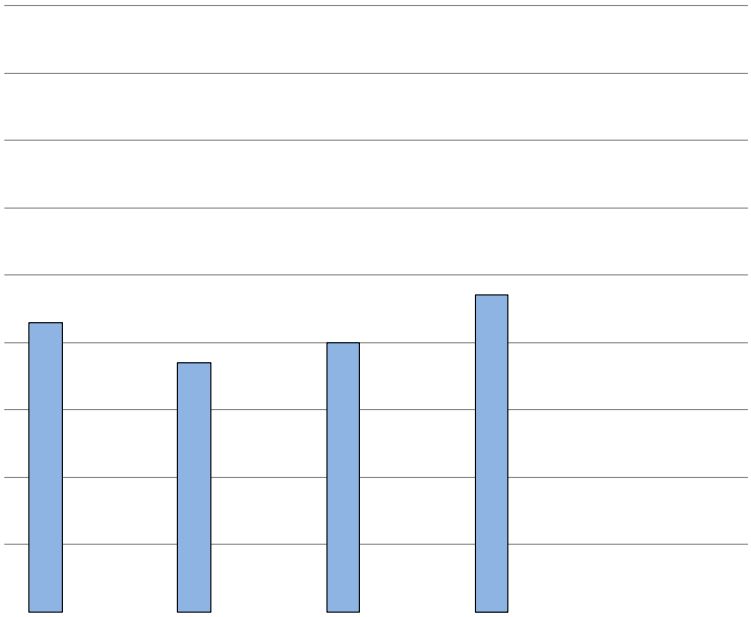

Percent Change in Grade Equivalents for Freshman Reading, Read 180, 2 Humanities Enriched - Gates Test, Comprehension
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
47.3%
23.6%
29.1%
50.0%
24.0%
26.0%
45.5%
24.2%
30.3%
46.0%
20.0%
34.0%
50.0%
35.0%
15.0%
42.1%
31.7%
26.3%
Frosh Rdg 2007-08
Frosh Rdg 2008-09
Read 180 2007-08
Read 180 2008-09
2 Hum Enr 2007-08
2 Hum Enr 2008-09
Greater than 1.00
.10 - 1.00
0 to Negative growth


36.4%
40.9%
22.7%
20.0%
50.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%



Appendix B

Course Grades for Read 180, Freshman Reading, & 2 Humanities Enriched



Student Survey: Attitudes Toward Reading

		READ 180		Frosh Rdg		Sp. Ed.	
		2006-07	2008-09	2006-07	2008-09	2006-07	2008-09
I like to buy books.	# of responses	41	51	60	48	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*33%*	*53%*	*50%*	*38%*	31%	36%
I like to read a book when I have the free time.	# of responses	40	50	59	47	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*44%*	*58%*	*41%*	*51%*	39%	43%
I get excited about some of the books I read.	# of responses	41	50	59	48	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*65%*	*72%*	*73%*	*71%*	46%	64%
I think reading is a good use of time.	# of responses	40	50	59	48	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*65%*	*73%*	*59%*	*56%*	69%	36%
I think reading is interesting.	# of responses	40	50	59	48	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*79%*	*70%*	*59%*	*65%*	69%	50%
I like to read to learn about things that I'm interested in.	# of responses		50		48		14
	Agree/Stronglyagree		*78%*		*79%*		79%
There are a lot of reading materials at home: books,	# of responses	41	49	59	47	13	14
	Agree/Stronglyagree	*81%*	*84%*	*85%*	*83%*	85%	79%
I don't read because I think it's hard.	# of responses		49		48		14
	Agree/Stronglyagree		*14%*		*8%*		7%
I share what I read with others.	# of responses		50		47		14
	Agree/Stronglyagree		*64%*		*70%*		79%

Part 2 (continued)

Student Survey: How much do you understand when you read material for the following classes?

	2006-07			2008-09		
	READ 180	***Frosh Reading***	***Special Ed***	***READ 180***	***Frosh Reading***	***Special Ed***
	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all
English	65%	68%	85%	66%	71%	72%
History	65%	54%	42%	60%	54%	57%
Science	39%	41%	42%	33%	43%	33%
Math	67%	71%	25%	58%	73%	72%

Part 3

*Shaded option is the preferred response.

If I realize that I don't understand something while reading, I usually…	Number of Responses	go on and finish the assignment even If I'm still confused	give up and quit	re-read passage to make sense of it
READ 180	50	8%	10%	82%
Frosh Rdg	49	10%	8%	82%
Special Ed	13	23%	0%	77%

When reading textbooks, I…	Number of Responses	use pictures, illustrations, and graphs to help me understand	try to understand the characters	look for similes or metaphors
READ 180	50	56%	30%	14%
Frosh Rdg	47	57%	40%	2%
Special Ed	13	31%	54%	15%

When reading textbooks, I also…	Number of Responses	use the setting to help understand	look for figurative language	use headings and subheadings to help me find main ideas
READ 180	49	33%	12%	55%
Frosh Rdg	46	22%	17%	61%
Special Ed	13	39%	23%	39%

When reading difficult text, I know to…	Number of Responses	pretend it is easy	read slower or re-read	take notes
READ 180	50	2%	64%	34%
Frosh Rdg	49	4%	45%	51%
Special Ed	13	8%	77%	15%

To understand what the author doesn't come right out and say, I use clues the author has given me and my own knowledge to…	Number of Responses	make predictions	make inferences	learn word parts
READ 180	50	44%	52%	4%
Frosh Rdg	48	27%	67%	6%
Special Ed	13	46%	46%	8%

To help me study and remember important information that I've read, I…	Number of Responses	take notes or highlight important information	highlight what I think the text will be about	take notes or highlight important information and then write a brief summary of what I've learned
READ 180	51	55%	20%	26%
Frosh Rdg	49	53%	14%	33%
Special Ed	13	46%	23%	31%

To keep myself involved and help my understanding, I…	Number of Responses	read slower	ask myself questions about what might happen or about what I want to find out	list words I don't know
READ 180	49	22%	69%	8%
Frosh Rdg	48	33%	58%	8%
Special Ed	14	36%	50%	14%

Before reading, it is important to know WHY I am reading and what I'm trying to learn. Therefore, I…	Number of Responses	set a purpose for reading	make a prediction	write a summary
READ 180	51	45%	45%	10%
Frosh Rdg	48	56%	40%	4%
Special Ed	14	50%	36%	14%

*Shaded option is the preferred response.