SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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# EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

## AGENDA

**Monday, October 13, 2014**
**1:00 p.m.**
**433 Blatt Building**

I. Welcome and Introductions — Mr. Whittemore

II. Approval of the Minutes of August 11-12, 2014 — Mr. Whittemore

III. Key Constituency: TransformSC

IV. Subcommittee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessments — Dr. Merck
Update: Cyclical Review of ELA and Math Standards
Update: Assessments

B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms — Mr. Martin
Information: Report on Educational Credit Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program
Information: 2014 Summer Reading Camp Report
Information: FY2015-16 Budget Process

C. Public Awareness Subcommittee — Mrs. Hairfield
Update: WorkKeys® Flyer

Executive Session

Adjournment

# Minutes
# Education Oversight Committee
# August 11-12, 2014
# Marriott Resort
# Hilton Head Island, SC

**Monday August 11, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Phillip Bowers; Anne Bull; Sen. Mike Fair; Margaret-Anne Gaffney; Barbara Hairfield; Sen. Wes Hayes; Deb Marks; Alex Martin; Dr. Danny Merck; Rep. Joe Neal; Rep. Andy Patrick; Neil Robinson; Patti Tate; David Whittemore (Chair); and Dr. Mick Zais

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Melanie Barton; Paulette Geiger; Lisa Nichols; Dana Yow

Other Legislative and Executive Staff Present: Sally Cauthen; Rachael Fulmer; Grant Gibson; Emily Heatwole; Pierce McNair

Mr. Whittemore called the meeting to order and welcomed the members to the annual summer retreat. He directed the members to the agenda and to the tentative 2014-15 meeting schedule for the EOC.

The Committee then approved the minutes of the June 9, 2014 meeting as distributed.

Mr. Bowers asked that the agenda be amended to include a discussion of the AP United States History courses at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 12, 2014. There being no objection, the agenda was amended.

Melanie Barton then provided an overview of the recent results of the 2014 administration of the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) and the expanded responsibilities of the EOC pursuant to provisos in the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act and to legislation enacted in 2014.

The Committee then discussed several issues related to accountability.

**A. Update on Special Assessment Panel**

Dr. Merck, Vice Chairman of the EOC and the EOC's appointment to the special assessment panel created by Act 200 of 2014, addressed the members. Dr. Merck provided an update on the special assessment panel's work. The special assessment panel was created by Act 200 to provide advice to the Executive Director of the Budget and Control Board, who is ultimately responsible for procuring an assessment for grades 3 through 8 and 11 and grades 9 and 10 if funding is available, in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics. Dr. Merck noted that the panel approved the request for proposal as required by the law. He noted that the process should ensure that South Carolina procures an assessment that will provide relevance to students for their future college and career goals. Dr. Merck reported that an assessment should be selected by the end of September. He also reminded the EOC that all 11$^{th}$ graders beginning this school year would take a college and career readiness assessment and

WorkKeys. Dr. Merck described how his own district has enlisted the assistance of two business owners to help parents and teachers understand the importance of WorkKeys.

Mrs. Hairfield noted that the EOC has worked with other stakeholders and created a flyer to help explain the importance of the WorkKeys assessment to parents and students. Dr. Zais commented that the use of WorkKeys legitimizes the choice of careers over post-secondary education in South Carolina's culture. Mr. Martin encouraged members to take WorkKeys with Mrs. Tate concurring that educators should not give an assessment that they themselves are not wiling to take. Ms. Hairfield also commented on the importance of Career Readiness 101 to assist students in preparing for WorkKeys.

**B. Designing Accountability Systems of the Future**

Then Chairman Whittemore recognized Dr. Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of the National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky, former state school superintendent in Kentucky and Arkansas, and former head of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Dr. Wilhoit then presented an overview of assessment and accountability in the era of post-No Child Left Behind. Dr. Wilhoit explained that accountability helps define how well schools, districts and states are doing at educating children. In the current world economy, every student has to be on the path to career, further education and life in the interconnected world. There is an important need to get this broader message out to parents. What accountability should do is to diagnose, intervene and monitor student progress.

Developing an accountability system for college and career readiness requires states to develop a new paradigm:

1. Focus on meaningful learning, enabled by
2. Professionally skilled and committed educators, supported by
3. Adequate and appropriate resources.

Such a system should be comprehensive and reciprocal meaning each level of the system (state, local, and school) should be held accountable for the contributions it makes. Second, the system must build capacity by addressing the inputs, processes, and outcomes that produce learning. Finally, it should be focused on a wide range of measures including the skills and abilities that students need to be college and career ready. For example, Dr. Dave Conley's four keys to college and career readiness that includes the cognitive strategies for learning as well as soft skills that employers need.

States should define what a strong academic foundation means for students and the goal of the state accountability system. This step would include adopting rigorous standards and assessments. Then the state must set goals to measure and improve college, career and citizenship readiness. Then the state would use a balanced system of assessments and measurements. As Dr. Wilhoit explained, accountability is not just one summative assessment.

Mr. Martin explained the new individualized career learning that 9$^{th}$ and 10$^{th}$ graders at Greer High School are provided this school year.

States must be able to measure individual student growth over time so that children do not get behind. In addition to knowledge, students must also develop the skills and characteristics that will assist them in careers and college. Accountability systems have

to use multiple measures and evidence from a range of sources over time. The focus has to be on demonstrated learning.

An example – how do states measure a student's ability to cooperate? Some districts are using digital portfolios as a tool for self-reporting. Parents have access to the portfolio, which can be used, for college applications as well as for job applications.

What are the barriers? At the local level, districts must have rich summative and formative assessments that are used as tools to inform learning. The balance is finding reliability and validity and not using summative assessment results to make all decisions. This will require greater professional capacity for teachers and administrators to shift their focus toward learning rather than assessment.

Transparency is another key piece of accountability. Information to communities, parents, teachers, etc., must be provided in a timely fashion in order to develop public trust in the system.

The Inspector model may work the best. If teaching and learning are taking place, then greater autonomy and flexibility are given to the local school district. Where the results are not showing teaching and learning, then there needs to be intervention.

The members then engaged Dr. Wilhoit in further discussion.

**C. Reviewing ELA and Math Standards**

Then Chairman Whittemore recognized Dr. Rainey Knight to describe the process used by the EOC in conducting the cyclical review of the English language arts and mathematics standards required by Act 200.

Dr. Knight provided an overview of the timeline that the EOC staff is working under to meet the requirements of Act 200. Sen. Hayes asked for clarification on how the state timeline conforms to the federal timeline

Mr. Bowers asked about the assessments created under Act 200.

**D. Science Standards and H.B.5.1**

Then, Mr. Whittemore called upon Melanie Barton to provide information on the science standards review. Mrs. Barton explained that three members of the EOC (Anne Bull, Neil Robinson and Senator Mike Fair) and three members of the State Board of Education (Traci Young Cooper, Dr. Danny Varat and Dr. Rhonda Edwards) met and unanimously agreed upon language to recommend to their respective bodies. The language is consistent with the National Science Teachers policy statements on evolution and on the nature of science.

Mrs. Hairfield asked if science teachers weighed in on the draft language. Mrs. Barton responded that the language of the standard comes from the National Science Teachers Association but not directly from science teachers in South Carolina.

Sen. Fair reiterated his position that the language requires students to be able to make conclusions based on scientific evidence.

Mr. Robinson moved that the EOC approve H.B.5.1 as proposed by the special panel. Sen. Hayes seconded the motion. The EOC approved the motion with Mr. Bowers requesting that his vote of "no" be recorded and with Mrs. Hairfield asking that her abstention from the vote also be recorded.

Then Rep. Patrick moved that the EOC go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Mr. Robinson seconded the motion.

At 5:30 p.m. the veil having been lifted, Mr. Robinson moved that the EOC amend the contract with the Executive Director to increase her annual salary by two percent to reflect the two percent increase granted to state employees and that a special committee composed of Sen. Wes Hayes, Neil Robinson and Rep. Joe Neal be formed to determine if any laws dictate how the salary of the Executive Director is established. Rep. Neal seconded the motion. The members unanimously approved the motion.

Mr. Whittemore announced that EOC members and staff who are interested, would be meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Alexander's, which is across the street from the hotel.

**Tuesday, August 12, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.**

Members Present: Phillip Bowers; Anne Bull; Senator Sen. Mike Fair; Margaret-Anne Gaffney; Barbara Hairfield; Senator Sen. Wes Hayes; Deb Marks; Alex Martin; Dr. Danny Merck; Rep. Joe Neal; Rep. Andy Patrick; Neil Robinson; Patti Tate; David Whittemore (Chair); and Dr. Mick Zais

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Melanie Barton; Paulette Geiger; Lisa Nichols; Dana Yow

Other Legislative and Executive Staff Present: Sally Cauthen; Rachael Fulmer; Grant Gibson; Emily Heatwole; Pierce McNair

With the agenda having been amended, the EOC began the meeting with information provided by Mr. Bowers about concerns with the AP United States History framework. The College Board, along with a Redesign Commission and a Curriculum Development and Assessment Committee, re-designed the framework to encourage students to use historical facts and evidence to create deeper conceptual understanding of critical developments in U.S. History. Students will be assessed using the re-designed framework beginning in 2015. Mrs. Barton answered questions about what South Carolina students in AP US history are required to take. She responded that South Carolina AP US History students must take the state end-of-course assessment and if the student wants to take the AP US History for possible college credit then the student takes the AP US History exam.

Mrs. Hairfield explained that the framework is not intended to include every historical person to be discussed in the classroom. Instead the framework is to encourage students not to commit to memory facts and dates but to understand the broader social, political, economic and cultural issues of United States history. After much discussion, Mr. Robinson called the question and moved that the issue be referred to the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee for additional information. Rep. Patrick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The EOC then began a discussion on early readiness.

**A. Beaufort County School District**

Mr. Whittemore recognized Rep. Patrick to introduce the first speaker. Rep. Patrick expressed his great pleasure that the EOC had asked that Dr. Jeffrey Moss, Superintendent of the Beaufort County School District, address the Committee and explain the district's local decision to expand quality early childhood options for its most at-risk four-year-olds.

Dr. Moss then described that the district has four goals, one of which is that all children are at grade level in 3rd grade in all subject areas. To accomplish this goal, the district will phase-in additional early childhood education programs. First, this year, the district will convert all half-day 4K programs into full day. Then next year, phase 2, the district will add 7 additional classrooms so that 883 children of the eligible 1700 will have an opportunity to attend. The third phase is to fund an additional 17 classrooms so that 82 percent of the 1700 eligible students, based on DIAL 4 screenings, are served. Finally, Phase 4 will involve partnering with private providers to provide quality professional development so that both public and private providers are committed to having quality standards. The total cost of the four-year initiative is $6.7 million with local funds. School district officials are comparing cohort data to determine the impact of the program.

Sen. Fair asked Dr. Moss how readiness was being defined in Beaufort. Dr. Moss said that as of now, the district is using the DIAL4 screening tool to determine eligibility.

**B. Overview of Early Readiness Assessments**

The chairman recognized Joe Waters, Vice President for the Institute for Child Success and Katy Sides, Director of Research and Grants for the Institute for Child Success (ICS) to update the EOC on research and efforts to improve early readiness of children. Mr. Waters provided the EOC with an overview of the activities and initiatives of ICS including:

1. Defining school readiness with experts, higher education, pediatricians, etc. and emphasizing the importance of family engagement and empowering parents and caregivers. The definition was used in the reauthorization of the Office of First Steps.
2. Accountability in early learning – ICS has promoted effective programs like Reach Out and Read and Nurse Family Partnerships
3. Working with officials from the state of Maryland on determining quality readiness assessments and learning more about the Maryland Model for School Readiness.

Ms. Sides discussed the upcoming work of ICS in September on defining the domains and evidence of the domains in early readiness. The EOC staff is participating in this endeavor.

**C. Folk Legends and Facts: Using data to Vanquish Myths about Education in South Carolina**

Dr. Zais then provided a PowerPoint presentation that used data from state and national sources to dispel several myths including the following: (1) Every student should complete a college-prep study; (2) South Carolina needs more individuals with

baccalaureate degrees; (3) a four-year degree is a ticket to the middle class; (4) teachers with masters and doctorate degrees are more effective; (5) high poverty districts and schools are failing; and (6) high poverty districts are least funded.

Rep. Neal asked why the state hasn't put more emphasis on teacher salary increases. Dr. Zais responded that we needed to have a teacher evaluation system in place first that measured the annual growth of children.

There being no further business, the meeting and retreat ended.

# EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

**Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee**

**Date: October 13, 2014**

**INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION**
Update on Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

**PURPOSE/AUTHORITY**
Proviso 1.85. of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act and Proviso 1.80. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act establish the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children. Under each proviso, the EOC is responsible for:

1. Determining if an independent school meets criteria to participate in the program;
2. Publishing on the EOC website Publish an approved list of schools and nonprofit scholarship funding organizations "in good standing"; and
3 Establishing an advisory committee made up of not more than nine members including parents, and representatives of independent schools and independent school associations to advise the EOC on implementation of the program.

**CRITICAL FACTS**
The attached is a compilation of responses from the nonprofit scholarship funding organizations, responding to a request for information from the EOC on the program's implementation in Fiscal Year 2013-14. The report also provides an initial update on the EOC's responsibilities for implementing the program in Fiscal Year 2014-15.

**TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS**
July 21, 2014 – EOC asks nonprofit scholarship funding organizations to provide voluntarily information on the implementation of the program in Fiscal Year 2013-14

**ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC**

**Cost:** Absorbed in operating budget

**Fund/Source:**

**ACTION REQUEST**

☐ **For approval** ☒ **For information**

**ACTION TAKEN**
☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**

☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

Fiscal Year 2013-14

# EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN

10.13.14

**Background**

Proviso 1.85. of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act created the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children. Program (Appendix A). Per the proviso, a nonprofit scholarship funding organization could award grants up to $10,000 to cover the cost of tuition, transportation and textbooks to "exceptional needs students" attending eligible, independent schools in South Carolina. The nonprofit scholarship funding organizations received donations from individuals or corporations. These donations were in turn, eligible for South Carolina income tax credits, up to a maximum of $8.0 million for Fiscal Year 2013-14, if the donations were made on or after January 1, 2014.

The proviso required the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to:

1. Determine if an independent school met criteria to participate in the program;
2. Publish on its website an approved list of schools and nonprofit scholarship funding organizations "in good standing"; and
3 Establish an advisory committee made up of not more than nine members including parents, and representatives of independent schools and independent school associations to advise the EOC on implementation of the program.

At the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2013-14, the EOC had:

1. Established, with legal counsel, procedures to identify eligible schools and nonprofit funding scholarship organizations;
2. Published on its website the names of seventy-three (73) schools eligible to participate in the program;
3. Published on its website the names of five (5) nonprofit funding scholarship organizations in the state that could accept contributions and make grants; and
4. Solicited the names of individuals to serve on an advisory committee to guide the EOC on the program's implementation.

**Data Request**

To provide additional information to the public and policymakers, the EOC on July 21, 2014 wrote a letter to the five nonprofit funding scholarship organizations asking for the following information for the time period of July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014: (Appendix B)

- Total dollar amount of revenues collected
- Total number of individual and corporate donors
- Total number of applications received
- Total number of applications approved
- Total number of applications denied
- Total number of eligible children awarded grants. "Awarded" is defined as checks being issued on or before June 30, 2014, or similarly, funds allocated or expended for grants by the nonprofit scholarship funding organization for specific individual students
- Total dollar amount of grants awarded and/or allocated
- Total number of eligible schools in which the eligible children were enrolled

- Of any balance of revenues/contributions as of June 30, 2014, what is the total amount of these revenues/contributions that are already obligated to eligible children who have applied for and been approved a grant for the 2014-15 school year?
- If you like to provide any information on the criteria used in approving or denying applications, the EOC would be interested in having the information.
- If you would like to share any information on the applicants (e.g. gender, ethnicity, or educational needs) but ***without providing personally identifiable information***, the EOC would be interesting in having such data.

**Results**

The five nonprofit funding scholarship organizations responded to the EOC's request. Appendix C are the actual responses received. This self-reported information is documented below in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1**

Revenues Collected and Awarded

(Fiscal Year 2013-14)

| Nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organizations | Total Revenues Collected | Number of Individual and Corporate Donors | Total Amount of Grants Awarded | Any Revenue Obligated for Scholarships |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Advance Carolina | $78,870 | 23 | $75,250 | $0 |
| Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge (D.E.S.K.) | $32,000 | 4 | $10,000 | $0 |
| Palmetto Kids FIRST[1] | $4,700,000 | 340 | $2,300,000 | $0 |
| South Carolina Corporate Coalition for Community Service | $0 | | | |
| St. Thomas Aquinas | $1,194,202 | 158 | $1,150,207 | $0 |
| **TOTAL** | **$6,005,072** | **525** | **$3,535,457** | **$0** |

[1] Palmetto Kids FIRST Data are approximate dollar amounts. As reported by Palmetto Kids FIRST, these "figures may be adjusted slightly upon final CPA audit." In addition, Palmetto Kids FIRST reported that less than $133,000 was retained for expenses and fees. And, "of the $2.3 million available at the end of the fiscal year, 100% had been awarded in 2014-15 for grants as of August 5, 2014."

**Table 2**
Applications and Awards
(Fiscal Year 2013-14)

| Nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organizations | Number of Applications Received | Number of Applications Approved | Number of Applications Denied | Number of Children Awarded Grants | Number of Eligible Schools |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Advance Carolina | 79 | 79 | 0 | 22 | 12 |
| Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge (D.E.S.K.) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Palmetto Kids FIRST | 300 | 300 | 0 | 300 | 16 |
| South Carolina Corporate Coalition for Community Service | -- | -- | -- | -- | 3 |
| St. Thomas Aquinas | 81 | 81 | 0 | 81 | 18 |
| **TOTAL** | 463 | 462 | 1 | 405 | 51 |

*Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge (D.E.S.K.)* explained that one application was denied due to the child not having documentation as being identified as eligible for special education services. In 2013-14 students making application for grants had to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) issued by a public school district verifying that the child was eligible for special education services. In school year 2014-15 the proviso governing the program was changed to allow children diagnosed by a private provider as needing specialized instruction and services to be eligible for the program as well.

*South Carolina Corporate Coalition for Community Service* explained that the Coalition's "interest over the last year has been to educate parents regarding the opportunities for the Scholarships. As such our method has been more methodical and grassroots in nature as we not try to rush children into the program but allow a natural interest of the program through education and awareness that provides parents with the most up to date and thorough information possible."

The EOC also asked the nonprofit scholarship funding organizations for information about the criteria used in making the grants. The responses appear below:

- *Advance Carolina* reported that a committee of three individuals makes the final determination. These individuals have no connections to the eligible schools receiving the grants and no children eligible for the grant.

- *Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge (D.E.S.K.)* reported that it "looks at the family's financial ability and the severity of the student's disability as criteria for a scholarship.

DESK prioritizes applicants with the severest educational and financial needs." An independent panel composed of a former special needs public school teacher of the year and a former deputy superintendent at the South Carolina Department of Education and others review and award the scholarships.

- *Palmetto Kids FIRST* reported that it "does not collect financial data, but coordinate(s) based on a cooperative 'honor system' with our partnered schools to help families in need first. However, our goal is to fund 100% of our eligible 'special needs' applicants. We believe families of 'special needs' children have extensive medical, personal, time and financial burdens out of just school tuition."

- *St. Thomas Aquinas* reported that enough funds were collected "to provide a scholarship to 100% of the applicants at a rate of 90%. In the future, if funding is constrained, we would apply a means test to determine which students were to receive scholarships to a greater extent than others. We would use the company FACTS that already has a contract with our diocesan schools."

Finally, the EOC asked if the organizations would share information about the gender, ethnicity or educational needs of the students served in the program without providing personally identifiable information. The responses appear below:

- *Advance Carolina* can provide the EOC "with significant demographic data (e.g. gender, ethnicity, educational needs, etc.) without reveal personal identifiable information."

- *Palmetto Kids FIRST* "does not collect data on race, gender, faith, education or financial needs, or any other distinguishing criteria on our applicant children, nor do we believe we should. We are 100% focused on supporting ALL eligible 'special needs' children without any discriminating knowledge as to the child's distinguishing characteristics."

- *St. Thomas Aquinas* reported the following demographic information. Of the 81 applicants

    - 19.7% were minority
    - 33% were female
    - 67% were male

**Fiscal Year 2014-15**

The General Assembly reauthorized the ECENC Program in the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act through Proviso 1.80. Regarding implementation of the program in Fiscal Year 2014-15, the Education Oversight Committee reports that as of August 29, 2014:

- As of September 5, 2014, eighty-one (81) schools have qualified for the program for school year 2014-15 and are documented on the agency's website at www.eoc.sc.gov. Two schools have been denied. One school did not provide the general education program as required by the proviso. The other school was not a member in good standing with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools or the South Carolina Independent School Association

- One additional nonprofit scholarship funding organization has applied to participate in the program. The EOC has requested additional information from the applicant to comply with the reporting requirements of Proviso 1.80. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act.

- The Advisory Committee has been selected and includes the following individuals.

**Two Parents**
Ms. Dorothy Cobb (Greer, SC)
Mr. José Mulero (Lugoff, SC)

**Two Representatives of Associations**
Mr. Edward Earwood
Executive Director
South Carolina Association of Christian Schools

Mr. Larry K. Watt
Executive Director
South Carolina Independent School Association

**Five Representatives of Schools**

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr. Don Blanch<br>Head of School<br>Camperdown Academy<br>Greenville, SC | Dr. Susan S. Thomas<br>Head of School<br>Glenforest School<br>West Columbia, SC |
| Ms. Kathy Cook<br>Head of School<br>Trident Academy<br>Mt. Pleasant, SC | Ms. Joanna Swofford<br>Director of EXCEL<br>Westminster Catawba Christian School<br>Rock Hill, SC |

Mrs. Jacqualine Kasprowski
Associate Director of Secondary Education
Diocese of Charleston
And Principal Cardinal Newman School
Columbia, SC

## Appendix A

### Proviso 1.85. of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act

**1.85.** (SDE: Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children) (A) As used in this proviso:

(1) 'Independent school' means a school, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met and that does not discriminate based on the grounds of race, color, religion, or national origin.

(2) 'Parent' means the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a child.

(3) 'Qualifying student' means a student who is a South Carolina resident and who is eligible to be enrolled in a South Carolina secondary or elementary public school at the kindergarten or later year level for the current school year.

(4) 'Resident public school district' means the public school district in which a student resides.

(5) 'Tuition' means the total amount of money charged for the cost of a qualifying student to attend an independent school including, but not limited to, fees for attending the school and school-related transportation.

(6) 'Eligible school' means an independent school including those religious in nature, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met, that:

(a) offers a general education to primary or secondary school students;

(b) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(c) is located in this State;

(d) has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state's diploma requirements and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress;

(e) has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws; and

(f) is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools or the South Carolina Independent Schools Association.

(7) 'Nonprofit scholarship funding organization' means a charitable organization that:

(a) is exempt from federal tax under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code by being listed as an exempt organization in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code;

(b) allocates, after its first year of operation, at least ninety-five percent of its annual contributions and revenue received during a particular year to provide grants for tuition, transportation, or textbook expenses (collectively hereinafter referred to as tuition) or any combination thereof to children enrolled in an eligible school meeting the criteria of this section, and incurs administrative expenses annually, after its first year of operation, of not more than five percent of its annual contributions and revenue for a particular year;

(c) allocates all of its funds used for grants on an annual basis to children who are 'exceptional needs' students as defined herein;

(d) does not provide grants solely for the benefit of one school, and if the Department of Revenue determines that the nonprofit scholarship funding organization is providing grants to one particular school, the tax credit allowed by this section may be disallowed;

(e) does not have as a member of its governing board any parent, legal guardian, or member of their immediate family who has a child or ward who is currently receiving or has received a scholarship grant authorized by this section from the organization within one year of the date the parent, legal guardian, or member of their immediate family became a board member; and

(f) does not have as a member of its governing board any person who has been convicted of a felony, or who has declared bankruptcy within the last seven years.

(8) 'Person' means an individual, partnership, corporation, or other similar entity.

(9) 'Transportation' means transportation to and from school only.

(B) A person is entitled to a tax credit for the amount of money the person contributes to a nonprofit scholarship funding organization up to the limits of this proviso if:

(1) the contribution is used to provide grants for tuition, transportation, or textbook expenses or any combination thereof to exceptional needs children enrolled in eligible schools who qualify for these grants under the provisions of this proviso; and

(2) the person does not designate a specific child or school as the beneficiary of the contribution.

(C) Grants may be awarded by a scholarship funding organization in an amount not exceeding ten thousand dollars or the total cost of tuition, whichever is less, for students with 'exceptional needs' to attend an independent school. An 'exceptional needs' child is defined as a child who has been designated by the South Carolina Department of Education to meet the requirements of CFR Part A Section 300.8 and the child's parents or legal guardian believe that the services provided by the school district of legal residence do not sufficiently meet the needs of the child.

(D) (1) The tax credits authorized by subsection (B) may not exceed cumulatively a total of eight million dollars for contributions made on behalf of 'exceptional needs' students. If the Department of Revenue determines that the total of such credits claimed by all taxpayers exceeds this amount, it shall allow credits only up to those amounts on a first come, first serve basis.

(2) A taxpayer may not claim more than sixty percent of their total tax liability for the year in contribution towards the tax credit authorized by subsection (B). This credit is not refundable.

(3) If a husband and wife file separate returns, they each may only claim one-half of the tax credit that would have been allowed for a joint return for the year.

(4) The person shall apply for a credit under subsection (B) on or with the tax return for the period for which the credit is claimed.

(5) The Department of Revenue shall prescribe the form and manner of proof required to obtain the credit authorized by subsection (B). Also, the department shall develop a method of informing taxpayers if either of the credit limits are met at any time during the 2013 tax year.

(6) A person may claim a credit under subsection (B) for contributions made on or after January 1, 2014.

(E) A corporation or entity entitled to a credit under subsection (B) may not convey, assign, or transfer the deduction or credit authorized by this section to another entity unless all of the assets of the entity are conveyed, assigned, or transferred in the same transaction.

(F) Except as otherwise provided, neither the Department of Education, the Department of Revenue, nor any other state agency may regulate the educational program of an independent school that accepts students receiving scholarship grants pursuant to this proviso.

(G) (1) The Education Oversight Committee, as established in Chapter 6, Title 59, is responsible for determining if an eligible school meets the criteria established by subsection (A)(6), and shall publish an approved list of such schools meeting this criteria below. For this purpose, it also shall promulgate regulations further enumerating the specifics of this criteria. In performing this function, the Education Oversight Committee shall establish an advisory committee made up of not more than nine members including parents, and representatives of independent schools and independent school associations. The advisory committee shall provide recommendations to the Education Oversight Committee on the content of these regulations and any other matters requested by the Education Oversight Committee.

(2) (a) By the first day of August for the current fiscal year, the Education Oversight Committee, on its website available to the general public, shall provide a list with addresses and telephone numbers of nonprofit scholarship funding organizations in good standing which provide grants under this proviso, and a list of approved independent schools which accept grants for eligible students and which in its determination are in compliance with the requirements of subsection (A)(6).

(b) Student test scores, by category, on national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, for all grades tested and administered by an eligible school receiving or entitled to receive scholarship grants under this proviso must be transmitted to the Education Oversight Committee which in turn shall publish this information on its website with the most recent scores by category included.

(3) Any independent school not determined to be an eligible school under the provisions of this proviso may seek review by filing a request for a contested case hearing with the Administrative Law Court in accordance with the court's rules of procedure.

(4) The Education Oversight Committee, after consultation with its nine-member advisory committee, may exempt an independent school having students with exceptional needs who receive scholarship grants pursuant to this proviso from the curriculum requirements of subsection (A)(6)(d).

(H) (1) Every nonprofit scholarship funding organization providing grants under subsection (C), shall cause an outside auditing firm to conduct a comprehensive financial audit of its operations in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and shall furnish the same within thirty days of its completion and acceptance to the Secretary of State and Department of Revenue which must be made available by them on their website for public review.

(2) Every independent school accepting grants for eligible students shall cause to be conducted a compliance audit by an outside entity or auditing firm examining its compliance with the provisions of this proviso, and shall furnish the same within thirty days of its completion and acceptance to the Secretary of State and Department of Revenue which must be made available by them on their website for public review.

**APPENDIX B**

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.
PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building
Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organizations

FROM: Melanie Barton Melanie D. Barton

DATE: July 21, 2014

IN RE: FY 2013-14 ECEN Program Updates

As you are aware, the General Assembly reauthorized the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children for an additional fiscal year through proviso 1.80. of the 2014-15 General Appropriations Act. Proviso 1.80. requires each nonprofit scholarship funding organization to conduct a financial audit that documents at a minimum the following: "the total number of grants awarded, the total amount of each grant, and the names of the eligible schools receiving grants on behalf of the eligible students."

The purpose for my writing is to ask each nonprofit scholarship funding organization to provide voluntarily the following information to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). The information will be useful as a starting point to evaluate the results of the compliance audits. Any information provided is considered public information and will be used to report publicly on the activities of the program in Fiscal Year 2013-14. In essence, the request is for each nonprofit scholarship funding organization to provide the following information for the time period of July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014:

- Total Dollar Amount of Revenues Collected
- Total Number of Individual and Corporate Donors
- Total Number of Applications Received
- Total Number of Applications Approved
- Total Number of Applications Denied
- Total Number of Eligible Children Awarded Grants. "Awarded" is defined as checks being issued on or before June 30, 2014, or similarly, funds allocated or expended for grants by the nonprofit scholarship funding organization for specific individual students

David Whittemore
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Mick Zais

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Total Dollar Amount of Grants Awarded and/or allocated

- Total Number of Eligible Schools in which the eligible children were enrolled
- Of any balance of revenues/contributions as of June 30, 2014, what is the total amount of these revenues/contributions that are already obligated to eligible children who have applied for and been approved a grant for the 2014-15 school year?
- If you like to provide any information on the criteria used in approving or denying applications, the EOC would be interested in having the information.
- If you would like to share any information on the applicants (e.g. gender, ethnicity, or educational needs) but ***without providing personally identifiable information***, the EOC would be interesting in having such data.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. If possible, I would like to have the information by August 1, 2014. You may mail or email the data.

## APPENDIX C

Advance Carolina
Scholarship Funding Organization

615 St. Andrews Road
Columbia, SC 29210

TO: Melanie Barton, Executive Director
South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
FROM: Edward Earwood, President
Advance Carolina
DATE: July 28, 2014
RE: FY2013-2014 ECENC Program Update

I am writing in response to your recent request for voluntary release of information to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). Advance Carolina, as a member of Access Opportunity South Carolina (AOSC), has signed the *Best Practices Pledge* of AOSC. A portion of the spirit of the best practice is detailed accounting regarding the use of funds as well as openness with our constituency. It is in this spirit that we provide EOC with the following data.

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Dollar Amount of Revenues Collected | $78,870 |
| Total Number of Individual & Corporate Donors | 23 |
| Total Number of Applications Received | 79 |
| Total Number of Applications Approved | 79 |
| Total Number of Applications Denied | 0 |
| Total Number of Eligible Children Awarded Scholarships | 22 |
| Total Dollar Amount of Grants Awarded and/or Allocated | $75,250 |
| Total Number of Eligible Schools in which Students Enrolled | 12 |
| Total of Balance Obligated | -0- |
| Total Percentage of Revenues Awarded to Student Grants | 95.4 % |

In response to the final two questions, Advance Carolina has a committee that meets as needed to select recipients of grants. This committee is comprised of three persons that do not have any vested interest in the award of scholarships. They are not actively involved with any school receiving grants; further, they do not have children eligible for grants.

We are most willing to provide EOC with significant demographic data (e.g. gender, ethnicity, educational needs, etc.) without revealing personal identifiable information. This data has been submitted to AOSC and will be submitted to EOC in aggregate format.

Thank you for your efforts to execute matters relative to Proviso 1.85 (FY 2013-2014). Please let me know if there is anything else that I can do to assist you.

For the children of South Carolina,

Edward Earwood
President

www.advancecarolina.com

Phone: 803.798.7558 | Fax: 803.798.7548 | Mobile: 843.513.5010 | Email: info@advancecarolina.com

PO Box 12173
Columbia, SC 29211
Phone: 803-575-0037
Email: info@scdesk.org

August 1, 2014

Mrs. Melanie Barton
Executive Director
South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
PO Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Mrs. Barton,

This letter serves as Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge (DESK) response to your memorandum dated July 21, 2014.

- Total dollar amount of revenues collected - $32,000
- Total number of individual donors – 4
- Total number of applications received – 3
- Total number of applications approved – 2
- Total number of applications denied – 1
- Total number of eligible students funds were allocated for – 2
- Total dollar amount of allocated grants - $10,000
- Total number of eligible schools in which eligible students were enrolled – 2
- Of the balance of revenues zero dollars have been obligated for grants in the 2014- 15 school year
- DESK looks at the family's financial ability and the severity of the student's disability as criteria for a scholarship. DESK prioritizes applicants with the severest educational and financial needs. After applications are received a independent panel made up of a former special needs public school teacher of the year, a former deputy-superintendent and others review applications and award scholarships.

If you have any other questions or would like clarification please let me know.

Best,

Phillip Cease
President

For more information about Donors Enriching Students' Knowledge
please visit www.scdesk.org

Palmetto Kids FIRST
Scholarship Program, Inc.

# Memorandum

**Date:** **August 5th, 2014**

**To:** **The SC Education Oversight Committee**

**From:** **Olga Lisinska, Director of Operations**

**RE:** **Response to Inquiry Regarding Program Results**

---

In response to your July 21st, 2014 letter (attached) for preliminary data related to the **Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC)** and **Palmetto Kids FIRST Scholarship Program**, we are pleased to provide the EOC with the following responses:[1]

1. **Total Dollar Amount of Revenues Collected as of June 30th, 2014.**

    - $4.7 Million was raised by Palmetto Kids FIRST

2. **Total Number of Individual and Corporate Donors.**

    - Approximately **340** individual donors ranging from **$100 to $1.52 Million each**.
    - Zero "corporate" donors. Our experience in starting the 2nd largest tax credit scholarship organization under Georgia's $58 million program in 2008 is that large public corporations will not financially support educational tax credit programs in the early years due to the politically charged "school choice" debate. We communicate with corporations about the program and tax credit opportunities, but do not expect substantial "corporate" donations before the program is permanent and has a few years of experience.

3. **Total Number of Applications Received.**

    - **300** applications were received from eligible children.

[1] All responses are as of June 30th, 2014 unless otherwise noted. Figures may be adjusted slightly upon final CPA audit.

Palmetto Kids FIRST Scholarship Program, Inc. | 1985 Riviera Drive, Suite 103-126 | Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
*info@palmettokidsFIRST.org* | 843-501-1842 (phone) | 866-501-7471 (toll free fax)
*www.palmettokidsFIRST.org* | *www.facebook.com/palmettokidsFIRST* | An IRS 501(c)(3) & SC Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO)

Palmetto Kids FIRST
Scholarship Program, Inc.

4. **Total Number of Applications Approved.**

   - **ALL 300** applications from eligible children were approved.

5. **Total Number of Applications Denied.**

   - **ZERO** applications from eligible children were denied.

6. **Total Number of Eligible Children Awarded Grants.**

   - **ALL 300** applications from eligible children were awarded the legally maximum grant of full 2nd semester tuition (or $10,000 if tuition was greater).

7. **Total Dollar Amount of Grants Awarded and/or allocated.**

   - **$2.3 Million** were awarded by Palmetto Kids FIRST as of 6/30/2014.
   - **$4.6 Million** as of today, 8/5/2014.

8. **Total Number of Eligible Schools in which the eligible children were enrolled.**

   - **16** different schools from all across SC were awarded scholarship grants as of 6/30/2014. This was 100% of the schools Palmetto Kids FIRST was working with that had eligible children applying for grants.

9. **Of any balance of revenues/contributions as of June 30, 2014, what is the total amount of these revenues/contributions that are already obligated to eligible children who have applied for or been approved [for] a grant for the 2014-2015 school year?**

   - Revenue: **$4.7 Million** collected as of 6/30/2014
   - Less: **$2.3 Million** of 2nd Semester Scholarship Grants Awarded
   - Less: **$133,000** of expenses and fees *(2.8% vs. legal max of 5%)*
   - Balance: **$2.3 Million Available** for 2014-2015 Scholarships Grants

Palmetto Kids FIRST Scholarship Program, Inc. | 1985 Riviera Drive, Suite 103-126 | Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
*info@palmettokidsFIRST.org* | 843-501-1842 (phone) | 866-501-7471 (toll free fax)
*www.palmettokidsFIRST.org* | *www.facebook.com/palmettokidsFIRST* | An IRS 501(c)(3) & SC Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO)

Palmetto Kids FIRST
Scholarship Program, Inc.

- ***100% of the $2.3 Million Available has been obligated and already issued for 2014-2015 scholarship grants as of August 5th, 2014.***
- As of August 5th, 2014, Palmetto Kids FIRST has eligible scholarship applicants requesting $4 Million (and growing daily). We are busy raising the remaining $1.7 Million necessary to once again fund 100% of our Palmetto Kids FIRST eligible applicants. **Please DONATE TODAY!!!** ***www.palmettokidsFIRST.org/donors***

**10. If you like to provide any information on the criteria used in approving or denying applications, the EOC would be interested in having the information.**

- Palmetto Kids FIRST will, ***when and if necessary due to limited funds***, issue grants based on financial need FIRST. We do not collect financial data, but coordinate based on a cooperative "honor system" with our partnered schools to help families in need first. However, our goal is to fund 100% of our eligible "special needs" applicants. We believe families of "special needs" children have extensive medical, personal, time and financial burdens outside of just school tuition. ***We strongly recommend against any formal needs based criteria in the ECENC***.

**11. If you would like to share any information on the applicants (e.g. gender, ethnicity, or educational needs) but *without providing personally identifiable information*, the EOC would be interested in having such data.**

- Palmetto Kids FIRST does not collect data on race, gender, faith, educational or financial needs, or any other distinguishing criteria on our applicant children, ***nor do we believe we should***. We are 100% focused on supporting ALL eligible "special needs" children without any discriminating knowledge as to the child's distinguishing characteristics. ***All we need to know is they are "special needs"!!!***

If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to let us know. Thank you.

Olga Lisinska, *info@palmettokidsFIRST.org,* 843-901-1842 (office)

***www.palmettokidsFIRST.org***
***www.facebook.com/palmettokidsFIRST***

Palmetto Kids FIRST Scholarship Program, Inc. | 1985 Riviera Drive, Suite 103-126 | Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
*info@palmettokidsFIRST.org* | 843-501-1842 (phone) | 866-501-7471 (toll free fax)
*www.palmettokidsFIRST.org* | *www.facebook.com/palmettokidsFIRST* | An IRS 501(c)(3) & SC Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO)

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING ORGANIZATION

1662 Ingram Road
Charleston, SC 29407
Phone: 843·853·2130
Fax: 843·402·9071
www.sccatholicsfo.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Most Reverend
Robert E. Guglielmone

Reverend Monsignor
Richard D. Harris

Sister Pamela Smith, CCSM

Education Oversight Committee
Nonprofit Scholarship Funding Organizations
Attn: Ms. Melanie Barton, Executive Director
P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

July 29, 2014

Dear Ms. Barton,

Please find the following information per your request in a memo on July 21, 2014.

- Total Dollar Amount of Revenues Collected: $1,194,202.00
- Total Number of Individual and Corporate Donors: 158
- Total Number of Applications Received: 81
- Total Number of Applications Approved: 81
- Total Number of Applications Denied: 0
- Total Number of Eligible Children Awarded Grants: 81
- Total Dollar Amount of Grants Awarded/Allocated: $1,150,207.46
- Total Number of Eligible Schools in which the eligible children were enrolled: 18
- Balance of revenues/contributions as of June 30, 2014: $21,642.00
- Criteria in Approving or Denying Applications:

We were blessed to collect enough funds to provide a scholarship to 100% of the applicants at a rate of 90%. In the future, if funding is constrained, we would apply a means test to determine which students were to receive scholarships to a greater extent than others. We would use the company FACTS that already has a contract with our diocesan schools. We are prepared to implement its use if necessary.

- Information About Applicants:
  - 19.7% minority enrollment
  - 33% female applicants
  - 67% male applicants

As always, we thank you for your assistance in these matters and are always available for any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

John L. Barker, CPA, CGMA
Treasurer

## *South Carolina Corporate Coalition for Community Services*

Email Response:

*Greetings Melanie -*

*Please find copies of the ENEC Program updates from the South Carolina Corporate Coalition for Community Services. The Coalition's interest over the last year has been to educate parents regarding the opportunities for the Scholarships. As such our method has been more methodical and grassroots in nature as we not try to rush children into the program but allow a natural interest of the program through education and awareness that provides parents with the most up to date and thorough information possible.*

*Attached you will find our comments regarding your questions.*

*Please let me know should you have any additional questions.*

*Thanks,*
*Stephen Gilchrist*

- Total Dollar Amount of Revenues Collected (**None)**
  - Total Number of Individual and Corporate Donors **(None ongoing)**
  - Total Number of Applications Received **(One)**
  - Total Number of Applications Approved **(None)**
  - Total Number of Applications Denied **(None)**
  - Total Number of Eligible Children Awarded Grants. "Awarded" is defined as checks being issued on or before June 30, 2014, or similarly, funds allocated or expended for grants by the nonprofit scholarship funding organization for specific individual students **(None)**
  - Total Dollar Amount of Grants Awarded and/or allocated **(None at this point)**
  - Total Number of Eligible Schools in which the eligible children were enrolled **(Three)**
  - Of any balance of revenues/contributions as of June 30, 2014, what is the total amount of these revenues/contributions that are already obligated to eligible children who have applied for and been approved a grant for the 2014-15 school year? **(No revenue has been collected therefore no funds have been allocated or obligated.**

**EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee**

**Date: October 13, 2014**

**INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION**
Summer Reading Camp Pilot Study, 2014

**PURPOSE/AUTHORITY**
Proviso 1.84 of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act allocated funds for summer reading camps. Twenty school districts in the state that provided summer reading camps in 2014 participated in a pilot study with the EOC. The pilot project involved districts submitting data regarding demographics and reading growth results of students in the camp, completing an online survey with descriptive data of the camp, and allowing observations of the camp by the Education Oversight Committee staff.

**CRITICAL FACTS**
The attached is a compilation of the survey results and student achievement data

**TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS**
Summer of 2014 – EOC staff visited twenty district reading camps and analyzed results from those camps.

**ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC**

**Cost:** Absorbed in operating budget

**Fund/Source:**

**ACTION REQUEST**

☐ **For approval** ☒ **For information**

**ACTION TAKEN**
☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**

☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

2014

# SUMMER READING CAMP PILOT

## Summary Analysis Prepared for the EOC

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building | Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

# Summer Reading Camp Pilot Analysis 2014

## I. Overview

In 2013 according to Proviso 1.84, the General Assembly directed school districts to provide summer reading camps for "students who are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency at the end of third grade." Funding for these camps will be based on the 2012-2013 3rd grade SC PASS results, specifically students who scored Not Met 1 on the SC PASS Reading and Research assessment. The General Assembly allocated $1.5 million dollars for the 2014 summer reading camps.

A joint resolution passed in May, 2014 by the General Assembly permitted districts the option to participate in a summer reading camp. Many districts opted to continue to offer the camps to students in need of extra assistance.

The purpose of the summer reading camps was to provide opportunities for students who scored Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment State Standards (PASS) to improve and advance their reading skills. During the summer reading camp experience, high quality reading instruction was provided in order for students to achieve the goal of reading on grade level.

For the summer of 2014, districts were to follow district policy/guidelines regarding retention for grade 3 students and provide an additional opportunity to struggling readers in preparation for grade 4. In addition, a district could offer summer reading camps for students who were not exhibiting reading proficiency in prekindergarten through grade 2 and could charge fees based on a sliding scale pursuant to Section 59-19-90 of the 1976 Code. Priority seats for the summer reading camps were designed, per Proviso 1.84, to be given to third grade students with reading difficulties.

Funding for the 2014 Summer Reading Camps was determined by the number of students who scored Not Met 1 on the reading portion of PASS in 2013. In the spring of 2014, districts carefully reviewed all students' progress in third grade reading for the 2013-14 school year to determine which students were substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency at the third grade level. A variety of data points were included in the student review such as teacher observations, teacher grades, progress monitoring results, and benchmark assessment results to determine if a student was substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency. (Note: 2014 PASS scores were not available prior to the start of the reading camp.)

Students who were not substantially demonstrating reading proficiency were invited and encouraged to attend the summer reading camp for the purpose of improving their reading skills; however, students were not required to attend.

Districts were sent a request from the Education Oversight Committee to participate in a pilot project. The pilot project involved districts submitting data regarding demographics and reading growth results of students in the camp, completing an online survey with descriptive data of the camp, and allowing observations of the camp by the Education Oversight Committee staff. Twenty districts volunteered to be part of the reading camp. Of the twenty districts in the pilot, 19 submitted completed surveys and 18 submitted student demographic and reading growth data. Of the 18 districts that submitted student demographic and reading growth data, only reading growth data from 13 districts could be calculated in this report due to incompatibility of the reading growth instruments used by the districts.

## II. Summer Reading Camp Guidelines and Activities

**South Carolina State Department of Education (SCDE) Guidelines for Reading Camps**

- Reading Camp must be six to eight weeks in length.
- Reading Camp must be at least four days a week and include five ½ instructional hours daily.
- Classes must be taught by highly effective reading teachers.
- Class sizes can be no more than 15 students per licensed teacher.

**Student Eligibility Guidelines**

K-3 students who are not substantially demonstrating reading proficiency at grade level should be included in the Summer Reading Camps. A variety of data points should be included in the student review such as teacher observations, teacher grades, progress monitoring results, formative assessments, and benchmark results.

**Parent Involvement/Notification**

Parents will be notified of student eligibility for Summer Reading Camp during the last 6 weeks of school. Attendance is optional but strongly encouraged.

**Summer Reading Camp Curriculum**

Districts were free to create their own curriculum for the summer camp. The South Carolina Department of Education held four regional workshops to provide training for literacy based, thematic approaches to the curriculum. The Department used fourth grade social studies as the theme for the units. Districts received a sample unit on westward movement that was aligned with fourth grade social studies standards as a means to teach reading skills as well as a multitude of resources from which to draw. The unit of study incorporated social studies standards from the grade above as a means of front-loading content for the first nine weeks of the upcoming school year. The SCDE provided instructional strategies for explicit teaching and discussed how formative assessment would be used to guide the instruction.

**Progress Monitoring**

Districts selected their own progress monitoring instruments to not only show the growth of students' reading but to identify areas of individual student weaknesses in their reading skills. The pilot districts reported a total of ten different progress monitoring instruments used in the Summer Reading Camps. The instruments most frequently reported were: Fountas and Pinnell Level Literacy Instruction 41%; Dominie 35%; STAR 17%; and Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) 12%. (Note the total is above 100% because a single district could list multiple instruments.) In order to compare the growth of the reading in the pilot districts, a correlation chart was created to align the progress monitoring instruments based on grade equivalent levels. See Attachment A for the grade equivalent chart.

**Reading Camp Home Libraries**

The South Carolina Department of Education provided books for all students in the summer reading camps as well as students in selected school districts who did not participate in the summer reading camps. Students were able to self-select eight to twelve texts to build their home libraries as part of a reading fair.

**Partnerships**

Districts were encouraged to partner with local businesses and community organizations to support the activities of the Summer Reading Camps. Thirteen of the nineteen surveys received (68% of the districts) reported they developed partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.

**Celebration for Summer Reading Camp Students**

The Education Oversight Committee provided book bags to students in each of the pilot districts to be used as part of a celebration of completion of the summer reading camp. The book bags included additional information on ways for parents to get involved in reading with their child; a reading bracelet; a pencil and eraser; two additional texts for children to build their home libraries, congratulatory letters from Governor Haley and the EOC's Chairman, David Whittemore; letters from resident legislators, reading calendars, and bookmarks. All of the pilot districts indicated they hosted a celebratory activity for students at the end of the camp.

**Summer Reading Loss**

One of the factors which suggest summer reading camps would be beneficial to students who were not reading on grade level is the research that indicates the reading levels of students from lower socio-economic families declines during the summer. Often, it is the students who can least afford to lose the reading gains they've achieved during the school year who fall the farthest behind when they return to the classroom after a summer break away from formal literacy instruction.

> A review of 13 empirical studies representing approximately 40,000 students found that, on average, the reading proficiency levels of students from lower income families declined over the summer months, while the reading proficiency levels of students from middle-income families improved modestly. In a single academic year, this decline resulted in an estimated three-month achievement gap between more advantaged and less advantaged students. Between grades 1 and 6, the potential cumulative impact of this achievement gap could compound to 1.5 years' worth of reading development lost in the summer months alone (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse, 1996).

## III. Summer Reading Camp Sites in 2014 Pilot Study

Summaries of each visit to the pilot sites are included in Attachment B.

Allendale School District

Barnwell 45 School District

Charleston School District

Clarendon 1 School District (Summerton)

Darlington County School District

Fairfield County School District

Florence 1 School District (Florence)

Florence 3 School District (Lake City)

Florence 4 (Timmonsville)

Jasper County School District

Lexington 2 School District (West Columbia)

Lancaster County Schools

Marlboro County School District

Newberry County Schools District

Orangeburg 5 (Orangeburg)

Richland 1 School District (Columbia)

Spartanburg 2 (Chesnee)

Spartanburg 6 (Roebuck)

York 1 (York)

York 4 (Rock Hill)

## IV. Eligibility, Enrollment, and Completion of Pilot Summer Reading Camps: Grade 3

The following tables summarize the responses to the survey administered to pilot districts.

| Grade | # Students | # Students Invited but Declined | # Students Eligible for Camp | # Students Successfully Completed Camp | # Students Promoted | # Students Retained |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade 3** | **568** | **490** | **1058** | **528** | **528** | **13** |

**Table 1.** Grade 3 Eligibility, Enrollment, and Completion Summary Data

*Source:* Self-reported data by 19 of 20 districts from survey results.

## Demographic Data from Summer Reading Camps, Kindergarten-Grade 3

| Grade | # Students | # Districts Offering Grade Levels | Ethnicity | | | Gender | | # Students with IEPs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | African American | Caucasian | Hispanic | Male | Female | |
| Kindergarten | 37 | 2 | 33 | 4 | 0 | 22 | 15 | |
| Grade 1 | 53 | 2 | 40 | 13 | | 33 | 20 | |
| Grade 2 | 55 | 2 | 52 | 3 | | 19 | 36 | |
| Grade 3 | 353 | 13 | 230 | 63 | 60 | 192 | 161 | 84 |
| Total | 498 | | 355 | 83 | 60 | 266 | 232 | 84 |

**Table 2.** Demographic Data from Summer Reading Camps, K-3

*Source:* Self-reported data by the 13 districts with reading growth data.

**The highlights of the survey questions and district responses are included below.**

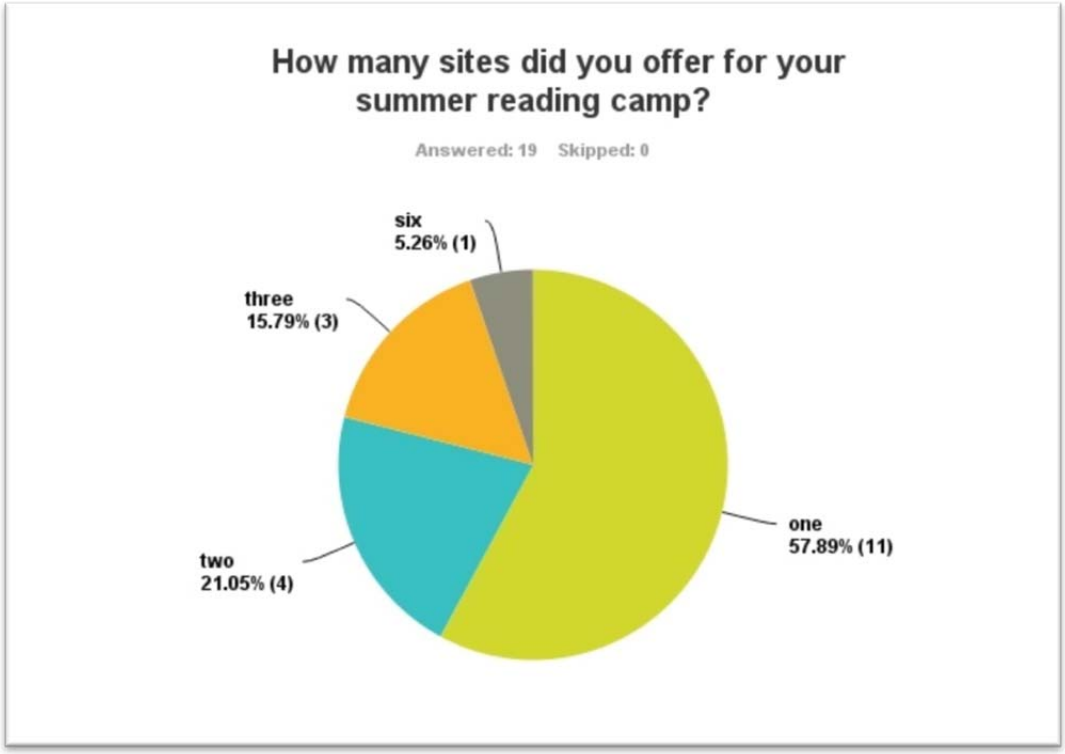



**Chart 1.** Number of summer reading camp sites

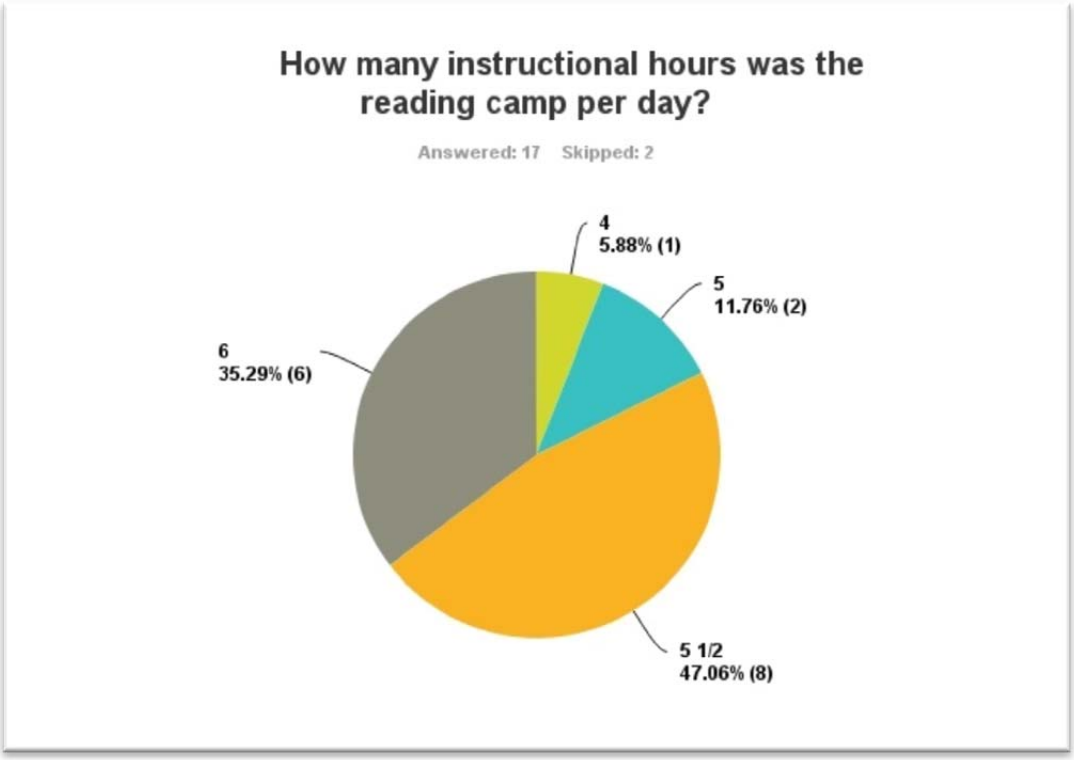



**Chart 2.** Daily instructional hours

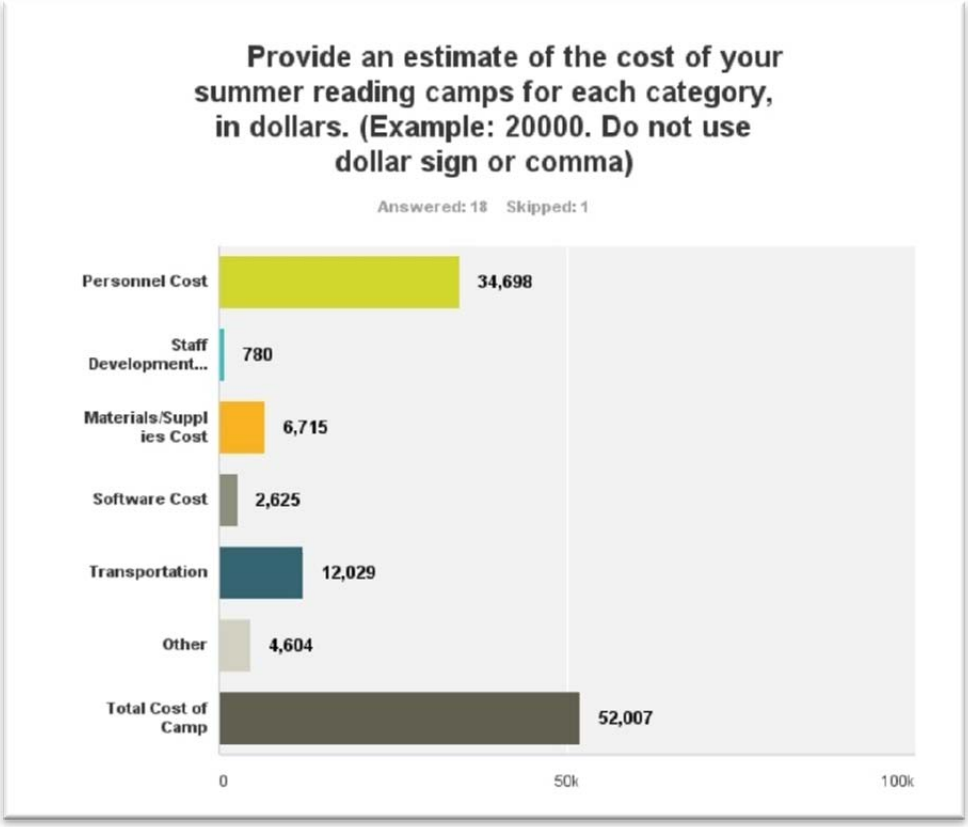



**Chart 3.** Average cost estimates per district for summer reading camps

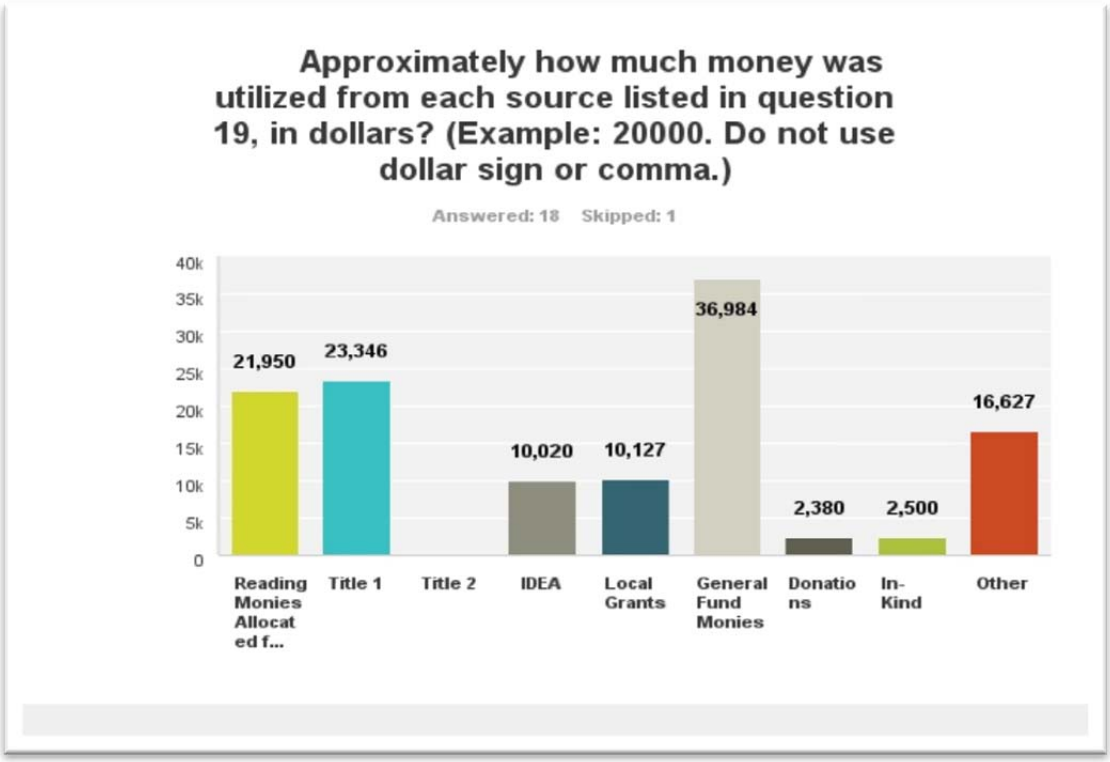



**Chart 4.** Average funds spent by source

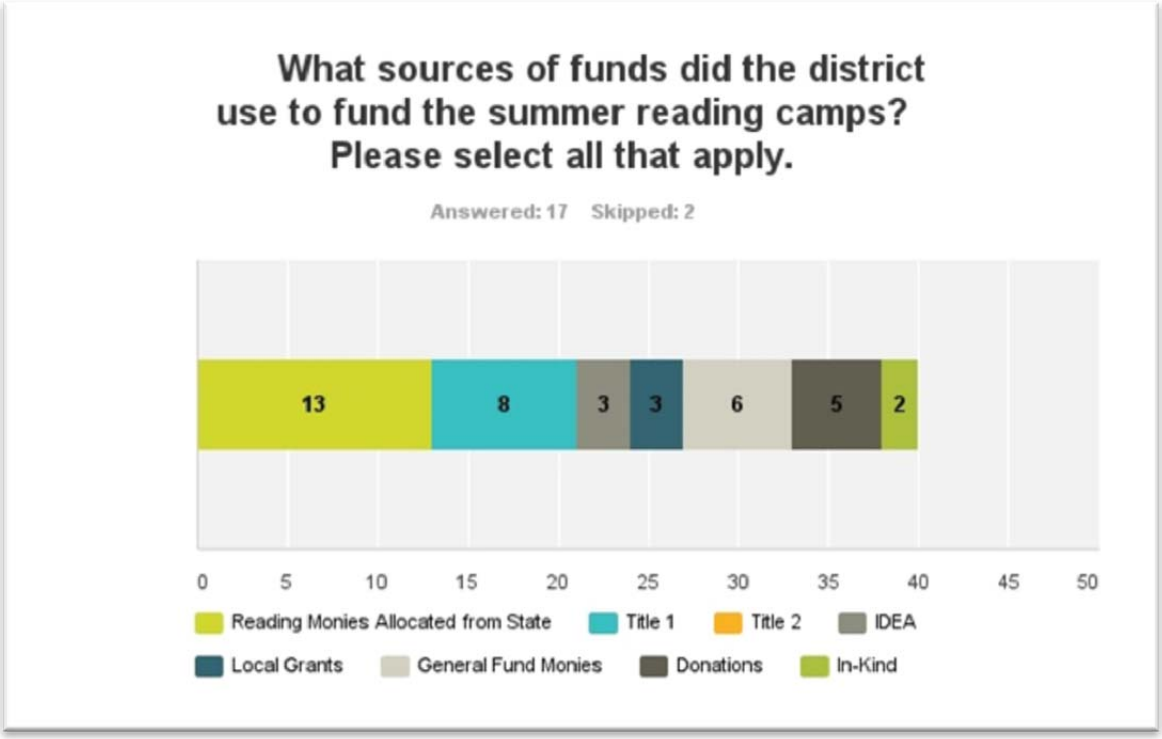



**Chart 5.** Sources of funds for summer reading camps

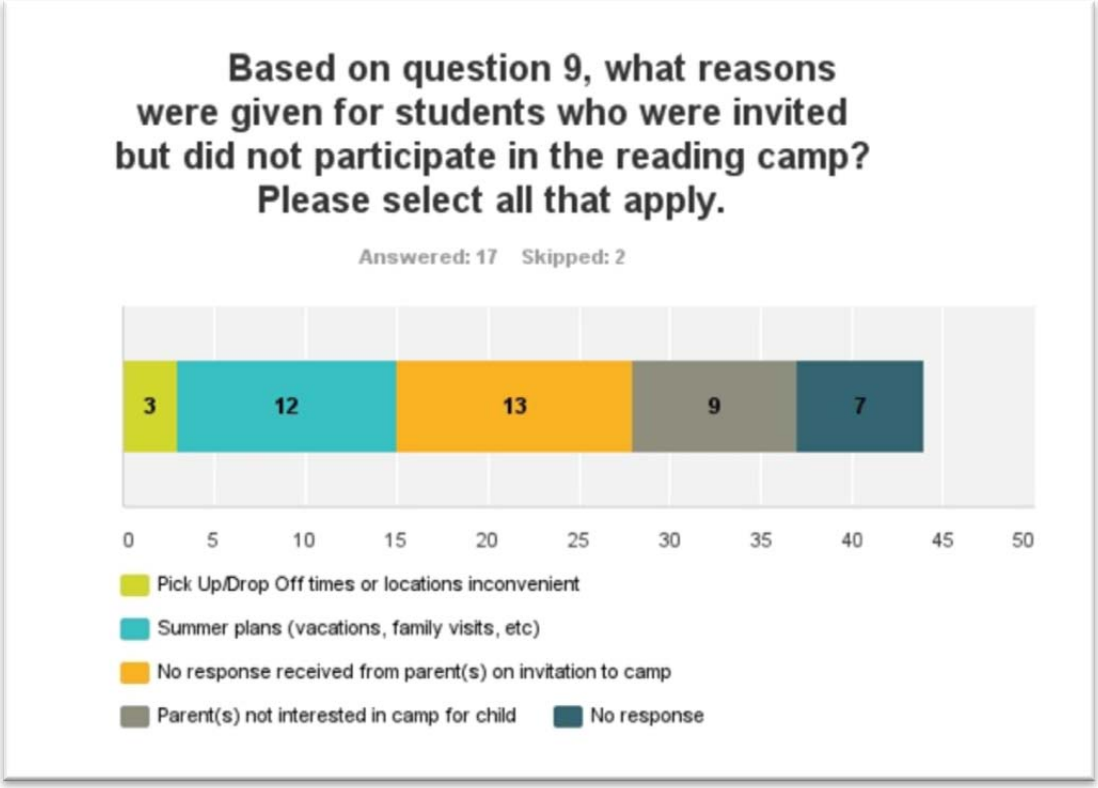



**Chart 6**. Reasons cited by students for not attending camp.

**What qualifications did your district use to select the teachers for the summer reading camp? Please select all that apply.**

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|---|---|---|
| elementary/early childhood certification | 89.47% | 17 |
| exceptional education background/certification | 57.89% | 11 |
| background in reading | 68.42% | 13 |
| minimum number of years teaching | 47.37% | 9 |
| effectiveness in classroom | 89.47% | 17 |
| teacher literacy endorsement | 5.26% | 1 |
| reading recovery certified | 15.79% | 3 |
| reading coach endorsement | 0.00% | 0 |
| Total Respondents: 19 | | |

**Chart 7.** Qualifications used by districts to select teachers for summer reading camps

**Estimate your teacher/student ratio for your classes in the summer reading camp.**

Answered: 15 Skipped: 4

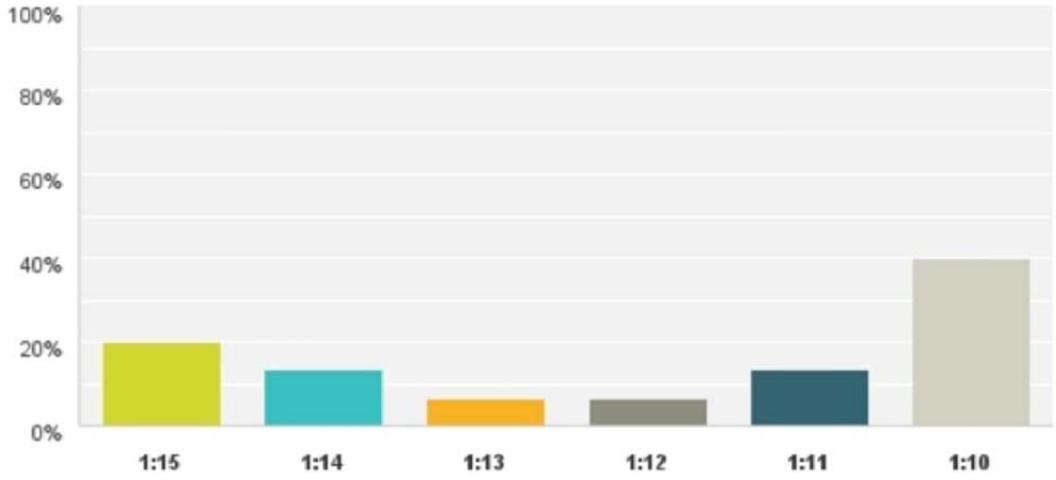



**Chart 8.** Teacher/student ratio for summer reading camp classes

Based on survey results, districts reported the following ***successes*** in their 2014 Summer Reading Camps.

**Chart 9.** Number of times districts reported successes by type

Based on survey results, districts reported the following ***challenges*** in the implementation of the 2014 Summer Reading Camps.

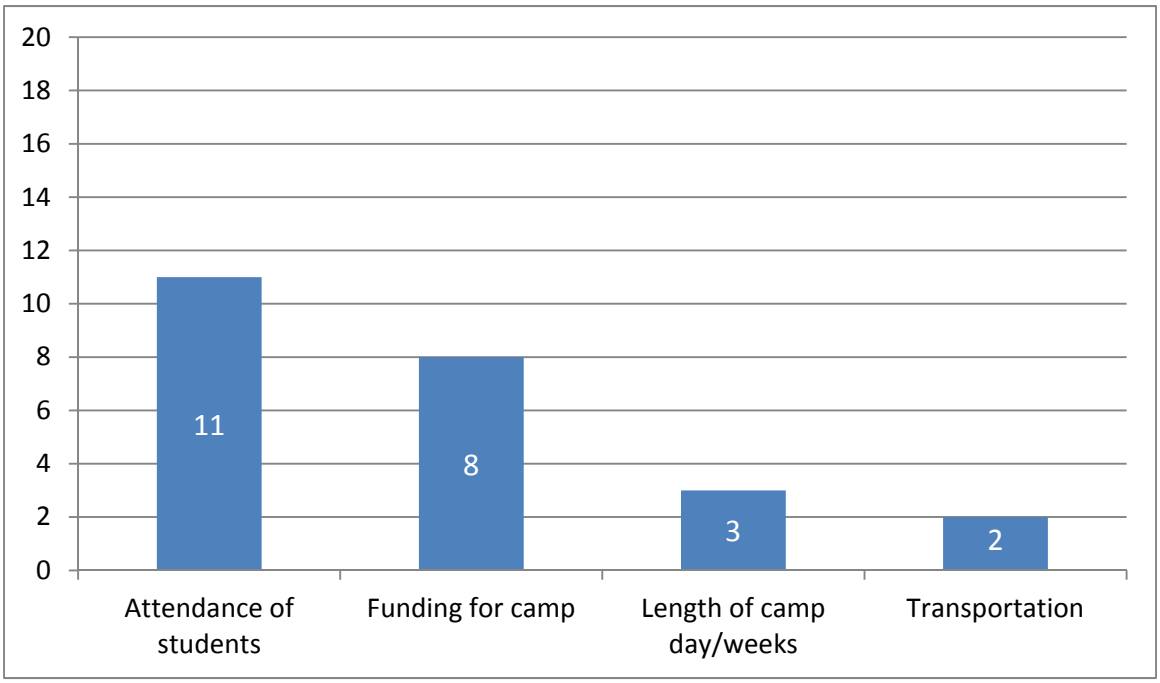



**Chart 10.** Number of times districts reported challenges by type

**The data below indicate the reading growth of the pilot school districts.**

| Summer Reading Camp 2014<br>End-of-Program Data Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GRADE LEVEL DATA** | | | | |
| **GRADE LEVEL** | **STUDENTS ENROLLED** | **AVG. ENTRANCE GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENT (Beginning of Summer Reading Camp)** | | **AVG. GROWTH** |
| Kindergarten | 37 | .71 | - .29 year | + .26 year |
| First Grade | 53 | 1.64 | -.36 year | + .15 year |
| Second Grade | 55 | 2.34 | -.66 year | + .25 year |
| Third Grade | 353 | 2.33 | -1.67 years | + .37 year |
| OVERALL PROGRAM | 498 | | | + . 35 year |

**Table 3.** Pilot Summer Reading Camp 2014 end-of program data summary

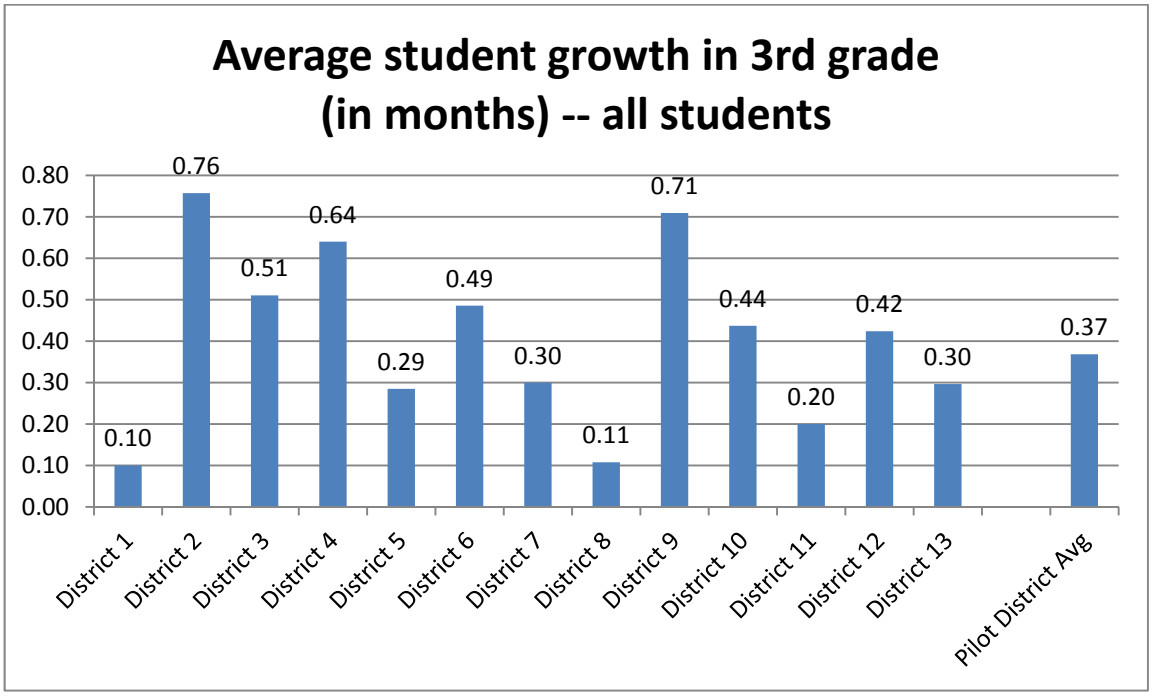



**Figure 1.** Data demonstrates the growth of **3rd grade** student (all students) reading by district and the pilot districts average.

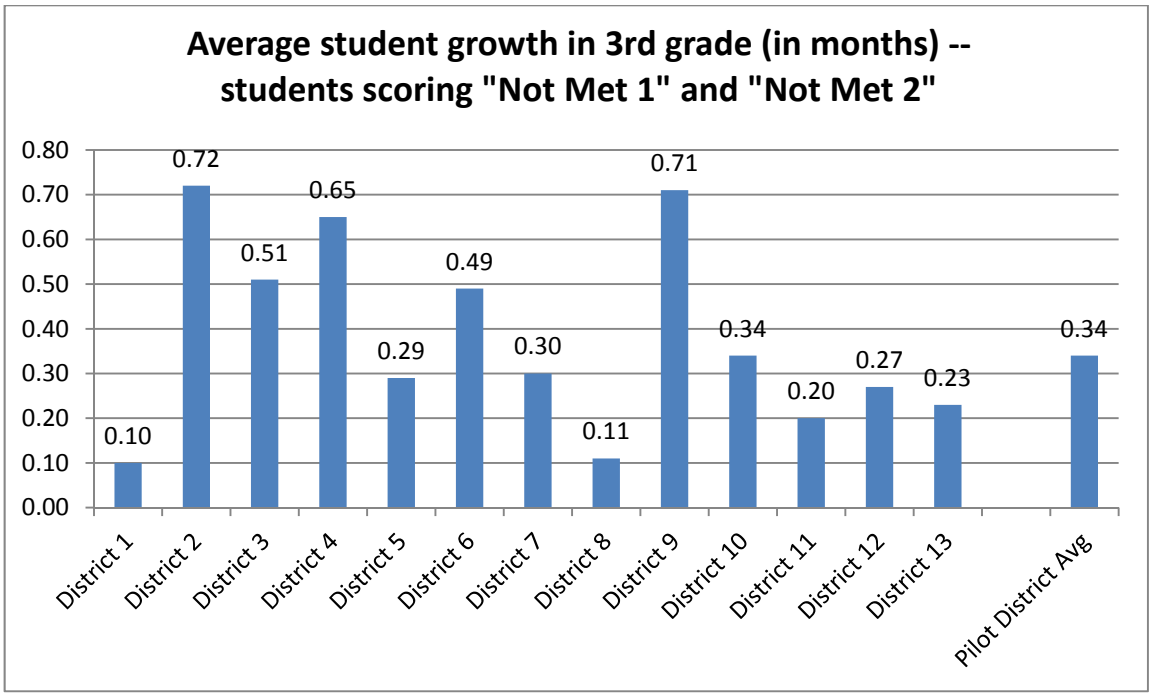



**Figure 2:** Data demonstrates the growth of **3rd grade** student (only students participating in the pilot camps who scored "Not Met 1" or "Not Met 2") reading by district and the pilot districts average.

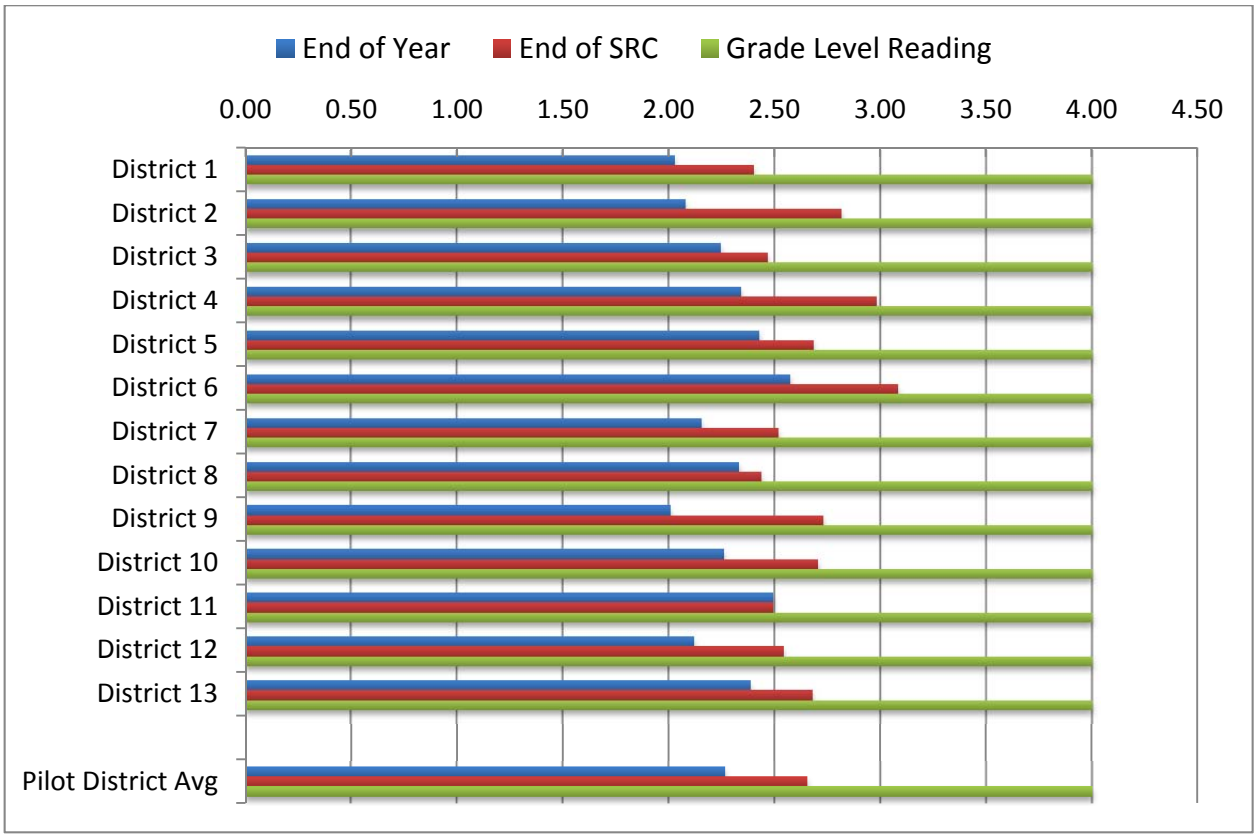



**Figure 3.** Data demonstrates **3rd grade** student reading growth for 13 districts as measured at the beginning of the summer reading camp compared to the end of the program. This growth is placed in relation to on-grade level reading.

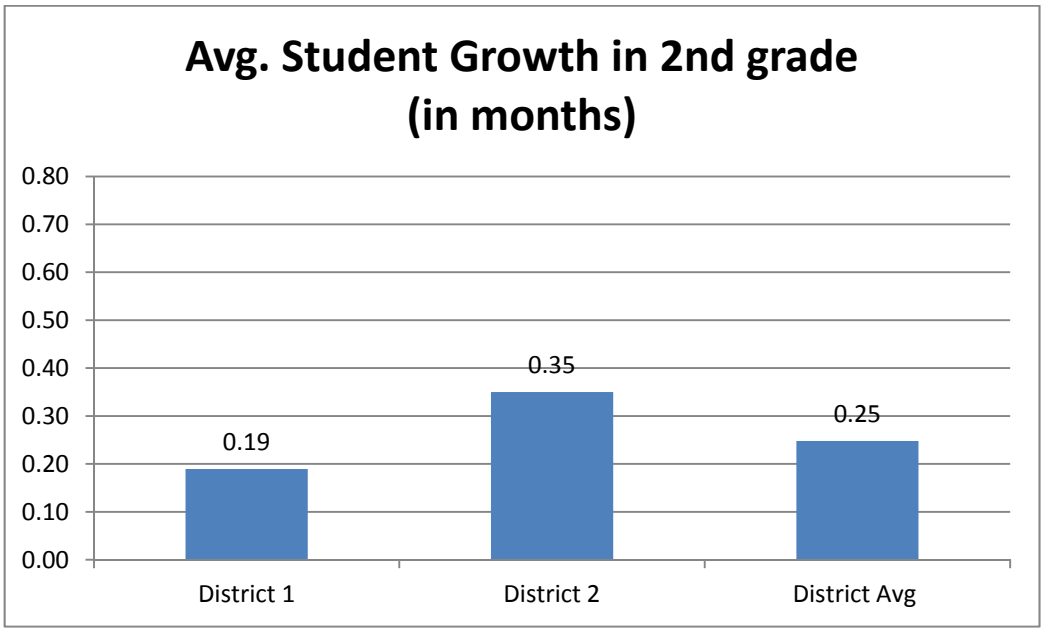



**Figure 4.** Data demonstrates the growth of **2nd grade** student reading by district and the pilot districts average.

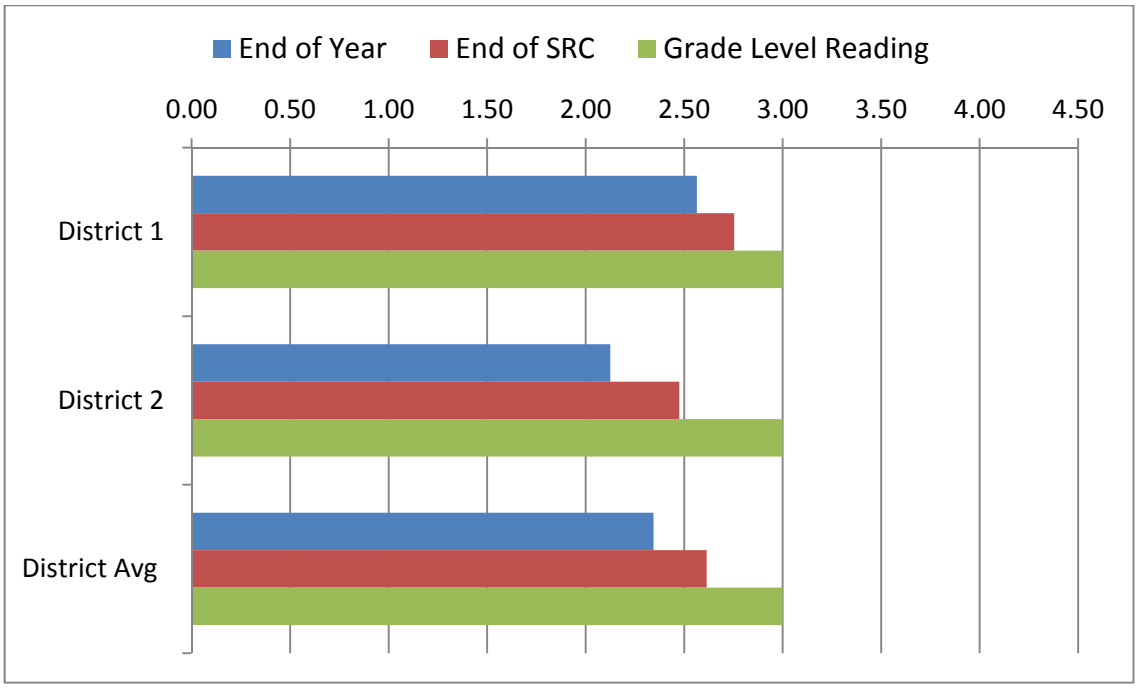



**Figure 5.** Data demonstrates **2nd grade** student reading growth for 2 districts as measured at the beginning of the summer reading camp compared to the end of the program. This growth is placed in relation to on-grade level reading.

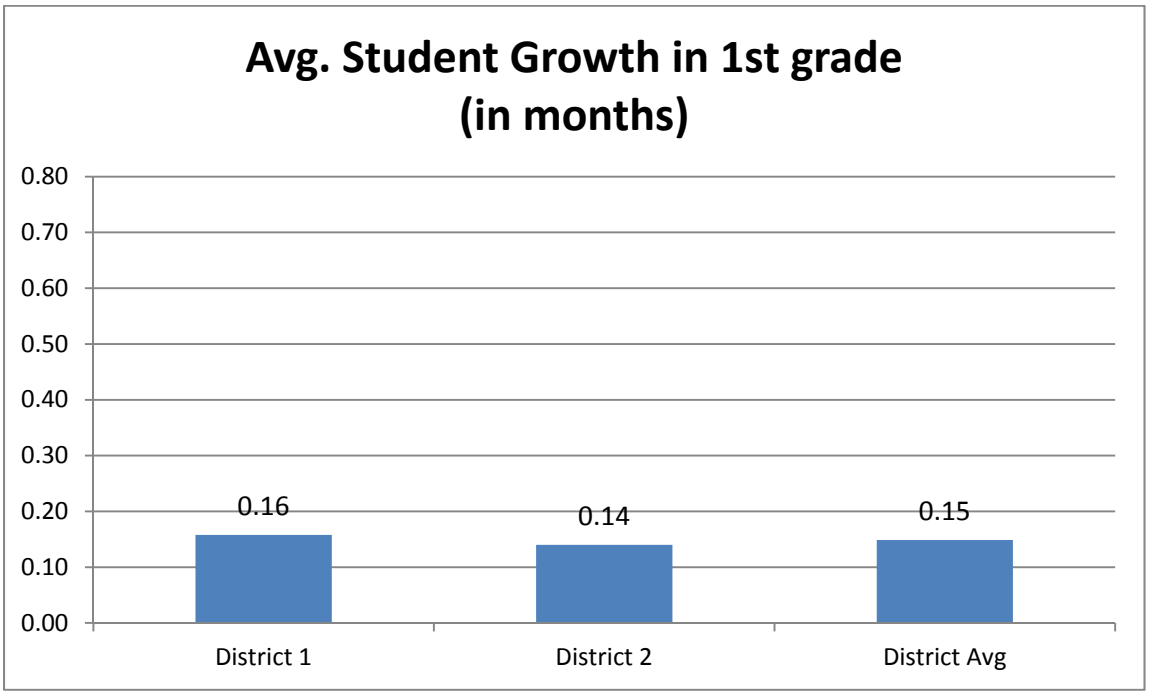



**Figure 6.** Data demonstrates the growth of **1st grade** student reading by district and the pilot districts average

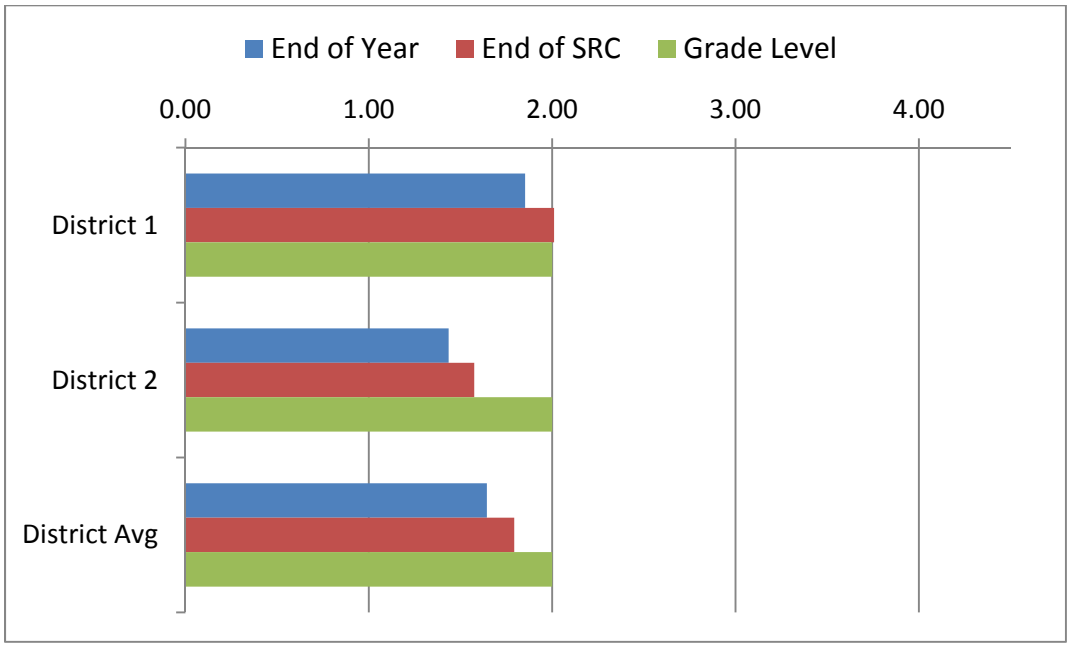



**Figure 7.** Data demonstrates **1st grade** student reading growth for 2 districts as measured at the beginning of the summer reading camp compared to the end of the program. This growth is placed in relation to on-grade level reading.

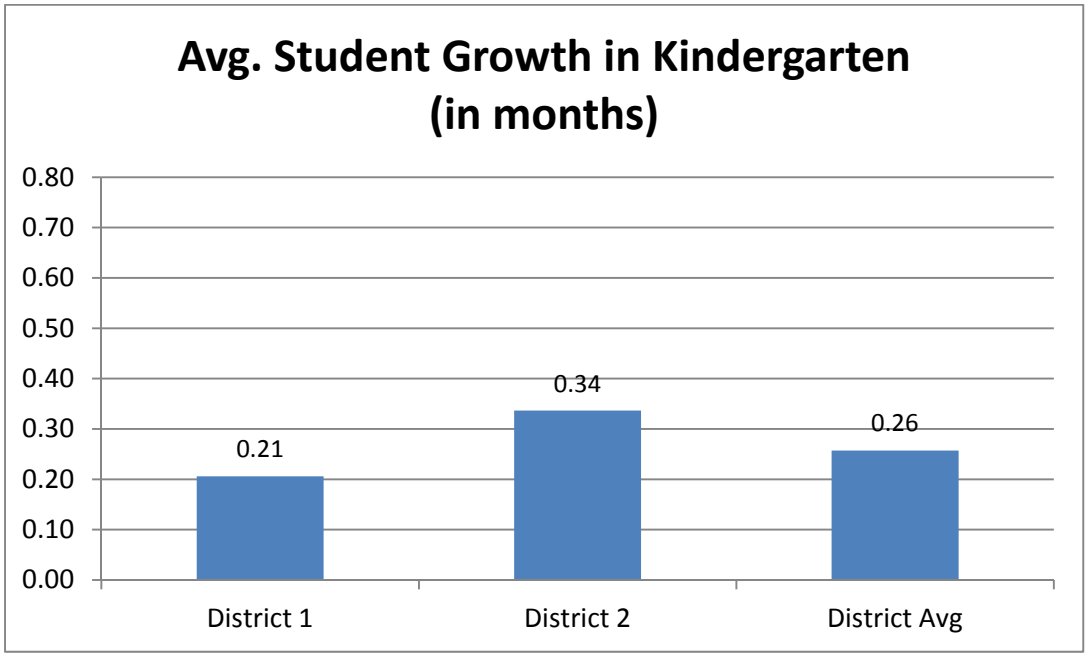



**Figure 8.** Data demonstrates the growth of **Kindergarten** student reading by district and the pilot district average

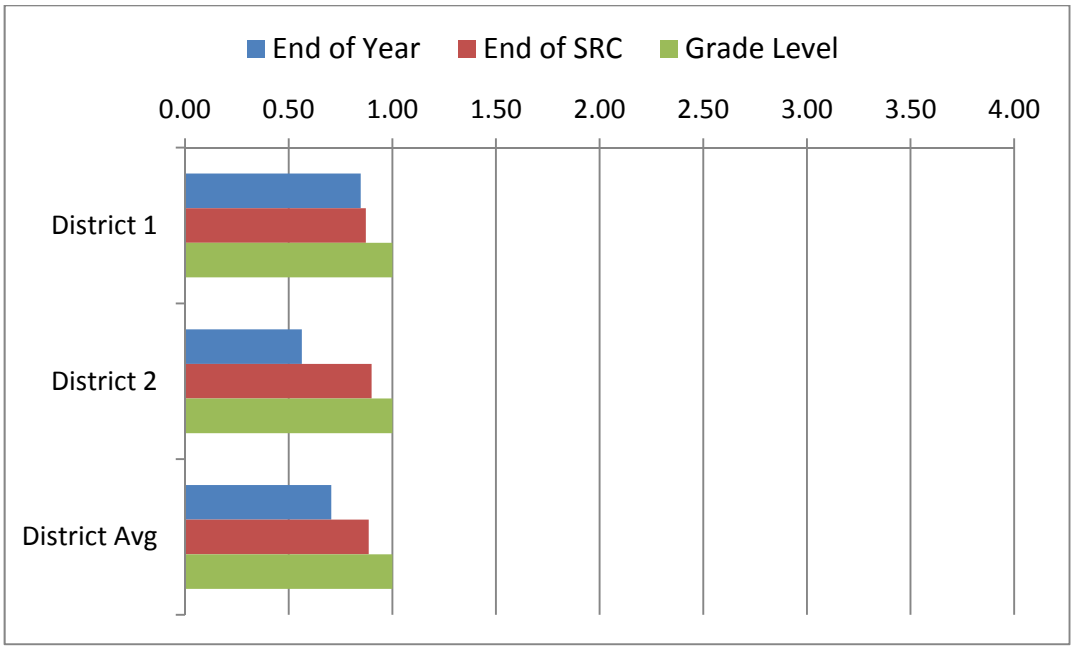



**Figure 9.** Data demonstrates **grade K** student reading growth for 2 districts as measured at the beginning of the summer reading camp compared to the end of the program. This growth is placed in relation to on-grade level reading.

## VII. Findings

1. Third grade students averaged approximately three weeks of growth for each week of instruction during Summer Reading Camp.
2. Student attendance was reported as a significant barrier to the Summer Reading Camps.
3. Third grade students who participated in the Summer Reading Camp were initially on average 1.7 years below grade level. Upon completion of the camp, these students were 1.3 years behind in reading.
4. Of the 2014 PASS scores provided by districts for the 2014 summer reading camp students, 31% scored Not Met 1 on PASS (lowest level) and 53% scored Not Met 2. A total of 85% of the students in the summer reading camp scored below the Met level in reading.
5. The results of 3.7 months average growth was below the expected growth of 4 months. However, the rule of thumb approximates it takes 5 hours in two weeks of additional intervention instruction to achieve one month's growth.
6. Kindergarten results indicated an average gain of 2.6 months, first grade showed a gain of 1.5 months and second grade showed an average gain of 2.5 months.
7. Of the four grades participating in the study, first grade showed the lowest overall gain. This was consistent with both of the districts with grade two students.
8. Districts in the summer reading camps did not identify English language learners. However, observations and discussions with camp directors indicated a relatively high percentage of students in the camps were students who could be identified as English as a second language.
9. The total number of students invited to attend in the Summer Reading Camps was 994 with 426 students who declined to participate.
10. Thirteen percent of the students in the pilot Summer Reading Camps were identified as exceptional education students.
11. The pilot districts in their Summer Reading Camps used ten different progress monitoring instruments.
12. Students showed a larger deficit in reading as they progress through the grade levels.
13. Districts in the pilot study that produced student reading growth gains above the pilot average implemented their camps in different ways as shown by the curriculum used, progress monitoring used, and structure of the day. However attributes that appeared to be similar for districts with student reading growth above the pilot average were: highly effective teachers in the program; a focused, intensive approach to teaching and learning; strong community/business partnerships; effective utilization of all staff in the program; engaging, motivating lessons by the teachers; and a strong process for effective progress monitoring of student growth.

## VIII. Recommendations

1. Districts should continue to recruit effective teachers of reading.
2. Teachers should utilize engaging and motivating lessons to engage students in the learning process.
3. The daily schedule should be intensive and focused on developing the reading skills of individual students.
4. Districts should consider standardizing the progress monitoring process using a single instrument with training provided to teachers.
5. Districts should implement a more frequent system of formal assessment/measurement of student reading level to capture growth of students as well as provide information to teachers for their reading instruction.
6. Districts should increase access to individualized reading interventions during summer reading camps for most at-risk students.
7. District should consider employing a summer reading camp director to coordinate the camp activities and provide support to teachers as well as reviewing the utilizations of all staff in the camp.
8. The state should strongly consider providing a single progress monitoring instrument to all school district for use throughout the school year as well as in the summer reading camps.
9. Districts should identify a method to more narrowly identify students eligible for the summer reading camps.
10. Districts should expect, plan and provide for English language learner students for the 2015 summer reading camps.
11. Districts should plan for additional slots for 2015 reading camps given the high percentage (43%) of students who were invited to participate but did not attend in 2014.
12. Districts should plan to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of students with IEPs (individual education plans) in the Summer Reading Camps.
13. Districts should consider using the Summer Reading Camps as a demonstration site for professional development to showcase exemplary teaching of reading.
14. Districts should consider early planning for creating awareness, interest and support for Summer Reading Camps with local businesses and community organizations.
15. Districts should consider offering summer reading camps to students in the earlier grades to close the gap in reading at an earlier age.

**Attachment A**. Grade Level Equating for use with2014 Summer Reading Camp Progress Monitoring Data Bases[1]

| DRA | STAR | Dominie | Grade | Guided | Reading Recovery | Grade | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.1 | A | 1 | KDG | |
| 1 | 0.3 | 1A | 0.3 | A | 1 | | |
| 1 | 0.4 | 1B | 0.6 | A | 1 | | |
| 2 | 0.4 | 2 | 0.9 | B | 2 | | |
| 2A | 0.5 | 2A | 1 | C | 3, 4 | | |
| 3-4 | 0.5 | 2B | 1.1 | C | 3, 4 | First Grade | Pre Primer |
| 3-4 | 0.6 | 3 | 1.2 | C | 3, 4 | | |
| 5-6 | 0.6 | 3A | 1.2 | D | 5, 6 | | |
| 5-6 | 0.7 | 3B | 1.3 | D | 5, 6 | | |
| 7-8 | 0.7 | 4 | 1.3 | E | 7, 8 | | |
| 7-8 | 0.7 | 4A | 1.4 | E | 7, 8 | | Primer |
| 9-10 | 0.7 | 4B | 1.5 | F | 9, 10 | | |
| 9-10 | 1.2 | 5 | 1.5 | F | 9, 10 | | |
| 11-12 | 1.2 | 5A | 1.6 | G | 11, 12 | | |
| 11-12 | 1.5 | 5B | 1.7 | G | 11, 12 | | First Reader |
| 11-12 | 1.7 | 6 | 1.7 | G | 11, 12 | | |
| 13-14 | 1.8 | 6A | 1.8 | H | 13, 14 | | |
| 13-14 | 1.9 | 6B | 1.9 | H | 13, 14 | | |
| 15-16 | 2.0 | 7 | 2 | I | 15, 16, 17 | | |
| 17-18 | 2.1 | 7A | 2.1 | J, K | 18, 19, 20 | Second Grade | 2.1 |
| 17-18 | 2.3 | 7B | 2.3 | J, K | 18, 19, 20 | | |
| 20-24 | 2.5 | 8 | 2.5 | J, K | 18, 19, 20 | | |
| 20-24 | 2.7 | 8A | 2.7 | L, M | | | 2.2 |
| 27-28 | 2.9 | 8B | 2.9 | L, M | | | |
| 30-32 | 3.0 | 9 | 3 | L, M | | | |
| 30-32 | 3.1 | 9A | 3.1 | N | | Third Grade | 3.1 |
| 30-32 | 3.3 | 9B | 3.3 | N | | | |
| 33-34 | 3.5 | 10 | 3.5 | N | | | |
| 36-38 | 3.7 | 10A | 3.7 | O, P | | | 3.2 |
| 36-38 | 3.9 | 10B | 3.9 | O, P | | | |
| 36-38 | 4.0 | 11 | 4 | O, P | | | |

*Dominie Levels for Assessment to Inform Instruction ** Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading Instructional Levels

[1] This chart is meant to serve as a guide to districts for the 2014 summer reading camp only.

**Attachment B.** **2014 Summer Reading Camp Site Visit Summaries**

**June 24, 2014** **District 1**

District attempts to select teachers from the application pool, based on those applying to teach in the summer reading camp. Staffing for the summer reading camp was challenging for this district, as many high quality teachers are unavailable to teach in the summer. There were two classes, each with one teacher. Twelve students were enrolled in the camp. Students had access to a computer lab but no access to the media center. Classrooms were in the process of being cleaned so classroom libraries were not available. Teachers used thematic units from state department workshop. Teachers focused on whole class instruction. Student behavior was an issue and took away from teaching time. The instructional schedule included guided reading and shared reading, computer lab and independent reading. Suggestion might be to use more time with one on one and small group instruction. Concerns expressed were the attendance of the students and the length of the camp.

Suggestions:

- Standardize the progress monitoring process.
- Teachers needed to use more differentiated instruction.

**June 12, 2014** **District 2**

The district selected teachers based on reading effectiveness during the school year. The camp was held in the media center. One class of 15 students was housed at one site. The media specialist volunteered her time to allow for book check out as well as operation of the book fair. Students were highly engaged and motivated. Students were eager to participate in the reading lessons and activities.

The instructional day consisted of interactive read aloud, shared reading, reading workshop, inquiry/research and writing workshop. Students were provided time on the computer using I-Station. All text chosen for the reading and research components of the camp were chosen based on units created by the district. These units were all science or social studies themed units based on 4th grade standards. They included Animals and Habitats, Native Americans, Westward Expansion, America, Space, and Weather. The text used included articles, poetry, class sets bought on the theme, research packets created for the units, Reading A to Z books and units, and leveled text. The text chosen for shared reading and interactive reading were on-grade level text, while the leveled text and small group texts were based on the students' independent/instructional reading levels. The text utilized in the research component of the

units was on-grade level, however multi-level text was available for independent research. A variety of text was available for the Self-Selected Reading time during the Reading Workshop time.

This district was unique in that the community was highly involved with the reading camp. The district had Community Reading Buddies, who were volunteers from the district and community to come and read each week with the students, as well as allowing the students to share what they had done that week (mentoring). The county library, Animal Advocates, Big Seven, local churches, community members (community organizations) - donated books for Book Fair and book giveaways, donated materials for use as instructional supplies.

Suggestions:

- Use the reading camp as a time to provide professional development to other teachers in the district on effective reading lessons.

**July 16, 2014** **District 3**

The school district sponsored 16 reading camp classes at one site. The grade levels served were kindergarten, first grade, second grade and third grade for a total of 116 students. The teachers were selected from the applications submitted. Teachers have taught during summer school in the past and have good experience serving struggling readers.
The teachers were both energetic and engaging, keeping the students on task at all times. It appeared there were a low percentage of students who were actually served in grade 3 that were eligible. Only 33% of the students eligible for the summer camp actually completed the camp. The district reported 85 students eligible, 44 students declined the invitation to attend and served 33 students. Twenty-eight students completed the camp in third grade. Instruction was provided was in both math and reading. Mentoring Math Minds and Readers Workshop formed the core of instruction. Readers Workshop included emphasis on phonics and word study. Related arts were included in the camp such as the camp offered art, dance and PE.
Attendance was reported as an issue. The school district partnered with a local nonprofit, Promising Neighborhoods that provided financial assistance. Several groups also provided assistance such as Citadel, BBT, and Boeing. The district had a celebration for the students at the end of the camp with a storyteller, movie and cook out.

Suggestions:

- District might want to review the instructional time during the camp to focus third grade on reading only.

**July 28, 2014** **District 4**

One class of students served in the areas of both math and reading. Save the Children provided books and Accelerated Reader for the camp. Teacher reported using STAR reading as its progress monitoring instrument but little evidence of any real progress monitoring taking place on a regular basis. This school seemed to have more of a struggle with making the most of every opportunity to engage students. There seemed to be more lag time between transitions. I would like to have seen more skill based small group instruction. It appears that guided reading is the main method of instructional delivery. The school utilizes Foster Grandparent program to provide mentors for students. Recruitment of teachers was an issue as well as attendance of students.

Suggestions:

- More structure should be provided to the teachers.
- Standardize the progress monitoring process.

**July 17, 2014** **District 5**

The summer reading camp as well as all of the summer school programs for the district were housed at one site. There were two classes of 3rd grade students, described to me as the lowest students, who were "in danger of being retained." One of the classes had about nine students and one had eight students. Students from three elementary schools fed into the class I observed class; three other schools made up the other class.

Students did not have access to the bookshelves in the classroom; they were covered up. The chairs and seats were also packed up so students had to sit on the floor. This did not seem to a problem for them. The teacher incorporated a good bit of movement into the instruction. The students did not have access to the library media center and printed material. Students had access to a class set of Chrome books and the teacher did use a Smart Board.

The teacher said she spent most of her time working with the students on math skills and increasing reading proficiency. They did not use the SCDE-suggested units of study but created their own. The students picked a story from Storyline Online (www.storyonline.net), a free web-based service from the Screen Actors Guild Foundation. On this site, a professional actor reads a children's book out loud and the illustrations are blown up on the screen. The children picked *Thank You, Mr. Falkner*, a book by Patricia Polacco. After listening to the story read aloud, the students broke down the story elements of setting, characters, plot, and conflict using their own graphic organizers. Since the story was about the author's own challenges as a young reader and how one teacher helped her overcome those challenges, the students opened up about how it felt to be called "stupid" or "slow" by others. One student said he just needed more books. His dad was supposed to be printing him stuff out at work but he hadn't had a chance yet.

The district used a Reading A-Z subscription for independent reading. They also use Dominie to evaluate student progress.

Dominie was used as a monitoring tool. The teacher said that in addition to Dominie, most of her decisions about individual student's progress were made based on her observations of independent reading.

The instruction by the teacher and the motivation of the students was exceptional. During their book discussion, it was clear that the students felt like they could speak out about their reading problems with students that were "like them." The teacher said that they had not any issues with absenteeism among the children at all.

Suggestions:

- District should consider providing print-rich environments with access to classroom libraries for students in the camp.
- District should consider partnering with community/businesses to enhance the resources and support for the camp.

**July 23, 2014 District 6**

Two of the three sites for the camp were visited. One site consisted of one-third-grade class with two certified teachers and an assistant. The class consisted of a large percentage of Hispanic students (50%). The camp was using Logic of English being funded by faith-based organization. Teachers participated in four days of intense training for the program. Instruction was heavy on phonics. Students were very engaged in the instruction through games, classroom discussions and writing. Teachers reported to me that the Logic of English curriculum was weak in comprehension. The teachers were using Essentials Reader and Achieve 300 to supplement that component in reading. Teachers were superb. The teachers were very knowledgeable regarding the program, the classroom well managed and the students were eager to participate. Teachers received training on Logics of English prior to implementing the program.

The second site camp was more traditional using Reading CAFÉ (comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanded vocabulary) as its instruction structure. One certified teacher and an assistant were assigned to the class. The teacher was superb and worked well with the teacher assistant. Students followed a balanced literacy approach to reading using a thematic approach. Themes used to teach reading were habitats, animals, western movement, all of which are fourth grade standards. Teacher was well organized and worked with students in various groups doing a variety of activities such as sustained silent reading on his/her grade level and in small groups working on activity to create vocabulary through science. Students read individually with the assistant. Classes used the storyboard.com website to develop their writing. District used DRA as its progress monitoring. Teacher reported students started class

with low level of confidence and were hesitate to read. She sees the students making progress towards students being independent readers.

The media center was open to all classes and students had access to computers. Both classes reported attendance was an issue. Students were provided field trips weekly, which appeared to be motivating for the students. Sites visited were the public libraries, zoo, botanical gardens, and SC State Museum.

Suggestions:

- Use the camp as a time for professional development and model for teachers what excellent reading instruction looks like.

**June 18, 2014 District 7**

The camp consisted of one class with 17 students. Teachers were selected from an application pool with the intention of selecting the most highly qualified teachers. Summer lesson plans provided by the district with a focus on literacy skills. The class was team taught with two effective reading teachers. The classrooms were organized with leveled libraries, teachers were using materials appropriately and students were engaged. It appeared that the students were receiving good instruction on phonics, vocabulary and comprehension.

Through teacher observations, it was observed that several teachers were prepared and engaging, providing quality instruction. Fluency, comprehension and vocabulary were the focus of the instruction. The curriculum used was Reading Street Leveled Readers. Monitoring of student growth was done using student portfolios and running records were completed on the students every two weeks. Teachers also used conference notes to guide instruction on a daily basis. The RAZ kids program has an assessment at the end of each book.

Suggestions:

- Standardize the progress monitoring progress.

**July 14, 2014 District 8**

District used one school as its central site to serve all students across the district for the summer reading camp. Students who had completed the third grade but were still struggling in reading were invited to attend. The director of camp ran a tight ship and was very knowledge about the program. The district based on effectiveness in the classroom-selected teachers. Teachers were selected from an applicant pool and the most highly qualified teachers were selected. District had six classes but hired seven teachers. This proved helpful when a teacher

was out for a day or had a vacation planned. By doing this, the district assured there was a certified teacher in the classroom everyday. On days when all teachers were present, the extra teacher served as an interventionist and worked with small groups.

Instruction was strong and it appears that students are given the opportunity to be successful. Materials used were Lucy Caulkins writing program and Literacy by Design for guided reading. Teachers were trained on both programs prior to the camp. Students are provided 6 weeks of summer reading camp for three hours per day.

Program utilized student mentors from the middle school and allowed students to read to them.

District used Fountas and Pinnell and MAP as its progress monitoring instrument. Students were grouped in classes based on their Fountas and Pinnell score from the spring testing.

Students' attendance was an issue. Fifty-two students were invited with only 39 regularly attending. On the day I visited 32 students were present.

Suggestions:

- Encourage district to find strategies to increase attendance.
- Partner with community/businesses

**July 14, 2014** **District 9**

The district offered one site for one class of 14 students for the summer reading program. The district made a strong effort to support all NM1 students with a very intense form of delivery. Two teachers taught the class: one the first three weeks and a second the last three weeks. Teacher I observed was extremely competent. A teacher's assistant was present for the entire camp. The teachers showed great interest in the success of the camp as well as the district. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, Title director, both teachers and the assistant were present during my visit. Both teachers were reading recovery teachers. The teachers used Fountas and Pinnell level literacy as the core instruction and Fountas and Pinnell as its progress-monitoring instrument. Each teacher focused on fluency and comprehension. The district noted that student attendance was an issue.

Suggestions:

- Consider using the reading camp as an opportunity to provide professional development for teachers.

**July 21, 2014** **District 10**

Teachers were selected based on applications and principal recommendations and appear to be of quality. The teacher I observed was exceptional. She had a strong background in reading and instruction was superb. District offered three sites for reading camps with a class at each site serving a total of 36 students. District noted this was only about half of the students they deemed eligible for the program. Students served showed a high percentage of Hispanic children.

Teachers provide both whole group and small group instruction addressing necessary skills, reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and phonics. Teachers used primarily literature-based instruction built around skills and strategies for helping students are successful readers. Instruction was structured and included all aspects of reading. Sample schedule was mini lesson & setting purpose, small group/ independent reading, and feedback from independent reading, read aloud, writing workshop, small group/independent writing, and inquiry & research. The media center and computer lab were available to students. Leveled texts were available to students in the classroom as well as each student having their own book collection. Students used Mimio Reading as an intervention. The district used STAR reading as its progress-monitoring instrument. Barnes and Nobles partnered with the district to provide free books to the students.

Suggestions:

- Consider using the camp as a time for professional development for other teachers.

**July 29, 2014** **District 11**

I observed quality, data driven instruction with students receiving instruction based on there individual needs. Teachers were dynamic and skilled in the delivery of the lessons observed. Classrooms were organized and well managed. Teachers provided instruction on a two-week schedule (3 teachers x 2 weeks). Students were eager to come to camp. The school served a high percentage of ESOL students. The teachers served a diverse group of learners and delivered explicit and direct instruction in order to improve learning. Daily schedule was individual conferencing/instruction, guided/individual reading, whole group writing, writing conferences and research. District was well organized and had a camp director.

Suggestions:

- Add professional development component to camp for other teachers to observe and debrief.
- Students' attendance was an issue. Utilize incentives and parent contact to increase attendance.

**June 11, 2014** **District 12**

Literacy based, thematic approach to curriculum was implemented for the 6-week summer reading camps. The units of study incorporated science and social studies standards from the grade above as a means of front-loading content for the first 9 weeks of the upcoming school year. An abundance of fiction and nonfiction texts as well as leveled text for use during small group instruction was provided. Dominie was used to monitor student reading progress over the program.

Teachers were hand selected by the district based on effectiveness in reading instruction during the school year. In some classes a teacher taught for three weeks and then a second teacher taught for three weeks. This strategy was used in order to retain the best teachers in reading. Master teachers who currently serve as reading coaches for their school taught two classes. These teachers wanted to "practice" their teaching skills with students so as to be better teachers of teachers.

The district used the summer camp to provide a three-day reading seminar for district K-3 teachers. Topics included quality reading instruction, assessment for reading, evaluation of reading assessment data, and the purposeful use of data in assigning interventions. After completing the reading seminar, participants were being asked to observe classrooms at the summer reading camps. Participants were asked to note connections between seminar and classroom practice as well as facilitate small group reading instruction under the guidance of a master teacher.

All staff was involved in the reading classes. An example is bus drivers were assigned to classes and assisted the teacher by reading with students.

Suggestions:

- Find ways to have access to classroom libraries for all sites.

**June 25, 2014** **District 13**

District was taking the summer reading camps seriously. Students from across the district were invited to one of six sites. Camp sites were limited due to transportation. District provided a coordinator for the program and each site had a supervisor. The district using knowledge of effectiveness of teachers in the regular school year selected teachers. Teachers were provided professional development time prior to the camp to develop units. Various levels of teacher effectiveness were seen in the classrooms.

Teachers used a more traditional approach to reading using balanced literacy as their structure. District did not use SC Department of Education's unit on western movement but created their own thematic units on the American Revolution. It fit nicely with July 4$^{th}$. By using this theme,

the district front loaded content the students would be see in 4th grade so they would be familiar with the concepts and vocabulary. Classes incorporated the Writers Workshop in the writing component. District used Dominie as its progress monitor.

The media centers and computer labs were available for students in the camp. The district reported attendance was an issue.

Suggestions:

- Strengthen program by partnering with businesses/community to enhance resources and support for camp

**July 30, 2014** **District 14**

During the site visit, it was observed that the teachers were well organized, skilled and prepared to deliver quality instruction. Each teacher was considered highly qualified and had shown growth with struggling readers. The teachers served a diverse group of learners and delivered explicit and direct instruction in order to improve learning. Through the use of a skill based program, student's individual needs appeared to be addressed. Weekly reports are provided to parents with updates on individual student progress. Students had daily conferences with teachers. Use of technology was evident and appropriate. The camp offered to rising 3rd through 5th graders. Combined finances from Title 1, 21st Century Grant and state reading funds. Grants were written to local sources for field trips.

Suggestions:

- Camp was 7 ½ weeks. Shorten camp to be able to recruit teachers and increase student attendance.
- Standardize progress monitoring throughout camp.
- Feeding sites limited school choices for camps.

**July 28, 2014** **District 15**

Reading camps were offered to all ESOL students and rising fourth graders. The district identified teachers. Teacher effectiveness was not evident.

No student data was provided. Teachers used May scores from STAR as starting point for growth. The district was planning on posttest using STAR in the beginning of school.
No skill information was identified for students and teachers were left to identify these needs on their own. Teachers were from other schools and didn't have all the materials as other teachers from the campsite.

Suggestions:

- Overall, teachers needed additional training in implementing a focused reading class.
- The selection of teachers needs modification.
- The structure of the program needs attention by district.

**August 4, 2014 District 16**

The camp consisted of single class of 11 students with one teacher and one assistant. Teacher appeared to be highly effective. Classroom was organized with leveled texts, teacher was using materials appropriately and students were engaged. It appeared that the students were receiving good instruction on phonics, vocabulary and comprehension.

Teacher reported no access to progress monitoring instrument for the program. She was to use STAR but it was not available online. She was familiar with Dominie but did not have access to the kit.

Daily schedule was individual conferencing/instruction, guided/individual reading, whole group writing, writing conferences and research. Concerns expressed were related to other groups of students in the building who were in activity-oriented classes. Reading camp students felt they were being punished. Daily attendance of students was a challenge Teacher felt the research component being too advanced for her level of students. Too much structure without time for arts, physical activity, etc. was a challenge but we made the schedule more flexible. The teacher felt the students seemed to enter the program with low concepts about reading, but during the last week, it was evident that the program improved their concepts about reading as well as improve their self-concepts. They seemed to be willing to share what was learned regarding strategies.

Suggestions:

- Move site away from other summer school activities so students will not feel intimidated.
- Ensure progress monitoring instrument is available to teachers.

**June 23, 2014 District 17**

Camp was composed of 24 third grade students. School also housed summer school for 1$^{st}$, 2$^{nd}$, 3$^{rd}$, 4$^{th}$ and 5$^{th}$ grades for a total of 102 students. Only 10 students were identified as summer camp students. The camp was using Logics of English, however, professional development to implement the program was not noted. The camp was focused on phonics. Students had access to books from the summer book fair and the library reading program.

Students had access to computers and used I-Station as an intervention. District used STAR as its progress-monitoring instrument. The district based on certification and effective teaching in reading selected teachers. The program could have been better organized. Delays in student instruction were evident by poor management. Students were in the lab but could not log on, students entered the classroom with no directions, and lots of down time evident.

Suggestions:

- Prior planning for the camp would provide for a better teaching and learning environment.
- Standardize the progress monitoring process.

**July 22, 2014 District 18**

The district selected the teachers based on prior effectiveness with reading. District provided a summer reading camp contact on site. Teacher effectiveness was not consistent. However, the coordinator for the reading camp was very enthusiastic and the program was well managed. The district provided one site for the camp and had six second grade classes and five third grade classes serving a total of 127 students. District noted that attendance had been an issue. District used American Book Company's 100 Book Challenge to motivate students to read. District had a parent night prior to the start of the camp to provide an orientation to parents regarding the camp and the importance of getting their children to attend. District used reading logs to document student reading at home and provided incentives for students.

Suggestions:

- Consider strategies to recruit effective teachers of reading.

**July 21, 2014 District 19**

The district sponsored a large summer program offered summer. The summer reading camp was an addition to the Summer Learning Academy for third, fourth and fifth graders. The students enrolled in the summer reading camp participated in some of the activities of the Summer Learning Academy and were pulled in small groups for the reading portion of the instruction.

Fifty-seven students were enrolled in the summer reading camp at in five classes at two sites. About half the students invited to the reading camp actually participated. Instruction was based on the needs of the students including leveled literacy instruction, guided reading, and small group instruction - integrated science/social studies. Both the media center and the computer lab were available to the students. The district used the American Book Company's 100 Book Challenge to motivate and increase interest in student's reading. The district used Fountas and

Pinnell's leveled literacy instruction as their intervention and DRA as its progress-monitoring instrument.

Suggestions:

- Focus instruction for summer reading camp students on reading.

**July 15, 2014** **District 20**

The camp was very well organized and staffed. I was impressed with the level of attention to all aspects of the program. Three sites were used throughout the district with a total of ten classes serving 75 students. The teachers were selected based on past experiences with struggling readers, and their certification. Instructional materials used included Stephanie Harvey's Comprehension Toolkits Grs. 3-6, Fountas and Pinnell's Leveled Literacy Intervention; Learning A-Z.com Online leveled text and Books, resources from media center. The district used Fountas and Pinnell as its progress monitor instrument. MAP was also used to show growth. A strength of this camp was the partnerships with the community including Parent Workshops, Speaking with Students-Provided materials/literature; District Student Nutrition Services, DHEC, Verizon Wireless, BI-LO, Panera Bread, DSS, Wal-Mart Vision Center, Family Dental Cent4r, Richland County Public Library, Dr. Bradee, DDE.

Suggestions:

- Consider using the camp as a time to provide professional development to other teachers in the district.

# Changes in 11th Grade State Testing

*Information for Students and Parents*

This school year marks the beginning of important changes in state testing for all 11th graders in South Carolina. For the first time, the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) will no longer be given. Instead, students in 11th grade will take two assessments -- a college and career readiness assessment (that has not been selected) and WorkKeys®, which measures essential workforce skills.

## What are the benefits of taking a workforce skills assessment like WorkKeys®?

There are many benefits!

- Successful completion of WorkKeys® can earn an 11th grader a National Career Readiness Certificate, which will help with finding summer and part-time jobs as well as internships. In South Carolina alone, over 1,500 employers recognize the certificate.
- National companies and industries also use WorkKeys® certificates in hiring. South Carolina will document the skill levels of our state's workforce and in turn, recruit more jobs that will be available to all students, including those graduating from a two or four-year college.
- A financial or personal crisis can occur and delay college plans. Having a WorkKeys® certificate can immediately open doors for jobs.

## But, my child has never taken career and technical education courses. Will he or she be prepared for WorkKeys®?

The WorkKeys® assessment measures "real world" skills that employers believe are critical to job success. Test questions are based on situations in the everyday work world. There are three parts of the assessment:

1. **Applied Mathematics** – Applying mathematical reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving to work-related problems from making change to plotting a patient's temperature readings
2. **Reading for Information** – Reading and using written texts like letters, directions, signs, notices, policies and regulations in a job
3. **Locating Information** – Using graphics like charts, graphs and tables to find information

11th graders should be prepared for the test no matter which courses were taken in high school. Students who need assistance should have the opportunity to utilize Career Ready 101, a preparatory course, this Fall.

## What does a WorkKeys®score mean?

On each of the three assessments (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information and Locating Information), a student receives a score of Level 3 through Level 7, with Level 7 being the highest possible score. Depending upon the **minimum** score received on all three assessments, the student may earn one of four National Career Readiness Certificates -- Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze.

| Lowest Minimum Score on All Three Assessments: | Qualifies for the Following National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) | % of NCRC Qualifiers by Certificate in U.S. (2006-2011) | Qualifier Has Skills for the Following % of Jobs in U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Bronze | 21% | 30% |
| 4 | Silver | 49% | 65% |
| 5 | Gold | 19% | 90% |
| 6 | Platinum | 1% | 99% |

Source: The Condition of Work Readiness in the United States. 2013.
<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ConditionWorkReadiness.pdf>.

**Level 3 WorkKeys® Applied Mathematics Sample Item**

In your job as a cashier, a customer gives you a $20 bill to pay for a can of coffee that costs $3.84. How much change should you give back?

1. $15.26
2. $16.16
3. $16.26
4. $16.84
5. $17.16

## My child does not plan on going to college so why should he/she really even try on the college readiness test?

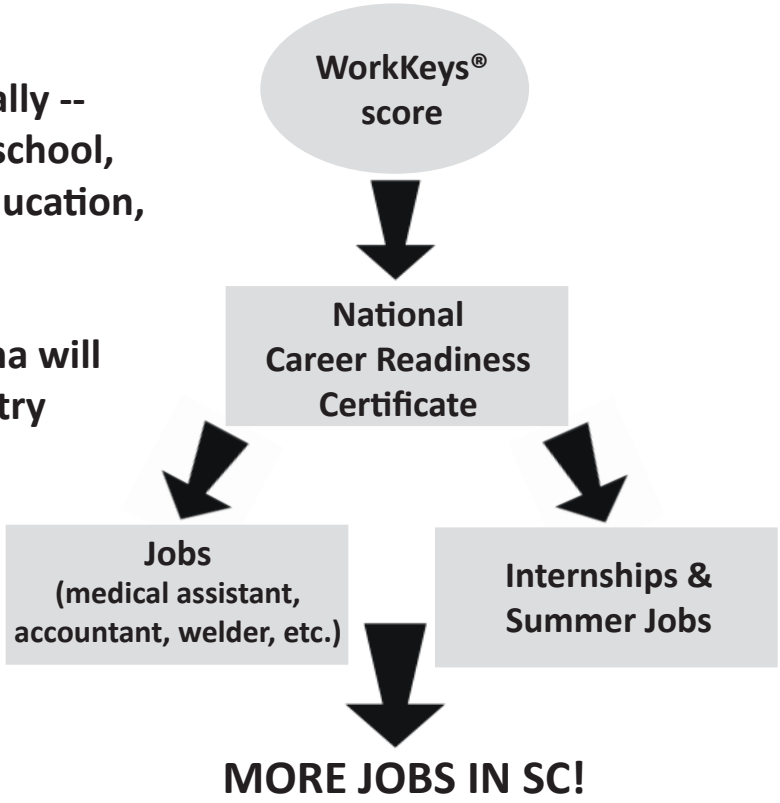
- A student needs to do his or her best on the college readiness assessment because the results may provide more choices for the future. A student may discover that he or she has the skills and knowledge to pursue an associate's or four-year degree. Just having the information will help plan for the future.
- Once a person starts working, they may decide that they want or need an associate's degree or industry credential to move up. All 11th graders will already have a college readiness score to help when applying for college.

## How will the results of these assessments be used?

The results will help 11th graders plan for the senior year and beyond. Consider the following:

- Do the scores show that the student is college and career ready?
- Are there courses that the student needs to take next year to improve his/her chances of going to college or entering a career?
- Are there dual enrollment options that the student could pursue to start earning college credits next year?
- Are there internships or jobs available where the student can use the WorkKeys® certificate to gain job experience?

**All students enter the workforce eventually -- whether they get a job right out of high school, work part-time while continuing their education, or go to college first.**

**By 2018, 56% of the jobs in South Carolina will require a postsecondary degree or industry credentials.**

**More information will be coming to schools and counselors prior to the administration of WorkKeys® in Spring 2015.**