

A
VALIDATION
REPORT
ON

READ 180

A print and electronic
adaptive intervention program
Grades 4 and above



A STUDY OF THE
INTENSIVE ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM AND *READ 180*
IN THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Final Report

A Study of the Intensive Academic Support Program and
READ 180 in the Los Angeles Unified School District

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In the 2000-2001 academic year, designated eighth grade students received specialized instruction to improve their reading skills. Under the auspices of the Intensive Academic Support Program (IAS), the *READ 180* Program from Scholastic Inc., was implemented.

***READ 180* Program**

READ 180 is a reading intervention program created as a result of more than ten years of research by experts at Vanderbilt University. Through a collaborative research effort between Vanderbilt and the Orange County Public School System in Florida, the *READ 180* pilot was used with more than 10,000 students between 1994 and 1999.

Research on the pilot project indicated that students participating in the Orange County research program experienced quantifiable improvement in the areas of reading achievement, the development of more positive attitudes and behaviors, and overall higher school achievement.

READ 180 is designed to support teachers in their efforts to improve reading achievement for students reading below grade level in the upper elementary and middle grades. *READ 180* utilizes an intensive reading intervention approach to:

- Deliver individualized, adjusted reading instruction to improve students' reading skills.
- Provide practice and the application of skills in multiple contexts to increase reading achievement.
- Support and motivate students as they progress toward becoming lifelong readers and learners.

READ 180 combines research-based reading practices with the effective use of technology, offering students an opportunity to achieve reading success through a combination of instructional, modeled, and independent reading components. The program incorporates instructional decision-making procedures and state-of-the-art instructional materials to ensure that each student's individual needs are addressed and that each attains maximum achievement.

READ 180 was designed to meet the needs of students who read below grade level. This instructional model is designed to send a strong message that each individual is valued, supported, given choices, and can succeed. This model combines the following elements:

- 90-minute daily class periods.
- Reduced class size of 15 students per class.

- Students engaged in daily instructional reading using *READ 180* software.
- Students receive daily modeled or independent reading practice.
- Students participate daily through individual or small-group instruction.
- Distinct classroom areas are designated for each type of instructional activity.
- A computer area with five computers for the *READ 180* instructional software.
- A comfortable reading area with cassette players and headphones for listening to the *READ 180* audiobooks.
- A worktable for teacher-directed small-group instruction.

The *READ 180* approach begins with 20 minutes of whole-class literacy instruction, in which the teacher and students engage in shared reading, read aloud, or mini skill lessons. Next, the students are split into three groups, and each group participates in three 20-minute rotations. During each of the three rotations the teacher works directly with one small group of students, while the remaining two groups work independently at the computer or reading stations. After the three rotations, the instruction ends with a 10-minute wrap-up for students to reflect on their daily performance.

To assist the teacher in developing lesson plans and monitoring student progress, the *READ 180* instructional components include: Teacher's Guides, Reading Strategies, and Resource books for comprehension and writing support. The Scholastic Management Suite software provides detailed progress reports that allow teachers to identify skills mastered and areas for improvement. The Scholastic Reading Inventory software provides an assessment of overall reading achievement and uses the Lexile Framework to facilitate assignment of program materials by matching student levels to text materials.

***READ 180* Student Selection and Teacher Training**

LAUSD students were selected for the program based on SAT-9 scores, report cards, and teacher recommendation. Two specific criteria were used by LAUSD for the eighth graders designated as IAS students: A grade of D or F in eighth grade English, and a non-passing grade on the LAUSD writing performance test. Most of the IAS students were repeating the eighth grade. These eighth grade LAUSD students began receiving the *READ 180* program during the 2000-2001 school year. The one common denominator was the student as a struggling reader.

As would be expected, students identified as Limited English Proficient scored the lowest of all language groups in Reading for 1999-2000 (21.10 NCEs).

Not shown in Table 2 are the percentile scores for the Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. In Reading, LEP *READ 180* students had a percentile mean of 9 compared to the district eighth grade LEP average of 13. In Language Arts, *READ 180* students' converted mean percentile was 9 compared to 15, the district average. Again, these results were evidence of the need for additional learning opportunities for the selected students.

Final Participant Data

In the spring of 2001, all *READ 180* participants were tested. In October of 2001, matched scores (1999-2000 and 2000-2001) were reported for 537 participants. This indicates that some students left the IAS program or did not have both 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 scores. Also, while the data presented in Tables 1 and 2 represents essentially the same students, they are not matched with the 537 participants who appear in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Table 3 presents attendance and absence data across the various demographic variables by *READ 180* students. The average number of days attended by *READ 180* students has 147 (approximately 82% in the 180 days number of the school year). The variability within and across ethnic and language groups was extremely large, indicating that some of the students attended school less than 60% of the days available.

Table 4 presents the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 matched scores for *READ 180* participants. For Reading, *READ 180* students gained approximately 3 NCEs from one year to the next (significant gain $p < .05$). Also, in Language Arts, *READ 180* students gained approximately 2 NCEs (also a significant gain, $p < .05$). District percentile ranks remained approximately equal from 2000 (Table 1) to 2001 (Table 4) at 33 in Reading and 36 in Language Arts. The *READ 180* students, however, gained four percentile ranks in Reading and three percentile ranks in Language Arts.

Table 5 presents the Reading and Language Arts NCEs categorized by ethnicity, gender, and language classification. Again, the means across ethnic groups and English Language classification vary greatly for both Reading and Language Arts.

Table 6 depicts the comparison group means (1999-2001) in Reading and Language Arts as approximately equal to the *READ 180* 1999-2000 means. (Note: The comparison group was selected from all other non-IAS LAUSD eighth graders. Selection of the comparison group was based on the 1999-2000 test scores with approximately the same percentages of gender, ethnicity, and language group as the *READ 180* students.)

Table 3 Demographic Variables and Attendance Final

READ 180			Days Attended*		Apportioned AbsenNCes*		Non-Apportioned AbsenNCes*	
	N	%	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)
ETHNICITY								
Asian	15	3%	172	(20)	5	(13)	1	(04)
African-American	75	14%	150	(40)	9	(11)	7	(10)
Hispanic	421	78%	145	(38)	14	(13)	7	(11)
White	15	3%	157	(22)	15	(16)	7	(09)
Filipino	9	2%	160	(38)	06	(07)	3	(05)
Pacific Islander**	2	<1%						
TOTAL	537		147	(38)	12	(13)	7	(11)
GENDER								
Male	329	61%	146	(37)	12	(13)	7	(10)
Female	208	39%	147	(39)	13	(14)	7	(12)
TOTAL	537		147	(38)	13	(13)	7	(11)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSIFICATION								
LEP	225	42%	142	(37)	15	(14)	8	(12)
RFEP	143	27%	143	(34)	11	(13)	5	(08)
IFEP	24	4%	147	(34)	14	(12)	7	(09)
None Listed	145	27%	145	(42)	12	(12)	8	(12)
TOTAL	537		147	(38)	13	(13)	7	(11)

*Rounded
 **To maintain confidentiality, categories with less than five students were not reported

**Table 4 Reading and Language Arts NCEs Final
 N = 537**

READ 180	1999-2000			2000-2001			**District
	NCEs		Percentile	NCEs		Percentile	
	Mean	(S)	Mean	Mean	(S)	Mean	
Reading	32.10	(17.9)	20	35.24**	(19.1)	24	33
Language Arts	33.29	(21.8)	21	35.08**	(21.1)	24	36

Source For District Percentile: <http://data.cae.ca.gov/>
 * Converted from Mean NCEs
 **Correlated 't' test, p<.05

As shown, the comparison group students lost ground in both Reading (32.44 to 25.78) and Language Arts (33.10 to 30.44) from 1999-2000 to 2000-2001. This finding is not surprising since these students had identical low reading scores compared to the READ 180 students, without the benefit of the READ 180 intensive program. In comparison, READ 180 students made significant gains in both areas. An independent 't' test between the READ 180 students and comparison students for 2000-2001 showed significant differences in NCEs scores in both Reading and Language Arts.

Table 5 **Reading and Language Arts Performance Final**
By Demographic Variables

READ 180		READING NCEs				LANGUAGE NCEs				
		1999-2000		2000-2001		1999-2000		2000-2001		
ETHNICITY		N	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)
Asian	15	54.38	(17.8)	57.14	(27.6)	62.21	(22.8)	51.47	(32.1)	
African-American	75	36.85	(20.5)	39.61	(23.9)	42.64	(22.4)	41.78	(29.9)	
Hispanic	421	29.75	(15.9)	32.93	(16.1)	29.62	(20.1)	32.70	(19.2)	
White	15	44.22	(23.0)	46.19	(29.9)	43.58	(14.67)	44.38	(25.4)	
Filipino	9	49.42	(26.4)	54.97	(21.9)	61.56	(17.7)	51.86	(30.6)	
*Pacific Islander	2									
TOTAL	537	32.10	(17.9)	35.24	(19.1)	33.29	(21.8)	35.08	(21.1)	
GENDER		N	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)
Male	329	30.57	(17.5)	34.82	(17.9)	31.19	(20.6)	33.77	(20.0)	
Female	208	34.55	(18.4)	35.90	(20.9)	36.59	(23.2)	37.14	(22.7)	
TOTAL	537	32.10	(17.9)	35.24	(19.1)	33.29	(21.8)	35.08	(21.1)	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSIFICATION		N	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)
LEP	225	25.36	(11.4)	28.37	(11.36)	23.14	(15.7)	25.07	(14.2)	
RFEP	143	37.87	(18.0)	40.76	(19.92)	41.45	(22.1)	43.96	(20.7)	
IFEP	24	37.83	(27.7)	43.70	(22.22)	44.58	(25.5)	42.73	(27.6)	
NONE LISTED	145	35.95	(20.8)	39.08	(23.5)	39.12	(22.7)	40.63	(23.0)	
TOTAL	537	32.10	(17.9)	35.24	(19.11)	33.29	(21.8)	35.08	(21.1)	

*To maintain confidentiality, categories with less than five students were not reported

Table 6 **Reading and Language Arts NCEs Final**
READ 180 Students and Comparison Group Students

	N	READING NCEs				LANGUAGE ARTS NCEs			
		1999-2000		2000-2001		1999-2000		2000-2001	
		Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)	Mean	(S)
READ 180	537	32.10*	17.9	35.24*#	19.1	33.29*	21.8	35.08	21.1
Comparison Group	536	32.44	16.3	25.78#	14.3	33.10*#	17.8	30.44#	18.1

* Correlated t test, p<.05, READ 180 1999-00 v. 2000-01
#Independent t test, READ 180 v. Comparison Group 2000-01 Scores, p<.05

In summary, READ 180 students significantly improved in Reading and Language Arts from pre (1999-2000) to post (2000-2001), while the comparison group students lost ground. As a result, for 2000-2001 READ 180 students scored significantly higher than the comparison group students who started at the same level in May 1999-2000.

Content Analysis of Classroom Observations

In order to verify implementation of the *READ 180* curriculum, a trained observer visited 25 IAS eighth grade classrooms in 21 middle schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. The one-hour visitations occurred in May through June 2001. The *READ 180* Observer Evaluation Forms were used (included in the Appendix).

Middle School Observations and 2000 API Rankings

Table 7 displays the observed 25 classrooms in 21 schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. These 21 schools were located in ten districts within LAUSD. The 2000 Academic Performance Index base score is listed, as well as each school's statewide ranking. The target statewide API score for middle schools 2000 in California was 657 (in 1999 it was 633). A comparison of the 19 schools' scores (2 schools' scores are unavailable) show that only 3 of the *READ 180* schools are near or above the statewide median. Sixteen schools rank below the target score and are considered high-risk schools in California, especially those ranking at one (N=8), two (N=4), or three (N=4).

Table 7 *READ 180* Schools Observed API Rankings

LAUSD	Middle	2000	Statewide
District	School	API	Ranking
A	Hale	747	8
	Porter	731	8
B	Maclay	414	1
C	Fulton	No API Available	
	J. Madison	519	2
	Millikan	643	5
D	Sutter	516	2
	Bancroft	567	3
	Emerson	577	3
E	Irving	545	3
	Berendo	451	1
	El Sereno	522	2
F	Virgil	461	1
	Clay	418	1
	Adams	414	1
G	Jefferson	No API Available	
	Stevenson	480	1
	R. H. Dana	552	3
H	Markham	402	1
	Gage	446	1
I	South Gate	488	2

Program/Student Data Management

Table 8 shows the extent to which student data was managed by the teacher, on a scale from “not-at-all” to “fully.” Almost all of the classes were 90-minute class periods, where whole group instruction was observed. All of the classes were 15-20 students in size. Core class activities were observed in 19 of the classrooms, as was the class-ending wrap-up activity. In general, there was evidence that almost all of the classes observed modeled reading using audiobooks, independent reading using leveled literature, video segments, and student participation in mini writing lessons.

The notable observations from Table 8 are:

- Both teachers and students appear comfortable with the program.
- The *READ 180* observer felt most of the students were in an environment that was caring and supportive.
- *READ 180* program materials and resources were present and available in the classroom.
- Only about half of the classrooms were operating according to the program model standard for optimizing success for students.
- In 21 of the classrooms, only four computers were found, not the minimum of five suggested for *READ 180*.
- In only eight of the 25 classrooms were students attending the *READ 180* class five days a week.
- All the *READ 180* teachers only somewhat or not at all used student data to drive the instruction in the classroom. SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory) is only somewhat used for student placement, as is SMS only somewhat used for continuous assessment.

Table 8 Program/Student Data Management

TO WHAT EXTENT*	Not At All	Somewhat	Mostly	Fully	Don't Know
are students actively engaged	2	6	12	2	1
are students knowledgeable about work expectations	0	7	15	2	1
do students have easy access to <i>READ 180</i> materials	1	1	15	8	0
do students appear to be operating independently	0	2	14	3	1
do students rotate smoothly between stations	1	6	12	3	1
do students relate to materials/discussions	1	3	15	4	1
are students completing the assigned activities	1	3	15	2	0

TO WHAT EXTENT*	Not At All	Somewhat	Mostly	Fully	Don't Know
are students comfortable with technology in the classroom	1	2	15	3	0
are students using other materials than <i>READ 180</i>	1	6	14	4	0
are teachers comfortable with the program	0	6	10	8	0
do teachers and students appear to be connected	2	6	7	7	1
do teachers appear to "buy in" to the program	2	1	13	7	0
do teachers use SMS to monitor student progress	2	18	2	1	1
is the classroom time managed efficiently	1	5	12	3	1
is the classroom environment free of distraction	2	5	13	1	1
is the environment caring and supportive	2	6	10	2	1
is the hardware/software operational	2	6	15	1	0
are the audiocassettes operational	1	5	16	1	0

OVERALL

are the <i>READ 180</i> program materials and resources present and available in the classroom?	0	1	15	9	
How close to the standard is the program model operating	3	9	10	1	
do the teachers and students appear comfortable with the program?	2	4	17	1	
To what extent in student data being used to drive instruction in the classroom?	9	16	0	0	
How available is students test-score data?	5	9	10	0	
In general, how well is this <i>READ 180</i> program operating?	2	6	16	0	

TO WHAT EXTENT

is SRI used for student placement	2	17	6	0	
is SMS used for continuous assessment	4	16	5	0	
does the teacher use SMS to monitor students	6	14	5	0	
are appropriate students in the program	0	9	4	0	
are READING COUNTS! quizzes administered	2	15	8	0	

*Some items were left blank on the class-visit survey, resulting in variability of total counts across items.

Of particular note is that 20 of the 25 classroom teachers observed only somewhat used the SMS (Scholastic Management Suite) to monitor student progress, and only 10 teachers were observed integrating data from the Scholastic Management Suite to guide student progress. The driver for continuous improvement is found in frequent assessment of student work. The *READ 180* student Data Management System needs some attention, both in teacher training and monitoring.

In general, for over half of the classrooms observed the *READ 180* program was operating well. In several classrooms, use of student data to improve instruction needed attention and monitoring by teachers.

Conclusion

READ 180 is a reading intervention program where past research indicates that quantifiable improvement occurs in reading achievement. It is designed to improve scores for those students reading below grade level.

During the year 2000-2001, *READ 180* was implemented in 69 IAS classrooms in 58 schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Baseline data provided in this current descriptive report indicated the majority of these schools are at risk on California's Academic Performance Indicators, and furthermore, the students selected for the *READ 180* intervention were those scoring at approximately the first quartile in both Reading and Language Arts (based on 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 scores).

Implementation observations indicated that the *READ 180* students are in an environment that is caring and supportive, with program materials mostly or fully available. The observations further indicated that the program model is somewhat to mostly operating close to standard, and that the teachers and students are comfortable with the program.

Results of the data analysis indicated that *READ 180* participants made gains in Reading and Language Arts for the year in the program and were significantly higher than an equivalent group of students who did not participate in the program. It is clear that the *READ 180* program is effective in raising both Reading and Language Arts scores.

About the Evaluator

Dr. Rosemary Papalewis is currently a Professor of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at California State University, Sacramento. She also serves as the Director of the University's Center for Teaching and Learning. Prior to coming to CSUS, she has held positions as the Western Region Vice President and National Teacher Expert for Sylvan Learning Systems, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for InterInstitutional Relations for the California State University System, and Professor and Co-Founding Director for the Joint Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at CSU Fresno, and was a Chief Administrator of several private schools in Nebraska. In addition to numerous research publications and presentations, she is the lead author of a book to be published in September by Sage/Corwin titled *Leadership on Purpose: Promising Practices for African-American and Hispanic Students*.

This analytic summary of *READ 180* evaluation findings was prepared by Policy Studies Associates, Inc. (PSA). PSA conducts research in education and youth development. Its studies span evaluation, policy analysis, and other forms of systematic inquiry. These projects integrate information from many sources to examine the operations and effects of programs to improve schooling and other services for children and youth. Clients include federal, state, and local government agencies; foundations; and other organizations that aim to use high-quality data to make policy decisions.



For more information about *READ 180*, please contact our regional office at 1-800-342-5331