

District Achieves 10-Year Sustained Success with Elementary and Middle School Reading Program *85.6% of Students Achieve “Proficient Reader” Status*

Source: Dr. Ted Kaniuka, Associate Superintendent, Craven County School District
Research conducted from 1993–2002, report submitted in 2002.

Introduction

Craven County School District has been implementing the Reading Renaissance® reading improvement process as part of the elementary and middle school reading programs for the past 10 years. During this time, the number of students districtwide scoring at or above grade-level in reading on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Test has increased by 19.8%. Currently, 85.6% of all students in the district have reached proficiency in reading.

Study Description

All 19 elementary and middle schools in the Craven County School District use Accelerated Reader® reading management software and implement Reading Renaissance as part of their balanced literacy program, which focuses instruction on phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension. Reading Renaissance is employed to improve vocabulary, increase prior knowledge through wide reading, and facilitate accountable reading practice time.

Craven County has sustained a dynamic Reading Renaissance program for 10 years. Most teachers in the district have attended at least one day of Reading Renaissance training, many have attended the two-day training, and others have deepened their understanding of Renaissance by attending various sessions at the annual National Renaissance Conference.

Many educators districtwide certify their proper implementation of Reading Renaissance every year through the Renaissance Certification program¹. In fact, by the end of the 2001–2002 school year, there were 207 Model Classrooms in

Reading, 7 Model Libraries, 3 Model Schools in Reading, 23 Master Classrooms in Reading, and 1 Master School within the district.

Results

North Carolina End-of-Grade Test data from 1993 through 2002 illustrates the substantial growth made in Craven County each year. The table on the reverse side shows the percentage of students reaching proficiency (scoring “at or above” grade level) has increased significantly over the past 10 years districtwide. For instance, in 1993 the total percentage of students who reached proficiency in reading was 65.8%. By 2001, 83.6% of all students had reached proficiency. This 17.8 point increase is 4.3 points higher than the growth achieved by the state during the same period.

By 2002, the percentage of students in the district reaching proficiency rose 19.8 points to 85.6%. At the time this report went to press 2002 statewide scores were not available. It is likely, however, that the statewide scores will fall below Craven County district scores, as they have for the past nine years.

Conclusion

The Craven County School District has established a balanced literacy program, which includes Reading Renaissance. This program has led to sustained growth in districtwide reading achievement. This growth indicates that each year the district grows closer to ensuring that every student in the district is a successful reader.

(continued on reverse side)

School Profile

**Craven County
School District**
Craven County, N.C.

Students: 14,896, Grades:
pre-K–12
Number of Schools: 22
Elementary Schools 14
Middle Schools 5
High Schools 3
Demographics:
Rural
Free or Reduced Lunch: 46%
Race/Ethnicity:
Black or African
American: 36%
White: 60%
Hispanic: 1%
Other: 1%

Educator Background

Ted Kaniuka, Ph.D., is Associate Superintendent for Instructional and Educational Services in Craven County. He has also held positions of assistant superintendent, executive director, principal, assistant principal, and classroom teacher. Kaniuka received his doctorate in Educational Leadership from East Carolina University, and his Masters in Elementary Education from C.W. Post College in New York.

Kaniuka has coordinated the district's use of Reading Renaissance for four years. He attributes the positive attitudes of students and teachers toward the program to the success it creates in students. The use of accountable reading practice, the differentiation of instruction, and the useful achievement information have supported a balanced reading program in Craven County.

Craven County School District, New Bern, North Carolina
Percentage of Students Scoring “At or Above” Grade Level in Reading
on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Test, Grades 3–8

Grade	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total Change
3rd	65.6	65.1	70.1	72.7	75.0	79.5	78.6	80.9	85.2	89.4	23.8
4th	63.2	70.1	71.3	77.2	77.9	79.1	79.1	78.5	82.3	83.6	20.4
5th	66.7	68.4	71.7	74.6	82.7	83.6	79.4	83.3	88.9	92.6	25.9
6th	64.2	67.8	60.8	73.0	74.1	77.8	79.0	74.3	73.9	77.4	13.2
7th	64.7	63.2	69.0	68.2	72.1	78.6	82.3	78.3	82.3	81.4	16.7
8th	70.7	71.9	73.5	79.6	77.7	84.8	84.1	86.5	89.1	90.3	19.6
District	65.8	67.7	69.3	74.1	76.6	80.5	80.4	80.3	83.6	85.6	19.8
State	63.3	65.1	67.0	67.9	68.8	72.8	74.8	75.3	76.8	NA ²	13.5

¹ The Renaissance Certification program provides professional recognition and support to educators who have met clear, objective Renaissance implementation standards. There are two levels of certification for educators to achieve: Model Certification, which confirms best practices are implemented correctly and students are receiving the correct amount of quality reading or math practice; and Master Certification, which challenges educators to excel further with Renaissance practices. The criteria are higher.

² The statewide scores were not available at the time the report went to press.

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