



Jim Sparks  
Principal

Leyna Steffen  
Assistant Principal

Dear Mr. Taylor,

As per your request, the following is recap of my experience using Reading Plus and its effectiveness on student growth. I have used Reading Plus at two schools. The first school was a Title I middle school with a 74% free and reduced lunch population. The second is a large elementary school with a population of 32% free and reduced lunch. Both schools have made gains in reading proficiency (GLP) and career and college readiness (CCR). Additionally, both schools have achieved high student growth.

The first school, South Davidson Middle School, is a Title I school of approximately 330 students. The school had historically had a school-wide proficiency rating of approximately 30% and had not met growth for two years in a row, in reading. After assuming the leadership of this school, the first thing I did was assess the EVAAS performance of my reading teachers. We had two sixth grade teachers that were significantly in the red, -6.0+. One teacher was retiring at the end of the year and the other was retiring in two years. Conducting teacher professional development did not seem like the answer. These teachers needed assistance of some kind, immediately. I did extensive research on computer assisted instruction and determined that Reading Plus may be the answer. After meeting with Mr. Taylor, he was generous enough to provide a pilot program for my school.

We implemented the pilot program, starting in November. One reading class per week was required to focus solely on the use of Reading Plus. Also, during our intervention time every student did Reading Plus at least one time a week, for 30 minutes. The teachers at all three grade levels implemented this program with fidelity. South went from 28% proficient to 60% proficient in reading. Our school exceeded growth the first year, +6.2. The two 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading teachers exceeded growth. The next year the school exceeded growth again. The school was designated a Signature School, by PTEC, for exceeding growth two or more years in a row. The year after I left this school, they continued to use Reading Plus as an integral part of reading instruction. They exceeded growth in reading again last year.

Last year, I assumed the leadership of the largest elementary in Davidson County. This school a high performing school always in the top 3 of elementary schools in our county. In 2015 the GLP was 65.7% in reading. Although this was a respectable performance number, there was room for growth. Again, Mr. Taylor set up a pilot program with our school. Again, we started in November. We implement the same program as South Davidson Middle School, one class period and one IME period a week. Last year we raised our proficiency to 73.4%, a growth of 9%. Last year we met growth. However, 8 out 10 third through fifth grade reading teachers had more growth than the previous year. We continue to implement the program this year and our initial benchmarks show that our rising 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have maintained their previous gains and should outperform last year.



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If you would like to discuss our program or our performance, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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