



Derry Township School District

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Response to Intervention and the Hershey Elementary Literacy Program

Overview of Initiative:

Derry Township School District's movement towards RtI and data-based decision making began during the 2002-03 school year with attendance at the PATTAN DIBELS training (Dr. Roland Good) as well as through the formation of partnerships with IU and PATTAN consultants to explore and implement evidence-based assessments and curricula. Since that time, the District has implemented comprehensive K-5 (through 8th grade beginning in 2006) Universal Screening using measures such as DIBELS, CORE Phonics, and STAR in grades K-5 and AIMSweb Maze and CBM, TOWRE, and GRADE+ in grades 6-8. The assessment program includes benchmark (3x/yr by specially trained SWAT team) as well as progress monitoring assessments conducted by the classroom teacher either weekly or every 3 weeks, depending on student risk level. The District teachers now gather formative assessment data and collaborate with peers to make data-based instructional decisions. The District has implemented a 3-tier model, which is prevention-oriented and where each tier provides a greater degree of intensive and supportive intervention in response to student need. Tier 2 (supplemental intervention), referred to in the District as "Double Dipping" or "Boosting," offers small group instruction, a higher degree of corrective feedback, more time on difficult tasks, teaching to mastery, increased opportunities to respond, more frequent progress monitoring, and fewer transitions. Tier 2 is only delivered in conjunction with Tier 1, so the classroom teacher never transfers ownership or responsibility for the solution to the instructional problem to other staff. Tier 2 actually has 2 levels of supplemental intervention – in-class and out-of-class. Tier 3 offers intervention which is more intensive and of longer duration and may include specially-designed instruction. For the first time, regular education, remedial education, and special education are working together as a unified team, with the same goal – to ensure that all students can learn and reach a level of proficiency.

The classroom has been identified as the first line of intervention. Teachers are expected to differentiate instruction based on student need and the role of the classroom teacher has been redefined to reflect that expectation. All students are now flexibly grouped according to their skills, as assessed through formative assessments. All students are provided truly balanced literacy instruction through scientifically-validated interventions in the classroom and all teachers have been trained in the tools available (e.g., Project Read, Road to the Code, PATR, Phonemic Awareness for Young Children, Read Naturally, etc.). Project Read, an Orton-Gillingham based structured multi-sensory language program, is now

provided to all students within the regular education classroom. When students are identified as at-risk, they are provided additional scientifically-validated intervention in the regular classroom by the regular classroom teacher. Some students are also provided a "Boost/Double-Dipping" with supplemental intervention of the same or similar scientifically-based intervention. The District Reading Specialists and Instructional Support Teachers are now referred to as "Intervention Specialists" and provide the supplemental intervention either in or out of the regular classroom. The teachers formerly known as Instructional Support Teachers have had their time reallocated to allow for delivery of direct services to students (up to 30 minutes per flexible group). The classroom teachers have been given a designated and protected time (90 minutes) to provide instruction in reading, allowing intervention specialists to support every classroom during reading instruction time. Students who participate in flexible groups may come from several classrooms (groups are determined by skill, not by homeroom).

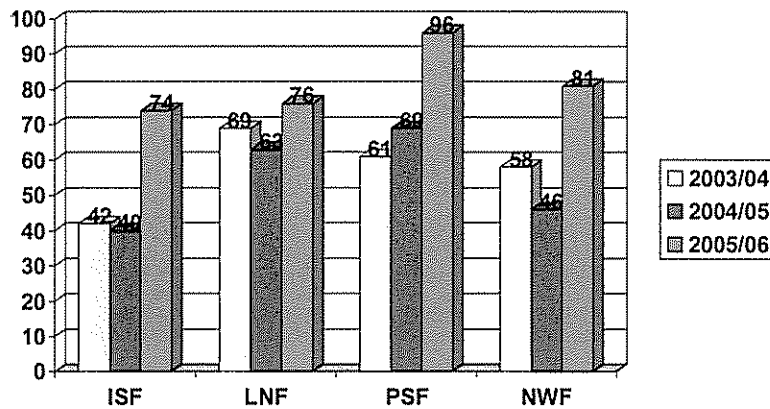
Each grade level has been divided into pods (teams of 3 or 4 teachers) that meet weekly (K-1) or bi-weekly (2-5) and includes literacy coaches and intervention specialists. The pods meet to collaboratively review data gathered by the classroom teacher and use the data to adjust flexible skills-based instructional groups, modify academic interventions, and identify patterns and solutions.

On either a monthly (K-1) or quarterly (2-5) basis, Intervention Planning Meetings are held to review the data from an entire grade-level. Data for all students assessed to be at-risk are entered electronically into the Data Profile Sheet and the student's response to intervention is automatically graphed to allow for assessment of the student's performance. Students who are not responding to intervention are then scheduled for an Intervention Team Meeting where specific individual goals are developed and individually tailored interventions are selected to address the development of skills that are lacking. Referrals for Special Education are made from these meetings and decisions to identify a student for special education services are made based on data and only made after a plan of intervention has been implemented and student response has been measured. Students are identified only if they have a significant skill deficit relative to peers and if they are not showing a significant response to a scientifically-validated intervention. The district psychologists and interns oversee the progress monitoring and assist the staff in utilizing the data gathered to inform instructional decisions. They also provide consultation with staff regarding reading, instruction, assessment, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making. The District has also hired 2 literacy coaches through an accountability grant who collaborate with administration, teachers, and psychologists to ensure instructional fidelity. They provide demonstrations of lessons and assist with data-based decision-making.

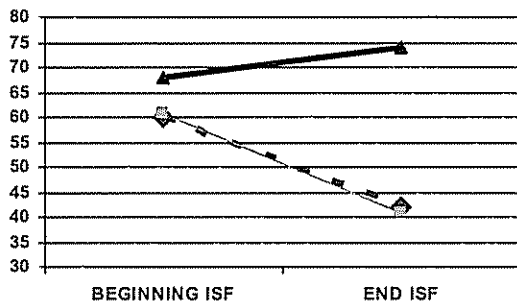
Outcomes – Percentage of Students at Benchmark:

***Note – 2005/06 is 1st year of Full RTI implementation ***

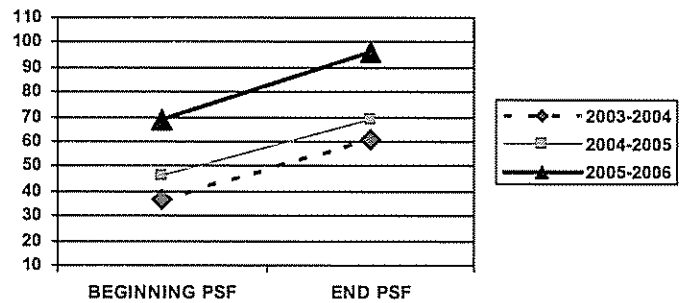
Kindergarten



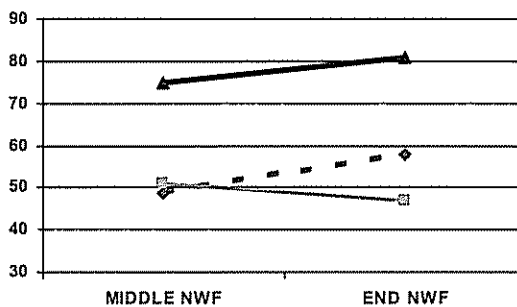
In comparison to previous years, the end of year results from the DIBELS assessments yielded significantly higher performance as compared to previous years. Most significant differences were measured in the students' PSF and NWF scores, suggesting that the Kindergarten students responded to the explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics.



Legend for ISF graph:
 - 2003-2004 (dashed line with diamond)
 - 2004-2005 (solid line with square)
 - 2005-2006 (solid line with triangle)



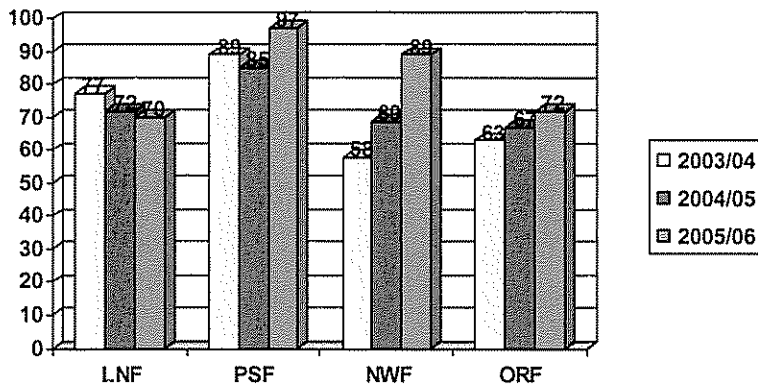
Legend for PSF graph:
 - 2003-2004 (dashed line with diamond)
 - 2004-2005 (solid line with square)
 - 2005-2006 (solid line with triangle)



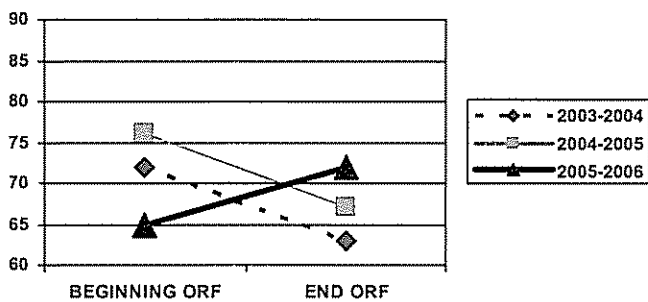
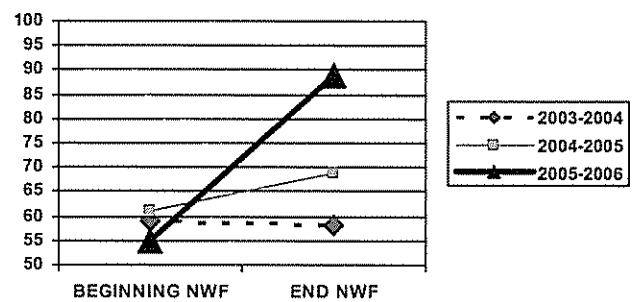
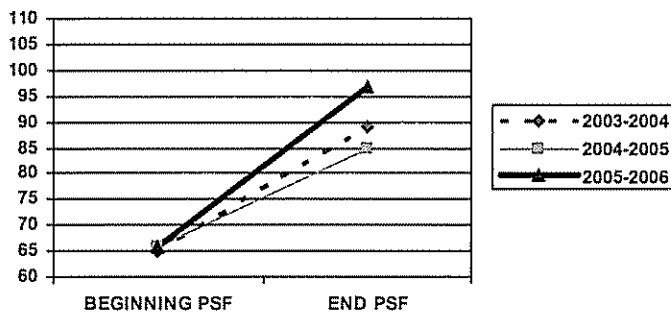
Legend for NWF graph:
 - 2003-2004 (dashed line with diamond)
 - 2004-2005 (solid line with square)
 - 2005-2006 (solid line with triangle)

A review of the progress graphs reveals that the students in 2005/06 made more significant growth in all assessed areas than did the students in previous years. Most significant, though, was that as phonemic awareness (ISF and PSF) was more explicitly taught, students developed better phonics skills (NWF).

1st Grade

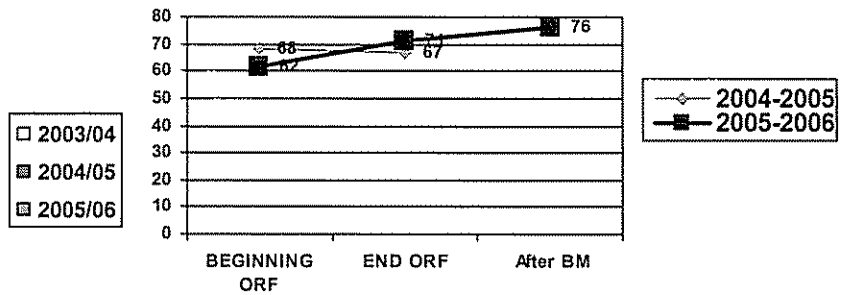
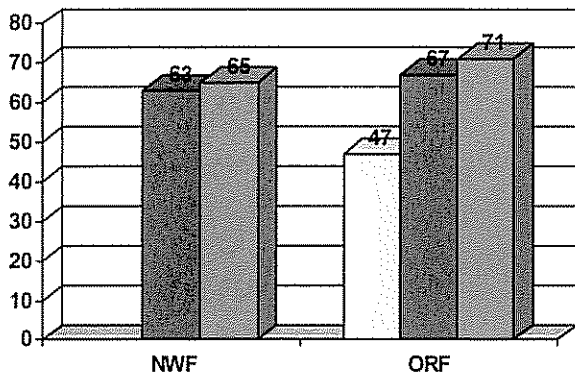


In comparison to previous years, students in 1st grade during the 2005/06 year were measured to demonstrate better developed phonics skills (NWF) and consequently were able to read more fluently and automatically with connected text (ORF).



A review of the progress graphs reveals that the students in 2005/06 made more significant growth in all assessed areas than did the students in previous years. Most significant, though, was that as phonics skills (NWF) were more explicitly taught, students developed better fluency and were better able to read with automaticity (ORF).

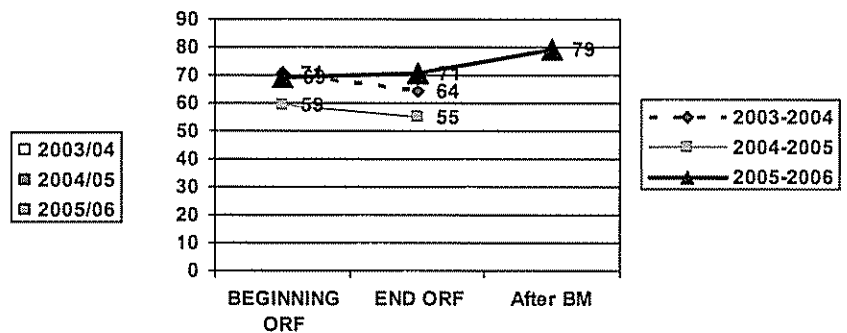
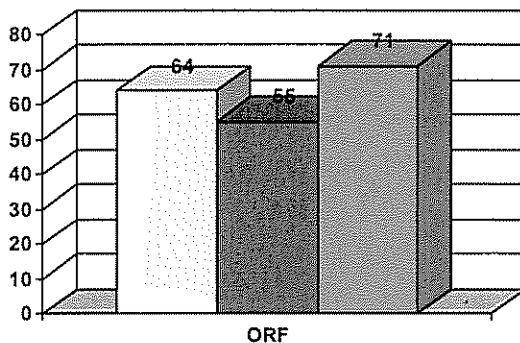
2nd Grade



At the end of the 2005/06 year, a greater percentage of 2nd grade students were at benchmark in phonics (NWF) and fluency with connected text (ORF) than during previous years prior to implementation or RTI.

A review of the progress graph from 2005/06 and 2004/05 reveals that students in 2nd grade read more fluently following the implementation of scientifically-based instruction.

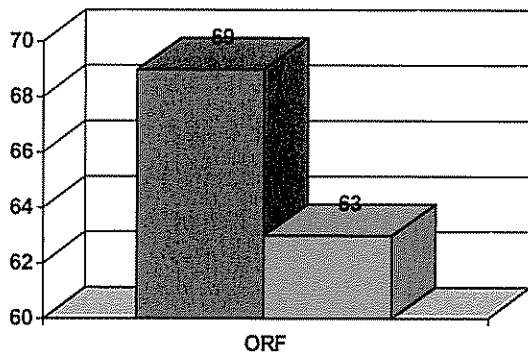
3rd Grade



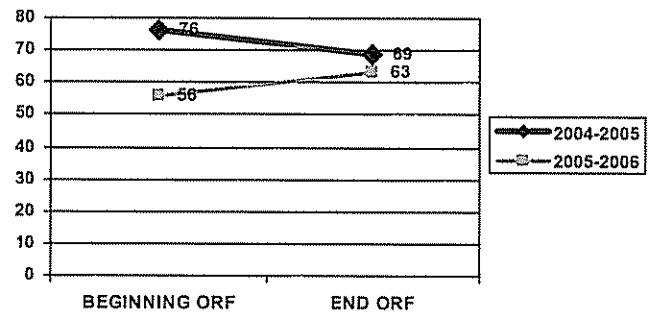
Assessment results revealed that in 2005/06, students read more fluently than in previous years.

A review of the progress data reveals that students in 2005/06 made progress following the implementation of the RTI initiative. Interestingly, students in the previous years demonstrated less fluency at the end of the year than at the beginning. At the end of 2005/06, students' reading fluency was higher than at the beginning of the year, suggesting that students were responding to the classroom instruction and reversed the trend from previous years.

4th Grade

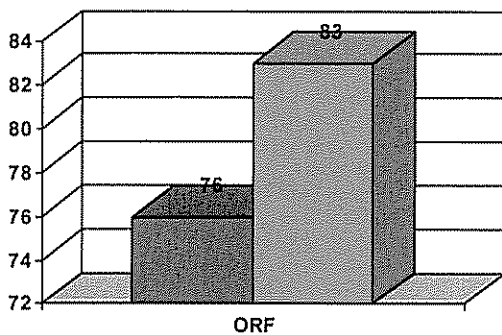


2004/05
2005/06

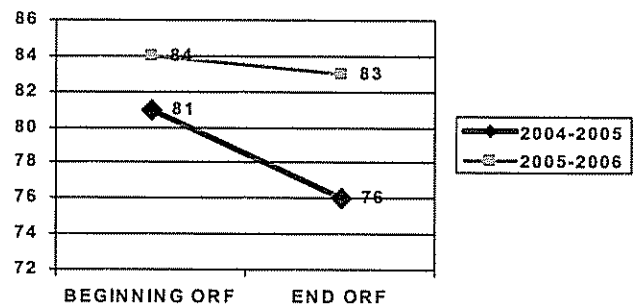


At first glance it appears that students in 4th grade demonstrated less fluency than in previous years. While this may be true it is also important to review the progress graphs below which reveals that although students in 4th grade during the 2005/06 school year demonstrated less fluency than the previous year, the students during 2005/06 made progress from the beginning of the year, while the students in 2004/05 actually decreased in their reading with automaticity (fluency).

5th Grade



2004/05
2005/06



A review of the 5th grade results from 2005/06 reveals that students demonstrated higher rates of fluency than during the previous year. In addition, students maintained their fluency rates while students decreased in fluency during the year prior to the implementation of RTI.