

INCREASING ACHIEVEMENT & CLOSING THE GAP

3 Things that Work in Minnesota Education

Testimony for the
Minnesota House Education Finance Committee
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Fred Nolan
MREA Executive Director



WHAT WORKS : READING RESEARCH

Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites

Elementary Focus—Grades E-3



Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) is a comprehensive approach to early literacy. This three-year project developed in 2011 by the Minnesota Center for Reading Research in partnership with Minneapolis Schools, Minnesota Reading Corps, and the Target Corporation. PRESS builds on the foundations of Reading First and further expanded to highlight other important areas, including working with English language learners, target reading interventions, and include technological solutions.

**Reading First was a federally-funded professional development program facilitated by the MCRR and the MDE with over 50 Minnesota schools (including Foley Elementary) participating in two rounds from 2004 to 2008.*

How does it work?

The Minnesota Center for Reading Research (MCRR) conducts applied research on reading and teaching approaches that facilitate reading instruction. The Center focuses on research that supports teachers, particularly those who teach students of poverty and students from diverse backgrounds. The Center addresses problems and issues in reading that require creative and powerful research efforts. It is a part of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota.

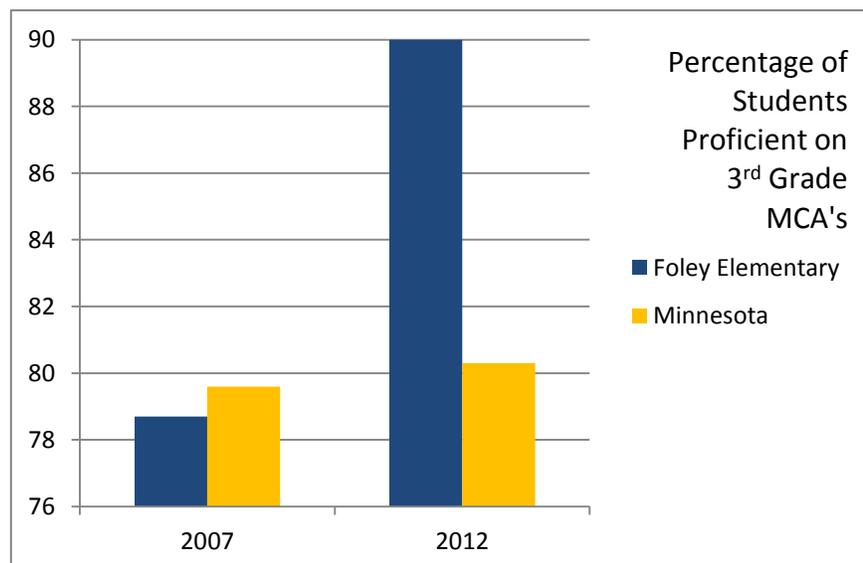
Focus Areas

MCRR provides review and consultation for reading instruction and results at districts, and works with school faculty and leadership to achieve success in:

- Quality Core Instruction
- Tiered interventions
- Leadership
- Professional development with literacy coaching in the classroom

What proves it works?

88% of third graders at Foley Elementary were proficient in both 2009 and 2011 and Foley Elementary exceeded the statewide average since 2008.



What are the results?

The six PRESS schools served an average of 486 students in the first year of the project with 16% of whom were white and 77% of whom were eligible for the federal free or reduced price lunch program.

On average, 62% of third-graders in the six schools scored in the proficient range on the state-mandated accountability test for reading during the first year of the project. This is significantly higher than the 47% that scored proficient in six control schools.

There is also data on pre and post-tests to suggest that the gap between the struggling readers and proficient readers had decreased with the PRESS model.

Nearly one in four 3rd graders in Minnesota is failing to reach basic levels of literacy (that's 15,000 children each year).

Research shows that if students don't read proficiently by 3rd grade, odds are they will not catch up. The primary goal of PRESS is to eliminate this literacy gap among kids so that all students are reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

The six PRESS schools gained **30% more in reading proficiency** than six control schools.

How does this impact a student?

One of the PRESS literacy coaches followed a specific first grader's growth from fall 2011 to spring 2012. When he entered PRESS, the student was unable to identify most of the letters of the alphabet and was a year behind his peers on reading benchmarks.

After working with his teacher who differentiated his literacy lessons, the student:

- Read at grade level passage by mid-year
- Read 70 per minutes in January
- Made significant improvement by May by correctly reading 90 words per minute

Not only had his confidence soared, but he became what the PRESS project strives to create – a proficient reader.

Learn More

www.cehd.umn.edu/reading/PRESS

Matthew K. Burns
Co-Director, Center for Reading Research
burns258@umn.edu

Lori Helman
Co-Director, Center for Reading Research
lhelman@umn.edu

Fred Nolan
Executive Director, MREA
fred@e-f-services.com

Maria Erlandson,
Principal, Foley Elementary School
merlandson@foley.k12.mn.us

WHAT WORKS: INTELLECTUAL WORK

Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW)

Secondary Focus—Grades 4-12



Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

Authentic Intellectual Work provides the framework, format and culture to improve the quality of teaching. This approach focuses on assisting a school and school district to help students:

- Develop higher order thinking
- Demonstrate complex understanding of significant disciplinary concepts
- Engage in work that has meaning and value beyond school

AIW equips students to address the complex challenges of work, civic participation, and managing personal affairs in the contemporary world through reflective professional development.

How does it work?

AIW is best done collectively, is organic, is authentic, and requires risk taking. Schools:

- Form cross-disciplinary learning teams focused on the successful implementation of AIW,
- Develop a common vision of quality instruction that is supported by research and aimed at improving student achievement,
- Become individually and collectively more reflective in applying AIW to everyday classroom practices, and
- Teachers and administrators create a leadership team focused on transforming their school and their students' learning and experiences through a deep understanding of the AIW framework.

What proves it works?

Ogilvie High School in 2010 was labeled by MDE as one of "Minnesota's Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools."

From 2010-2013, Ogilvie High school was the only School Improvement School (SIG) to use AIW as its instructional intervention.

By 2012, Ogilvie High School rated as follows on the Minnesota Multiple Measures Ranking (MMR),:

- MMR Rank of 70.32, which was better than 332 Minnesota High Schools
- Focused Rating(FR) of 90.02

In 2012, Ogilvie H ranked No. 1 in MMR and FR scores among the 2010 MDE Designated SIG High Schools and more than double the other SIG High Schools average.

WHAT WORKS: INTELLECTUAL WORK

Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW)

Secondary Focus—Grades 4-12



Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

AIW Schools' Students Outperform Non-AIW Schools in 11 of 12 comparisons

8 Comparisons are statistically significant <.05

Grade	4	8	11
Reading	9.2*	5.5*	2.9
Math	11.4*	8.1*	11.2*
Science	4.8	6.5*	6.7*
Grade	5	8	11
Social Studies	4.4	-.06	11.9*

*indicates increases at <.05 probability

An Initial Evaluation of the Iowa DE Project to Enhance Students' Authentic Intellectual Work (2012, pp. 15-24)

How does it impact a teacher?

A teacher of 41 years attended his first AIW scoring session. At the end of the professional development day, the teacher asked the principal if he could address the staff. Reluctantly, the principal turned the floor over to the teacher. Standing before his peers, he stated:

“This morning a group of colleagues scored a lesson I have struggled with for years. We discussed my intent, what I expected of students, and what hasn't worked in the past. My peers helped me revise the lesson. For the first time in 41 years, professional development has changed how I am going to teach today.”

(*The AIW Journey*, 2013, p. 10)

“Each AIW experience has left me with thought-provoking questions, a **clearer sense of my instruction**, and the motivation to become a **more deliberate teacher**.”

Sarah Brown Wessling, 2010 National Teacher of the Year Award Recipient.

The Iowa Department of Education conducted a matched sample study of the effectiveness of AIW with 33 schools and nearly 8,000 students.

This chart shows the percentile advantage on the Iowa required tests for students at the 50% percentile in AIW schools whose teachers had been participating in AIW Learning Teams for at least one year as compared to a matched sample of schools which were not doing AIW

Learn More About the MREA-AIW HS Reform Project in Northern Minnesota

Dana L. Carmichael, Co-Director of the Center for AIW

dana@centerforaiw.com Centerforaiw.com

Fred Nolan, Executive Director, MREA

fred@e-f-services.com Mnrea.org/partners/aiw

Jake Nelson, Principal, Ogilvie High School

inelson@ogilvie.k12.mn.us Ogilvie.k12.mn.us

WHAT WORKS: Develop Collaboration

Solve “Finding Time for Teacher PD” Problem

K-12 Focus



Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

The first and most persistent question teachers have for any effective, collaborative strategy for improving student achievement is, **“Where will we find the time to work together?”**

“Schools with teachers working in isolation, no matter how good, are less effective than schools with teachers working together in teams,”

(Odden, A.R., 10 Strategies for Doubling Student Performance, 2009, p. 100).

How does it work?

There is an answer that many schools are using in Iowa: “Schedule early outs (or late starts) weekly or every other week. When using early outs or late starts, you may decide to make adjustment to the schedule by increasing instructional time to the other days of the week. Do not shorten instructional time experienced by the students. Be sure to inform the public about how time is used, the rationale for changing the schedule including the benefits to students.” (Iowa Professional Development Model, Iowa Dept. of Ed.)

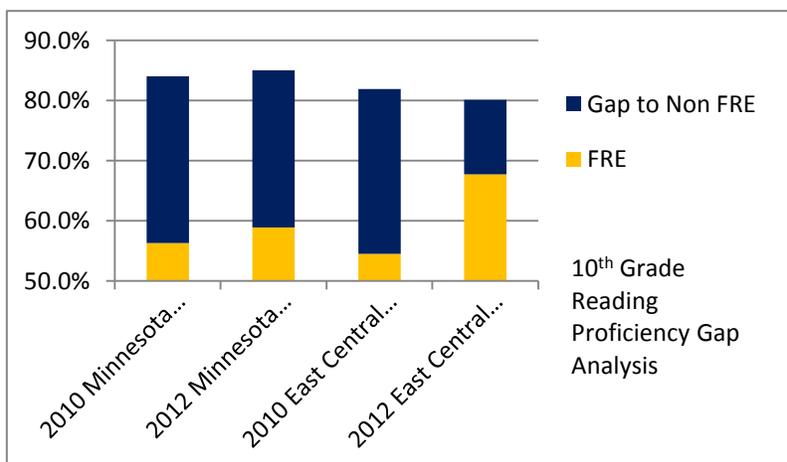
In Minnesota, East Central Public Schools modified their student schedule to gain 90 minutes a week of collaborative, teacher PD time when they entered the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, M, T, Th, Fri, students are in school until 3:31 and on Wednesdays they go home at 2:00. Instructional minutes actually increased in East Central’s model.

In Iowa, a popular variation is for teachers to work collaboratively two hours for three weeks in a month and go home with the kids one week a month to get personal and family appointments done. Teacher total contracted time and salary compensation and costs remain constant.

What proves it is working?

East Central High School Cuts Achievement Gap in Half

From 27.4% to 12.4%



How'd they do it?

East Central High School employed the following collaborative teacher professional development strategies during the weekly 90 minute blocks:

- Learn from student work with the Tuning Protocol from the National School Reform Faculty
- Collaborate with colleagues to identify teaching and learning needs
- Create individual and group professional development plans
- Look closely at classroom data

How did it affect a student, family or teacher?

Stephanie Youngberg, Principal of East Central recently shared:

“I had a second year teacher stop me in the hall concerned that 35 percent of his kids failed a test. He was then able to bring that data to his PLC and together the team was able to identify, specifically, what the learning needs were and he was able to work with his team to figure out how best to get those needs met so that his students were all able to be successful.”

Tina Wahlert, school improvement professional development consultant with Green Hills Area Education Agency, Iowa, shared:

“I am struggling with a story of a teacher or student affected. I think because as long as I have been in education in Iowa, PD has been part of the teaching day. It has never been an option for us.”

Learn More

Rita Martins, Lead Consultant, Iowa Department of Education, Learning and Results
Rita.Martens@iowa.gov

Stephanie Youngberg, Principal, East Central High School
syoungberg@eastcentral.k12.mn.us Eastcentral.k12.mn.us

Fred Nolan, Executive Director, MREA
fred@e-f-services.com Mnrea.org