**Fast ForWord Program Update**

June 12, 2012

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## Overview

The Response to Intervention Model (RtI) mandates that all school districts adopt research based interventions in an effort to accelerate learning for all students regardless of their achievement levels. District 97 adopted the Fast ForWord Program in January, 2012. This adoption was recommended after extensive research, review and discussion that began in 2010. The Fast ForWord Program will serve as a research based neurological intervention for students in the district. The program is not a curriculum replacement—but supports the existing curriculum. The Scientific Learning family of products will supply learners with enhanced cognitive skills—which will help students to process information accurately and more quickly so that they can be more successful in class and well versed in 21st Century Learning Skills. These critical skills include: work ethic, collaboration, social responsibility, innovation, critical thinking and problem solving.

## Spring Implementation Models

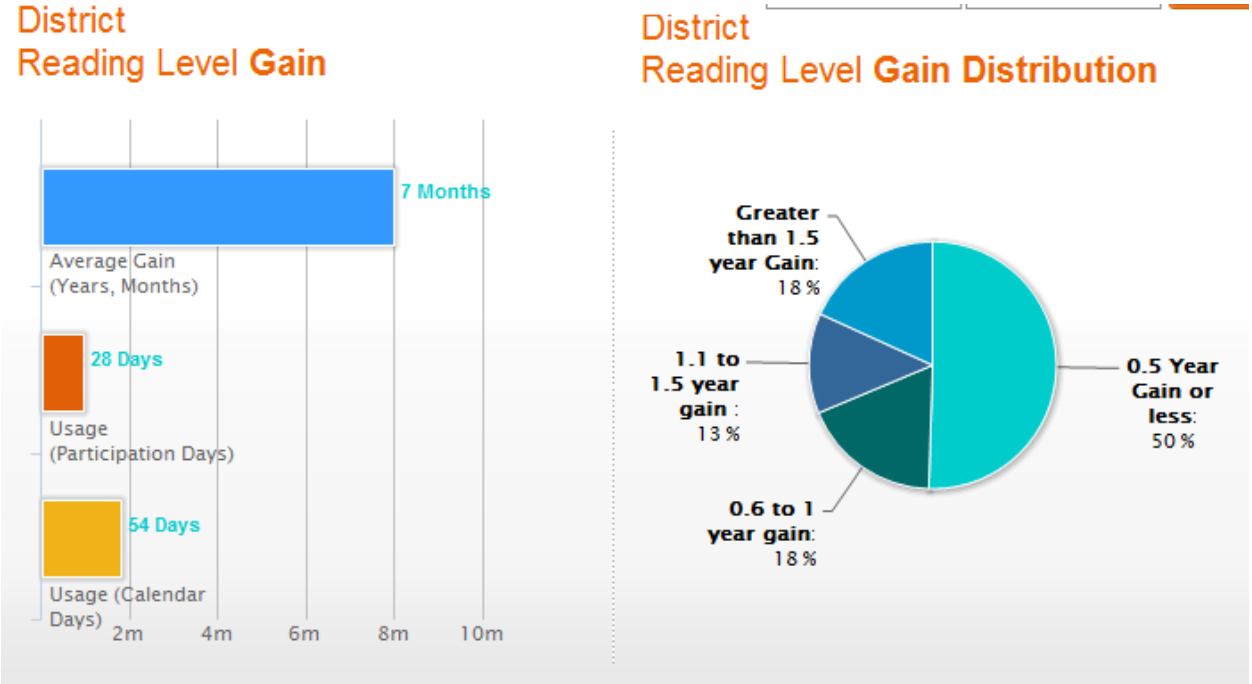
The program was implemented this past spring at 6 schools. The students selected to participate in the program varied from students in need of additional support to high achieving students. There were 315 students that received Fast ForWord from February through June. The schools that implemented Fast ForWord were Mann, Hatch, Whittier, Holmes, Brooks and Julian. Four elementary schools ran three different implementation models and the two middle schools ran after school programs. The implementation models include: universal grade level approach, before and after school programs and a targeted pull out intervention program for special education students. All students were required to complete at least two products. Mann and Hatch both implemented a universal tier one model. Hatch moved their 5th grade students through Fast ForWord Products and Mann moved all 1st grade students through the products. Whittier ran a before school program for approximately 40 students that were in need of intervention support. Holmes identified 10 special education students and they were pulled out of class during the school day. Lastly, the two middle schools implemented after school programs for targeted students that were in need for intervention support. Julian targeted 6th grade students only and Brooks targeted students from all grade levels that were in

need of additional support. A Fast ForWord Coach worked directly with the students in the computer lab to ensure that they received the additional support needed to successfully work through the products. A key focus for the Fast ForWord Coaches was to address students who had intervention flags as a result of struggling with the content and to constantly review the assessment data and reports that were generated on a weekly basis. The data was analyzed and used at both the building and district level to make the necessary adjustments to ensure that students were receiving Fast ForWord with high fidelity. All teachers, staff and principals that were involved in the spring implementation received training and ongoing support from district administration, principals, and scientific learning.

**Monitoring Student Progress – Data Analysis**

The district was assigned a professional development manager from Scientific Learning who worked in concert with the district in developing and coordinating training and reviewing student data. The professional development manager worked directly with the staff and the administration on strategies to effectively use the data from Progress Tracker and MyScilearn to ensure that the program is being implemented with high fidelity. Scientific Learning Progress Tracker is an on-line data analysis and reporting tool that enables educators to effectively monitor individual, classroom, school, or district performance of students working on Fast ForWord Products. The MyScilearn web-based platform offers performance reports at the district, school, group and individual student levels to improve data driven decision making. Enhanced report designs feature graphical depictions of trends, at-a-glance data summaries, and icons highlighting both good and poor performance. The Reading Progress Indicator is used to monitor student growth. Reading Progress Indicator (RPI) assessments are administered before and after Fast ForWord participation to help measure the impact of Fast ForWord intervention. Reading Progress Indicator evaluates Phonological Awareness, Decoding, Vocabulary, and Reading and Listening Comprehension. Reading Progress Indicator (RPI) was developed by a partnership between Bookette Software Company and Scientific Learning and was designed to measure the benefits of the Fast ForWord products. Prior studies have demonstrated the positive correlation between Reading Progress Indicator and nationally normed reading assessments as well as high-stakes reading tests from various states. The Reading Progress Indicator has a strong and positive alignment with MAP Reading and Language scores.

# Reading Progress Indicator Gains in MySciLEARN



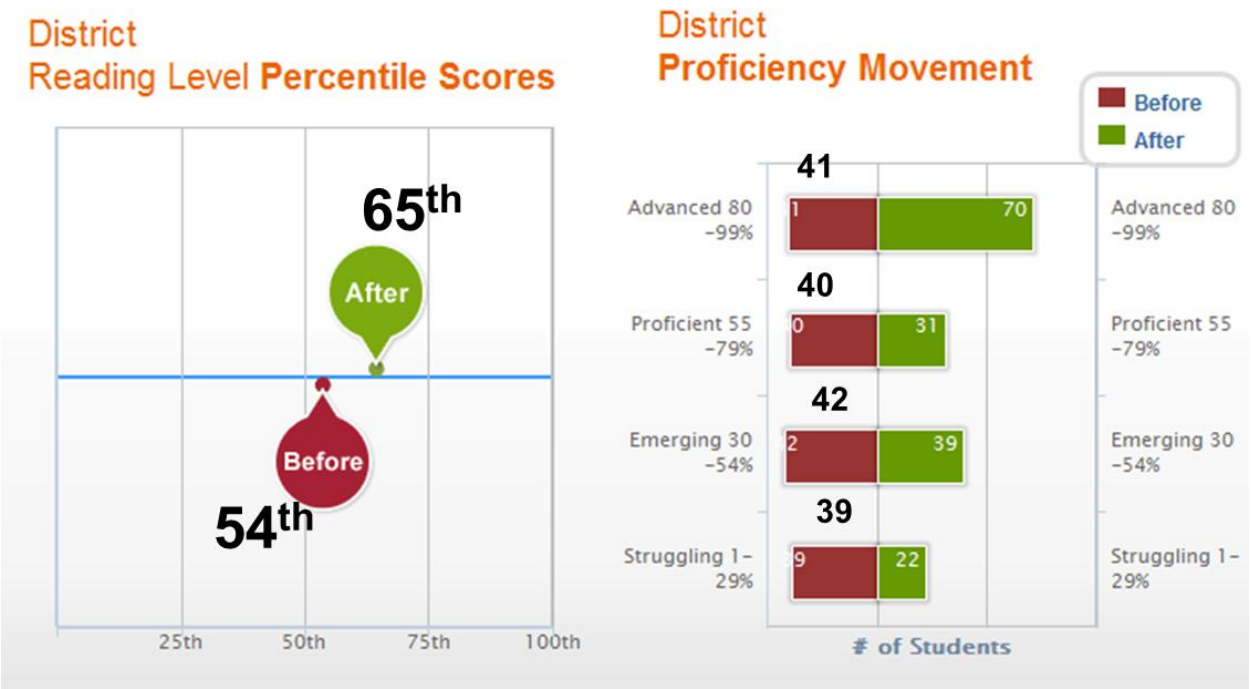

The graphs above highlight all students in the products, as reflected in My SciLEARN. This information was pulled on or about May 29, 2012.

All students in Oak Park who took a post-test are reflected here, whether gains were made or not. Students on average gained 7 months in reading over 28 days of usage over a 54 calendar day span.

At the district level, these gains are reflected as follows:

50% of the students made up to a .5 year gain or less. 18% made up to a one year gain, 13% made up to a 1.5 year gain, and another 18% made greater than a 1.5 year gain.

# Reading Progress Indicator




During the spring semester of 2012, students on average started in the 54th percentile in reading and moved as a group to the 65th percentile.

39 students were struggling prior to Fast ForWord and 22 were struggling afterward.

42 students were emerging before Fast ForWord and 39 were emerging afterward.

40 students were proficient before Fast ForWord and 31 students were proficient afterward.

41 students were advance prior to Fast ForWord and 70 students were advanced afterward!

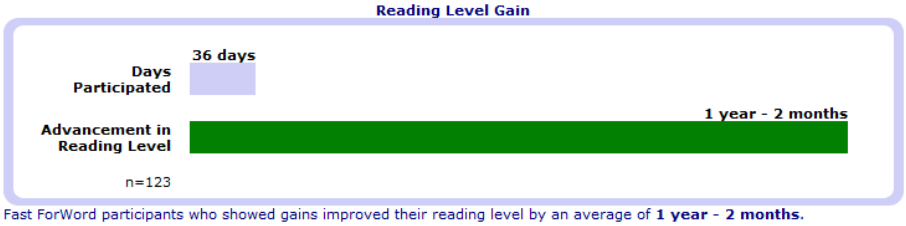
Gains reflected in MySciLEARN, again reflect all students whether they made gains or not on their most recent assessments.

# Reading Progress Indicator Gains in Progress Tracker

**District Results** info

View: Reading Level Gain

**Reading Level Gain**




Fast ForWord participants who showed gains improved their reading level by an average of **1 year - 2 months**.

**Reading Level Gain Distribution**

| Number of Participants Making: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Up to 0.5 Year Gain | 0.6 to 1 Year Gain | 1.1 to 1.5 Years Gain | Greater than 1.5 Years Gain | Total Number of Participants |
| 84 | 30 | 24 | 24 | 162 |

**Reading Level Gain Per School**

| School | Number of Participants Making Gains | Average Time between Assessments (days) | Average Gain (yr-mo) | Fast ForWord Product Use* | | | | Most Recent Follow-up Assessment Date | Total Number of Participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Days Participated | Completion | Attendance | Participation | | |
| District | 123 | 68 | 1-2 | 36 | 87% | 86% | 97% | May 2012 | 162 |
| Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School | 10 | 68 | 0-9** | 35 | 84% | 75% | 97% | May 2012 | 14 |
| Horace Mann Elementary School | 68 | 72 | 0-8 | 38 | 85% | 88% | 97% | May 2012 | 84 |
| Oliver Wendell Holmes Elem Sch | 6 | 61 | 1-4** | 30 | 96% | 73% | 96% | May 2012 | 7 |
| Percy Julian Middle School | 17 | 60 | 1-0** | 31 | 86% | 88% | 96% | May 2012 | 22 |
| Whittier Elementary School | 11 | 72 | 0-8** | 37 | 91% | 89% | 99% | May 2012 | 19 |
| William Hatch Elementary Sch | 11 | 60 | 1-0** | 33 | 94% | 90% | 99% | May 2012 | 16 |

*Fast ForWord Product Use averages only include data for completed Fast ForWord products with valid assessments, and only for participants showing gains.
**Fewer than 40 participants with follow-up assessments.

The data above was taken from Progress Tracker and highlights the gains that students made based on the Reading Progress Indicator. 123 of 162 students or 76% of students who took a post test grew 1.2 years in just 36 days on the products. These students are those who completed one product or more the fastest and made gains on their most recent assessment.

The Reading Level Gain Distribution reflects all 162 students who took the most recent assessment whether gains were made or not:

84 students made up to a half year gain.

30 students made up to a year gain.

24 students made up to a 1.5 year gain.

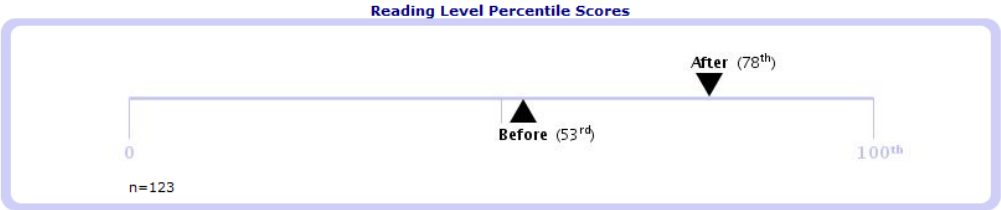
24 students made greater than a 1.5 year gain.

# Reading Level Percentile Scores

**District Results** info

View: Reading Level Percentile Scores

**Reading Level Percentile Scores**




Includes Fast ForWord participants whose skills showed improvement.

On average, the group's initial skills correspond to the **53rd percentile**. The group's follow-up skills correspond to the **78th percentile**.

**Reading Proficiency Levels**

| Number of Participants: | Struggling: 1st to 29th percentile | Emerging: 30th to 54th percentile | Established: 55th to 79th percentile | Advanced: 80th to 99th percentile | Total Number of Participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Before Fast ForWord | 39 | 42 | 40 | 41 | 162 |
| After Fast ForWord | 22 | 39 | 31 | 70 | 162 |

Following Fast ForWord participation, **64** students improved by one or more proficiency levels.

**Reading Level Percentile Scores Per School**

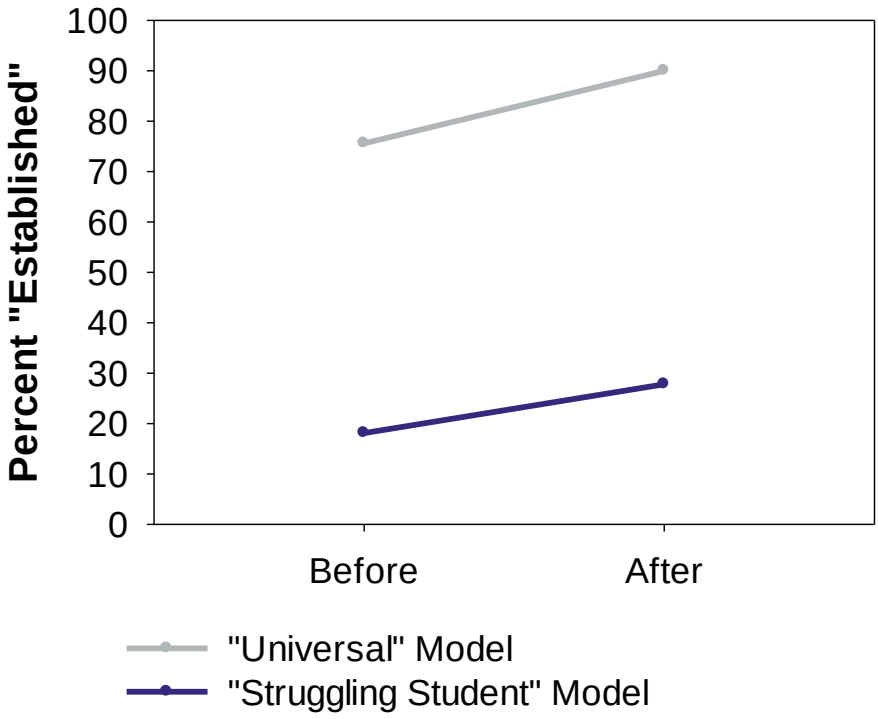
| School | Number of Participants Making Gains | National RPI Percentile Scores | | | Fast ForWord Product Use* | | | | Most Recent Follow-up Assessment Date | Total Number of Participants |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Before Fast ForWord | After Fast ForWord | Change | Days Participated | Completion | Attendance | Participation | | |
| District | 123 | 53 | 78 | +25 | 36 | 87% | 86% | 97% | May 2012 | 162 |
| Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School | 10 | 37 | 59 | +22** | 35 | 84% | 75% | 97% | May 2012 | 14 |
| Horace Mann Elementary School | 68 | 70 | 90 | +20 | 38 | 85% | 88% | 97% | May 2012 | 84 |
| Oliver Wendell Holmes Elem Sch | 6 | 52 | 79 | +27** | 30 | 96% | 73% | 96% | May 2012 | 7 |
| Percy Julian Middle School | 17 | 23 | 39 | +16** | 31 | 86% | 88% | 96% | May 2012 | 22 |
| Whittier Elementary School | 11 | 24 | 53 | +29** | 37 | 91% | 89% | 99% | May 2012 | 19 |
| William Hatch Elementary Sch | 11 | 40 | 60 | +20** | 33 | 94% | 90% | 99% | May 2012 | 16 |

*Fast ForWord Product Use averages only include data for completed Fast ForWord products with valid assessments, and only for participants showing gains.
**Fewer than 40 participants with follow-up assessments.

The graphs above highlights the same 76% of students who made gains based on the Reading Progress Indicator data. These students started at the 53rd percentile and grew to the 78th percentile. This translates into 25 points of growth at the district level. The reading proficiency levels explain the number of points gained before and after Fast ForWord use.

## Comparison of the Oak Park Implementation Models

### A Scientific Analysis

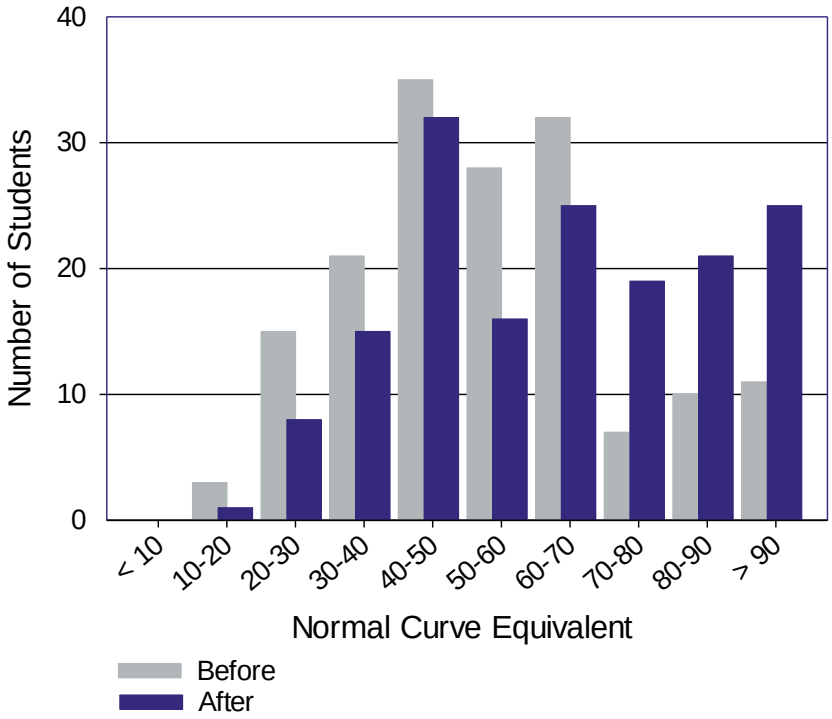



The Fast ForWord products were implemented using two different models: the Universal Model and the Struggling Student Model.

The Universal Model was implemented in 1st and 5th grade classrooms at two schools (n = 90). The Struggling Student Model includes students (about 25% of the class) that were pulled-out to use the Fast ForWord products (n = 72). Students ranged from 2nd grade through 8th grade.

The graph shows the percent of students in each model who fell into the established range before and after using the Fast ForWord products. (Established is defined as a score on Reading Progress Indicator at the 55th percentile or above.) In the Universal Model, the percentage of students who fell into the established range increased from 76% to 90%. In the Struggling Student Model, the percentage of established students increased from 18% to 28%.

## Both Groups (Struggling & Universal)

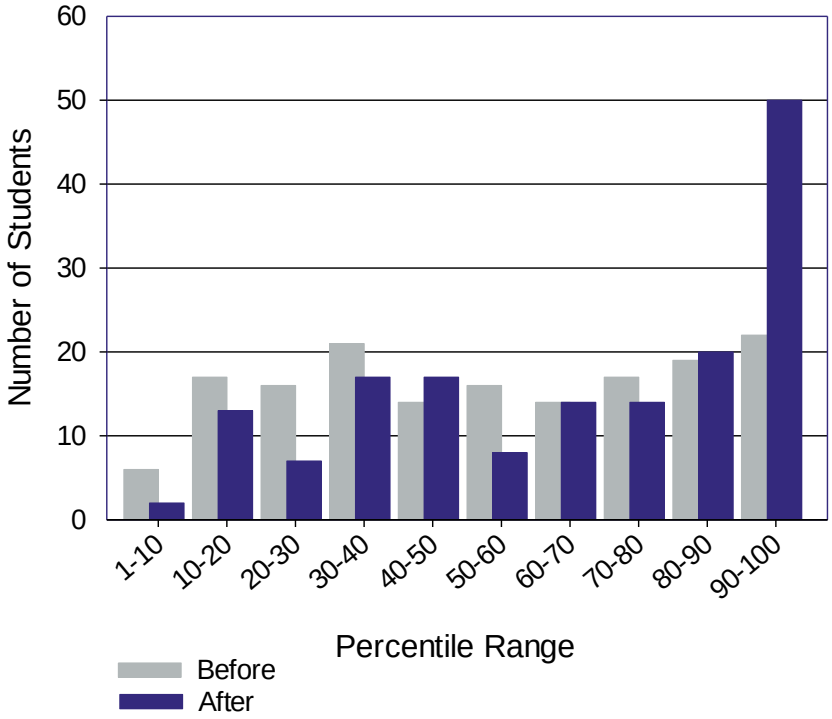



This graph includes data for all 162 students who used the Fast ForWord products – both those who were involved because they were struggling and those who were involved because they were in classrooms that implemented the universal model where all students used the products.

The graph shows the number of students scoring in each bin before and after Fast ForWord use. The number of students scoring in the lower ranges, such as below 20 NCE's, and between 20 and 30 NCE's, decreased after students used the Fast ForWord products, while the number of students scoring in the upper ranges increased.

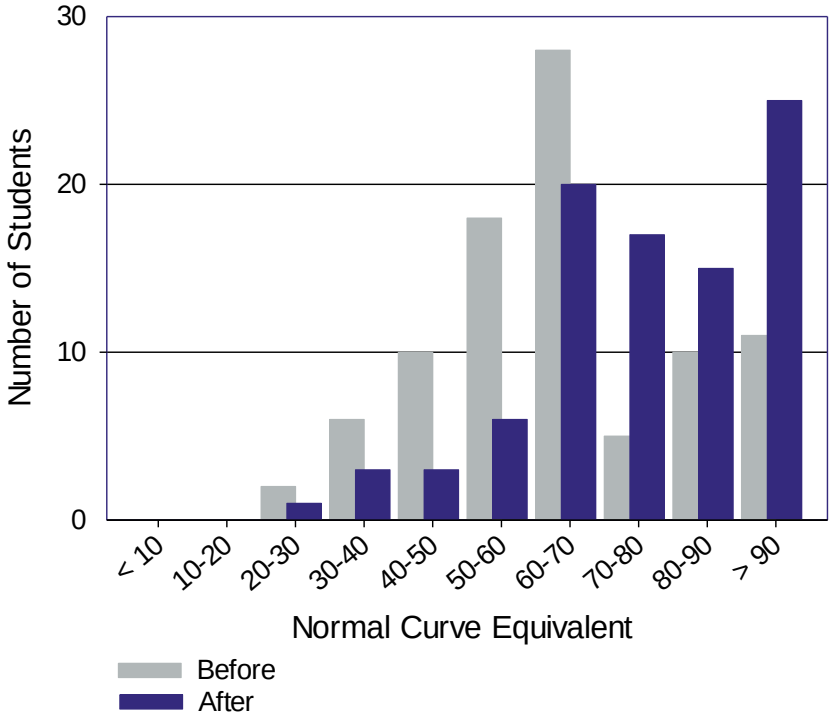
Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE's) and percentiles are different methods of scaling results and can be converted back and forth – NCE's display results on a normal (bell) curve and are appropriate for statistical analyses. The group of 162 students improved from an average score of 54 NCE's to 63 NCE's which corresponds to an improvement from the 57$^{th}$ percentile to the 73$^{rd}$ percentile.

## Both Groups (Struggling & Universal)

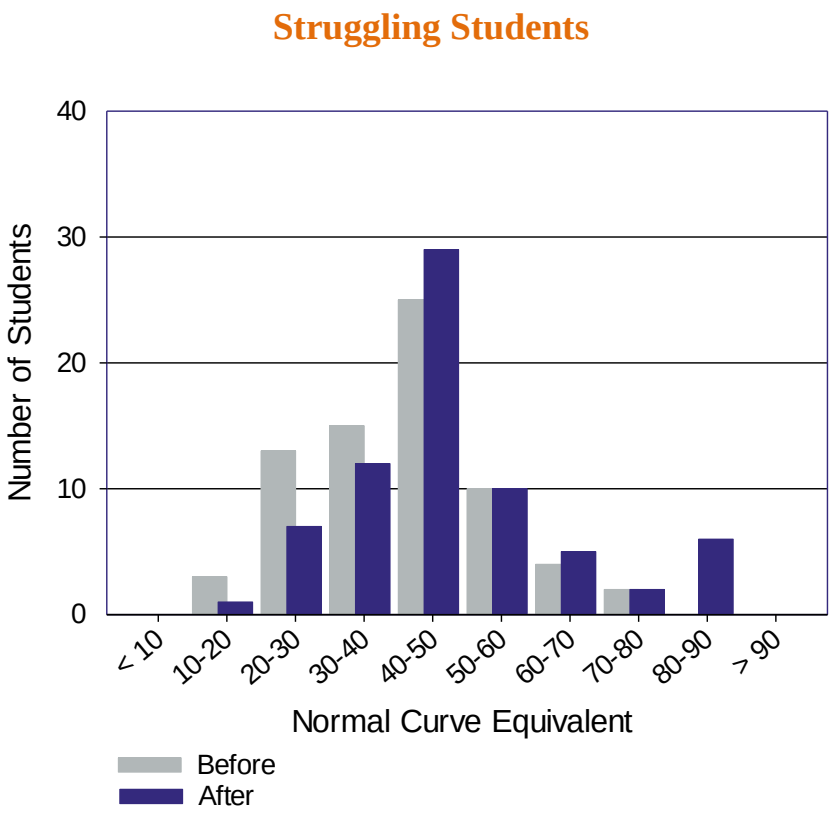



This graph shows the same 162 students as the previous graph, but displays the results in terms of percentiles instead of in terms of the normal curve. On average, the students improved from the 57$^{th}$ percentile to the 73$^{rd}$ percentile. It is generally better to look at results in terms of NCE's because that displays them on a normal or bell curve. Percentile's mask how difficult it is to move students who are at the extremes (for example, the 5$^{th}$ percentile or the 95$^{th}$ percentile). An example is asking 50 students to get in line by height. The students at the extremes are pretty quick. The shortest student knows exactly where they go, and the next shortest is right there. The students in the middle take a lot of time figuring everything out. If the shortest student grows an inch (or puts on platform shoes), they are likely still shortest. However, if a child in the middle grows an inch or puts on those platform shoes, she/he will likely move up several spots. NCE's and Percentiles map to each other (just like yards and meters map to each other – you can mathematically convert one to the other) but the map between NCE's and percentiles is not evenly spaced so that if you have students evenly spaced across the percentiles, you will have a normal curve across percentiles.

## Universal Model




The graph above explains how Fast ForWord impacts grade levels. This graph includes the 90 students who used the Fast ForWord products as part of the universal model, where all students in the grade levels used the products. Mann moved their 1st graders through the products and Hatch moved their 5th graders through the products. On average, students improved from the 65th to the 76th NCE which corresponds to an improvement from the 76th to the 89th percentile.




The graph above explains how Fast ForWord impacts struggling students. This graph includes only the 72 students who used the Fast ForWord products as part of the struggling student model, where struggling students were pulled-out to use the Fast ForWord products. Classrooms at all levels, from 2nd through 8th grade, took part in this model. On average, students improved from the 41st to the 47th NCE which corresponds to an improvement from the 33rd to the 44th percentile.

## Lessons Learned and Recommendations

In the summer/fall of 2011, the district implemented Fast ForWord products as a pilot program and made some gains even though there were issues with fidelity relative to product usage and protocol. There was a 21 day break in the middle of product use for many of our students. During the spring 2012 implementation, the average product completion was one product and they were completed without interruptions, which led to greater gains based on the RPI data and overall district

implementation trends. Based on the RPI data from Progress Tracker, we saw a district average gain of one year and two months versus the 7 month gains as a result of the summer/fall pilot.

While the average gains across the district for students who received a pre and post test was one year and two months, it is clear that we saw the most gains through the universal model (Tier 1) that was implemented at both Mann and Hatch. On average, students improved from the 65$^{th}$ to 76$^{th}$ NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent), which corresponds to an improvement from the 76$^{th}$ to the 89$^{th}$ percentile. The universal model impacts more students as the products help struggling students and high performing students. Through implementation of the universal model, we are able to catch students before they start to struggle and help students who were never going to struggle.

The Fast ForWord Program will be implemented across all 10 schools beginning in the fall of 2012. All 8 elementary schools will employ a Tier 1 Universal grade level model for primary grade students and will use the program for students in need of intervention support in the intermediate grades. The middle schools will continue to implement a targeted RtI intervention model for students that are in need of additional support or remediation. The rationale behind focusing on the primary grades ties directly to one of the major key concepts relative to the Response to Intervention Model (RtI), which is school systems focusing on early intervention strategies for students in kindergarten through third grade. The research is undeniable that focused and intensive early intervention in the primary grades prevents students from "falling through the cracks" prior to reaching third grade—which is the initial year of mandated state testing. The Response to Intervention Model seeks to prevent academic failure through early academic intervention. The implementation of the Fast ForWord Products for all students in primary grades will serve as a powerful intervention and help accelerate learning for each student at all academic levels prior to reaching the critical intermediate grades. In addition, the students in the primary grades will develop critical early literacy skills through the Fast ForWord products, which will better prepare them for the intermediate grades. Through the first two language products, students receive language development, comprehension, sequencing, vocabulary and phonetic skills. These are essential early literacy skills that our students must develop so that they are successful in class regardless of their academic level. Through this implementation approach for the 12/13 academic school year, all students in the district (K-8) will have received Fast ForWord Products by the end of the 17/18 academic school year.

As a result of implementing a universal model across the elementary schools, the district will ensure that the appropriate staff members receive Fast ForWord Training. As it stands, Longfellow, Beye, Lincoln and Irving staff will need to be trained over the course of the summer months. Additional grade level teachers across the district will need to be trained as well. We are in the process of scheduling training for teachers who will be directly involved in Fast ForWord implementation in the fall of 2012.

Lastly, a major premise behind the Response to Intervention Model was the issue of over-identification of students being placed into Special Education. The Fast ForWord Program has proven to reduce the number of students that are being diagnosed for Special Education, which will result into significant and ongoing savings for the school district. Effective next year, no students will be identified for special education services without going through the Fast ForWord Products or other remedial interventions.

If the implementation of this program can prevent 30 students from being placed into Special Education each year, we would expect to see savings of approximately $105,000 annually.