

Aspira South Youth Leadership Charter School

MIAMI-DADE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Miami, Florida

SCHOOL PROFILE

180 STUDENTS, GRADES 6-8
94% Free/Reduced Lunch
14% African-American
0% American Indian
0% Asian
79% Hispanic
6% White

PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ IMPLEMENTATION

- After-School Model
- Grades 6-8, May 2005
- Reading Focus
- Supplemental Education Service

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Achieve Now Progress Test

RESEARCH TIME FRAME

2004-2005 School Year

SES PARTICIPANT STUDENTS MAKE GAINS IN READING SKILL AREAS

STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROGRAM AT ASPIRA SOUTH CHARTER SCHOOL MADE GAINS IN SOME READING SKILL AREAS. STUDENTS MADE A 13.43 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE POINT GAIN IN VOCABULARY COMPREHENSION AND AN 8.80 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE POINT GAIN IN READING COMPREHENSION; BOTH GAINS WERE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT. STUDENTS MADE A 0.99 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE POINT DECLINE IN PHONICS, DECODING AND WORD ANALYSIS. WHEN THE SAMPLE SIZE WAS LIMITED TO STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED 80% OR MORE OF PROGRAM ATTENDANCE, THESE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT AVERAGE PERCENTAGE POINT GAINS OF 14.42 IN VOCABULARY COMPREHENSION AND 10.37 IN READING COMPREHENSION. THESE STUDENTS SAW A 3.69 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE POINT DECLINE IN PHONICS, DECODING AND WORD ANALYSIS; THE DECLINE WAS NOT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT.

IN TERMS OF AVERAGE PERCENTAGE CHANGE, THE ENTIRE GROUP OF STUDENTS WITH PRE- AND POST-TEST RESULTS MADE A 0.26% INCREASE IN PHONICS, DECODING AND WORD ANALYSIS PROFICIENCY SCORES, A 25.83% INCREASE IN THEIR VOCABULARY COMPREHENSION PROFICIENCY SCORES AND A 44.19% INCREASE IN THEIR READING COMPREHENSION PROFICIENCY SCORES. WHEN THE SAMPLE SIZE WAS LIMITED TO STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED THE PROGRAM FOR A MINIMUM OF 24 HOURS (80% ATTENDANCE RATE), THE AVERAGE PERCENTAGE CHANGE AMONG THESE STUDENTS WAS A 5.53% DECREASE IN THEIR PHONICS, DECODING AND WORD ANALYSIS PROFICIENCY SCORES, A 27.46% INCREASE IN THEIR VOCABULARY COMPREHENSION PROFICIENCY SCORES AND A 48.87% INCREASE IN THEIR READING COMPREHENSION PROFICIENCY SCORES.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS AT ASPIRA SOUTH CHARTER SCHOOL WERE IN GRADES SIX THROUGH EIGHT. THEY WERE ASSESSED USING PLATO ACHIEVE NOW PROGRESS TEST. TEST RESULTS ARE REPORTED BY TEST LEVEL RATHER THAN BY GRADE LEVEL.

SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Standards: Aspira South Youth Leadership Charter School offered Supplemental Education Services because of their School Improvement status as designated by the Florida Department of Education. This school offered parents and students the choice of participating in an after-school program provided by a vendor outside of the school system. These parents and students chose The PLATO Achieve Now skill-and-content model.

Curriculum and Instruction: PLATO Achieve Now’s interactive curriculum was integrated into the instruction for students in grades 6 through 8 during the 4 week after-school program. The model included consultant staff working with tutoring program staff to identify individual learning needs and to develop a Student Tutorial Plan that addressed the achievement needs of each student. The Student Tutorial Plan, designed to address skill gaps and learning needs included: assessments to monitor progress; learning activities that were engaging and supported student progress over time; and instruction in both small groups and individually. Students attended four days a week for two hours each day. Individual student progress was continually assessed in order for tutors to tailor both the instructional strategies and curriculum to meet the needs of each student.

Assessment/Evaluation: Various assessments were used to monitor student progress throughout the four week period. These included the Achieve Now Progress Tests, Achieve Now Progress Checks, and observations. A comparison of the individual students’ Achieve Now Pretest and Post Test scores is included in this evaluation.

Professional Development: An Education Consultant and Program Manager were assigned to this program to monitor progress of students and assist tutors as needed. Professional development sessions were customized to

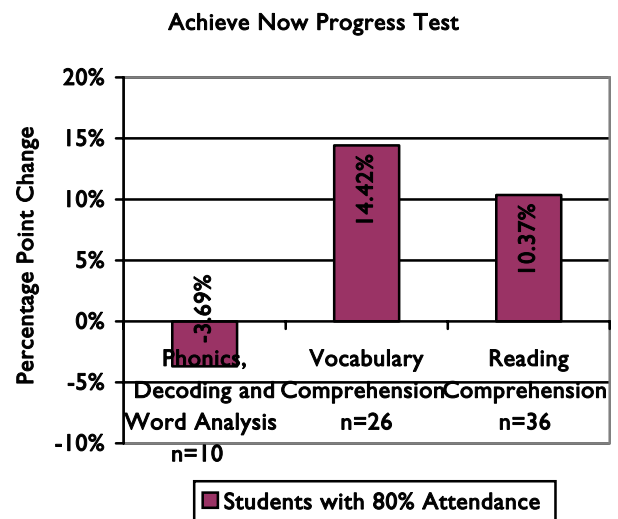
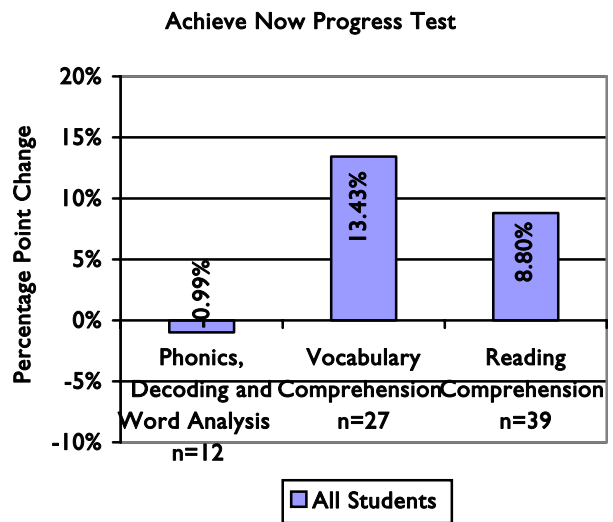
meet the needs of both tutors and students. These sessions included how to integrate Achieve Now in the after-school program, curriculum alignment, modeling and other best practices. Consultants also assisted with creating individualized student tutorial plans, tutoring, lesson planning and family communication.

Parental Involvement: Parents were invited to attend a family workshop at the beginning and end of the program. Parent Reports, which included student progress information, were sent home on a weekly basis and at the end of the program.

Students made gains in Vocabulary Comprehension and Reading Comprehension

Students at Aspira South Charter School made a statistically significant 13.43 ($p=0.001$) average percentage point gain in Vocabulary Comprehension and a statistically significant 8.80 ($p=0.037$) average percentage point gain in Reading Comprehension. Students saw a 0.99 ($p=.863$) average percentage point decline in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis; the decline was not statistically significant. The average attendance rate was 28.08 hours for those students with pre- and post-test results in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis. The average attendance rate was 28.96 hours for those students with pre- and post-test results in Vocabulary Comprehension, while the average attendance rate was 28.69 hours for those students with pre- and post-test results in Reading Comprehension.

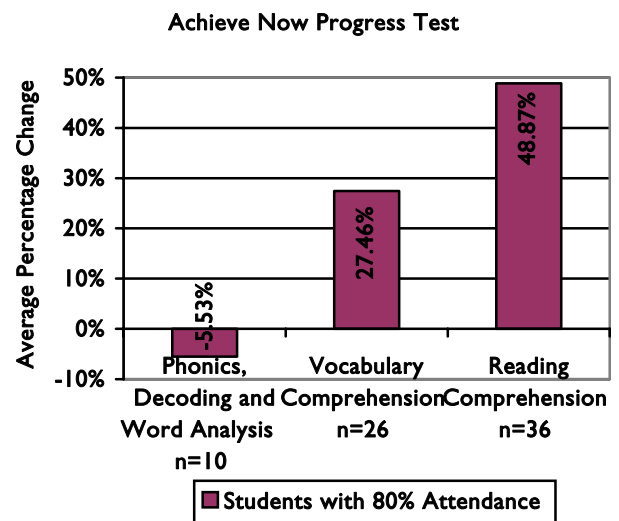
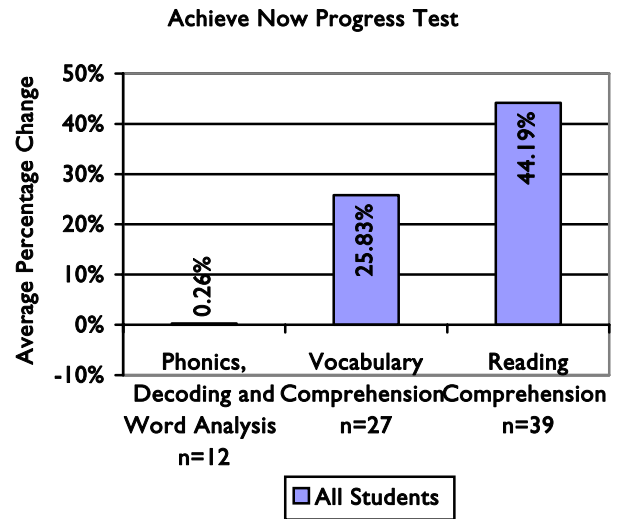
When the sample size was limited to students who attended the program for a minimum of 24 hours (80%) these students demonstrated statistically significant average percentage point gains of 14.42 ($p=.001$) in Vocabulary Comprehension and 10.37 ($p=.021$) in Reading Comprehension. The average attendance was 29.77 hours for students with pre- and post-test results in Vocabulary Comprehension, while the average attendance was 29.83 hours for students with pre- and post-test results in Reading Comprehension. Students showed a 3.69 ($p=.454$) average percentage point decline in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis after an average attendance of 30.00 hours.



Students increase average percentage change in Vocabulary Comprehension, Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis and Reading Comprehension

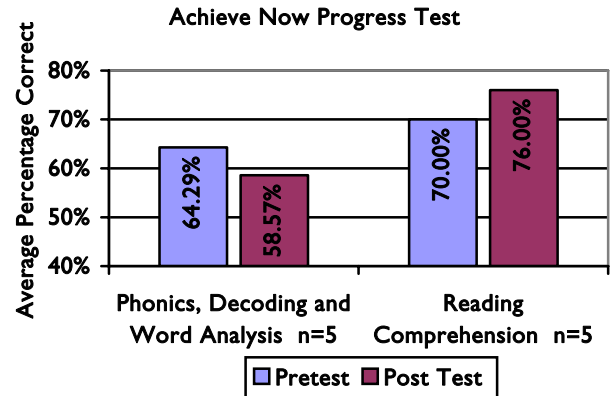
Students participating in the SES Program at Aspira South Charter School made overall percentage increases in Phonics Decoding and Word Analysis, Vocabulary Comprehension, and Reading Comprehension. In terms of average percentage change, the entire group of students with pre- and post-test results made a 0.26% in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis proficiency scores, a 25.83% increase in their Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and a 44.19% increase in their Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.

When the sample size was limited to students who attended the program for a minimum of 24 hours (80%), these students made a 5.53% decrease in their Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis proficiency scores, a 27.46% increase in their Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and a 48.87% increase in their Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.



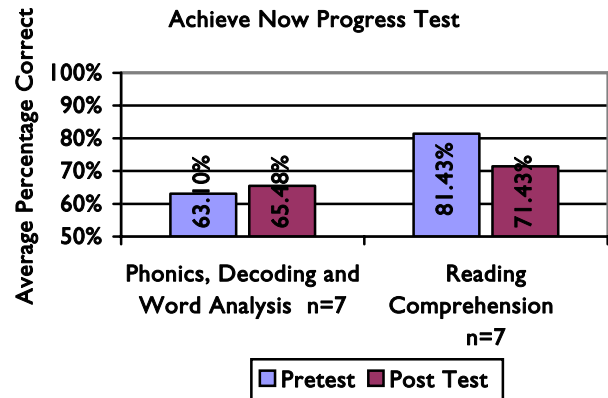
Students taking the Grade Two test make gains in Reading Comprehension

An analysis of individual grade-level test scores of students participating in the SES program at Aspira South Charter school revealed that students taking the grade two PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test made an average percentage point decline of 5.72 ($p=0.374$) in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis dropping from an average mean score of 64.29% on the pretest to an average mean score of 58.57% at post test. Students taking the grade two PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test made an average percentage point increase of 6.00 ($p=.468$) in Reading Comprehension moving from an average mean score of 70.00% on the pretest to an average mean score of 76.00% at post test. No scores for Vocabulary Comprehension were computed for students taking the grade two tests because no valid pairs existed.



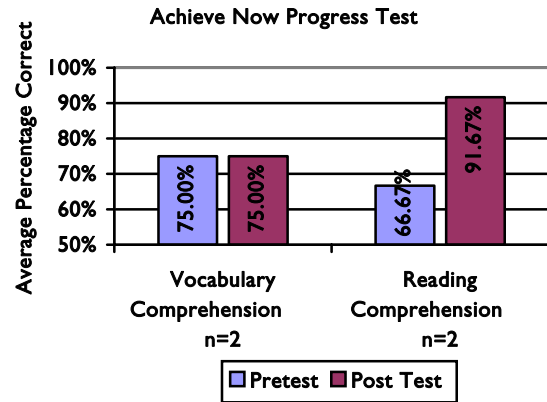
Students taking the grade three test make a gain in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis

Students participating in the SES program at Aspira South Charter School who took the grade three PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test made an average 2.38 ($p=.797$) percentage point increase in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis moving from an average mean score of 63.10% on the pretest to an average mean score of 65.48% on the post test. Students who took the grade three PLATO Achieve Now Progress test made an average 10.00 ($p=.111$) percentage point decline in Reading Comprehension dropping from an average mean score of 81.43% on the pretest to an average mean score of 71.43% at post test. No scores for Vocabulary Comprehension were computed for students taking the grade three tests because no valid pairs existed.



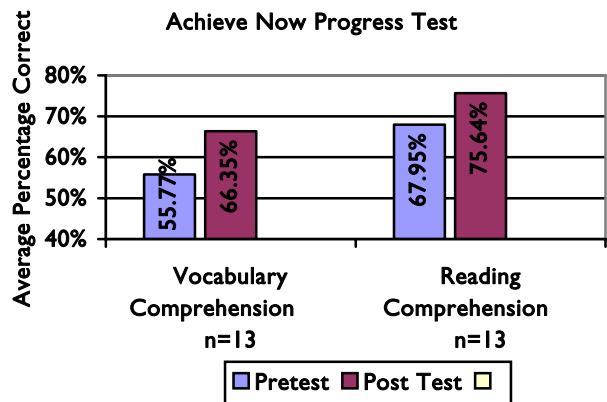
Students taking the grade four test make gains in Reading Comprehension

Students participating in the SES program at Aspira South Charter School who took the grade four PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test on average posted no change ($p=1.0$) in Vocabulary Comprehension scoring an average mean score of 75.00% on both the pretest and the post test. These students did make an average 25.00 ($p=0.500$) percentage point increase in Reading Comprehension moving from an average mean score of 66.67% on the pretest to an average mean score of 91.67% on the post test. No calculations were made for Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis because no valid pairs existed.



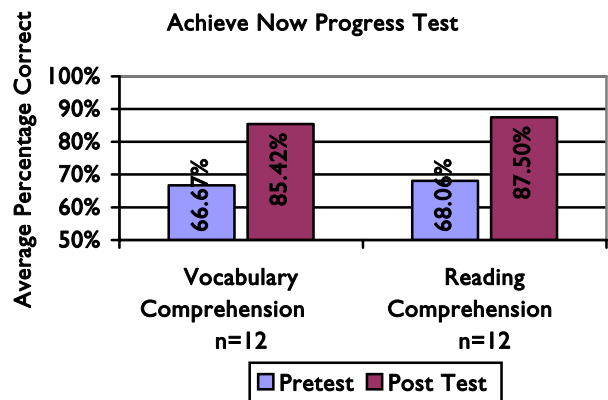
Students taking the grade five test make gains in Vocabulary Comprehension and Reading Comprehension

Students participating in the SES program at Aspira South Charter School who took the grade five PLATO Achieve Now Progress test made an average 10.58 ($p=.119$) percentage point increase in Vocabulary Comprehension moving from a mean score of 55.77% on the pretest to a mean score of 66.35% at post test. Students also made an average 7.69 ($p=.449$) percentage point increase in Reading Comprehension moving from an average mean score of 67.95% on the pretest to an average mean score of 75.64% at post test. No calculations were made for Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis because no valid pairs existed.



Strong gains posted by students taking the grade six test

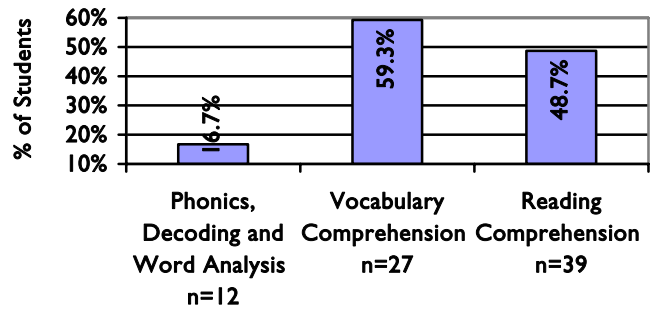
Students who took the grade six PLATO Achieve Now Progress test realized an average 18.75 ($p=.002$) percentage point increase in Vocabulary Comprehension moving from an average mean score of 66.67% on the pretest to an average mean score of 85.42% at post test. These students also made an average 19.44 ($p<.001$) percentage point increase in Reading Comprehension moving from an average mean score of 68.06% on the pretest to an average mean score of 87.50% at post test. Results were statistically significant for both Vocabulary Comprehension and Reading Comprehension.



Students make 15% gains

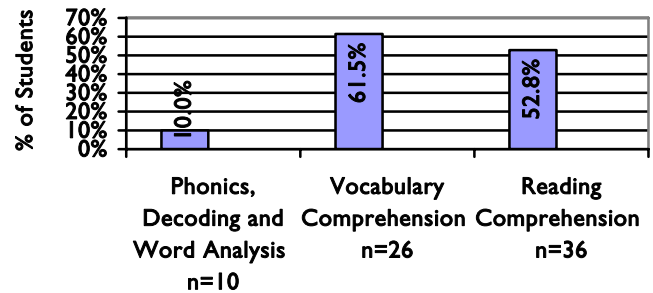
Of the students who participated in the SES program at Aspira South Charter School who had both pre- and post-test scores, 16.7% made a 15% gain in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis proficiency scores, 59.3% made a 15% gain in Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and 48.7% made a 15% gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.

Students Making 15% Gain in Proficiency Scores



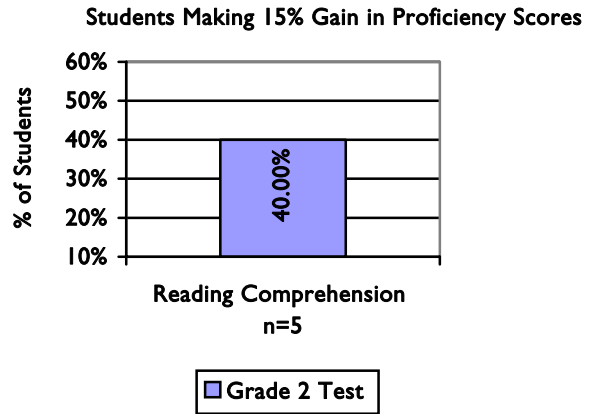
When the sample size was limited to students who attended a minimum of 24 attendance hours (80% or more of program attendance), 10% of the students made a 15% gain in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis proficiency scores, 61.5% made a 15% gain in Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and 52.8% made a 15% gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.

Students With 80% Attendance Making 15% Proficiency Gains

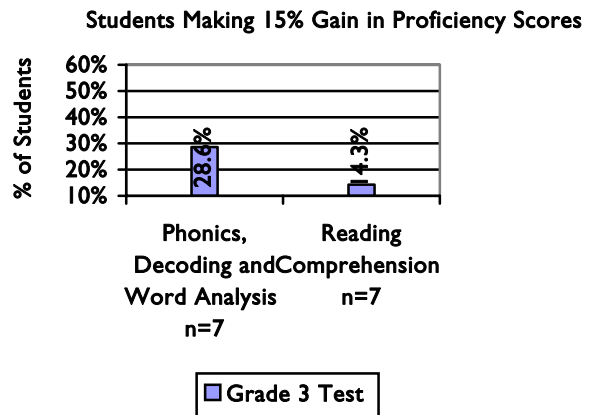


Students make 15% gains in proficiency scores

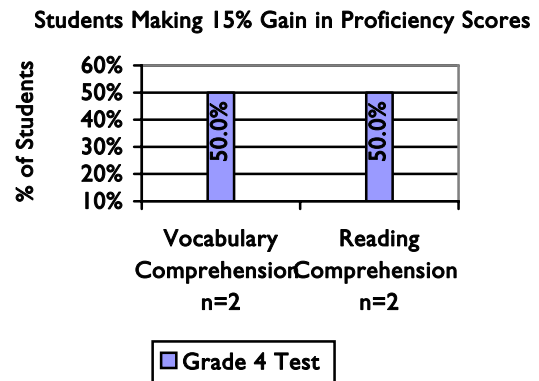
A careful examination of proficiency gain results indicated that of the students who took the grade two PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test, 40% made a 15% or more gain in Reading Comprehension.



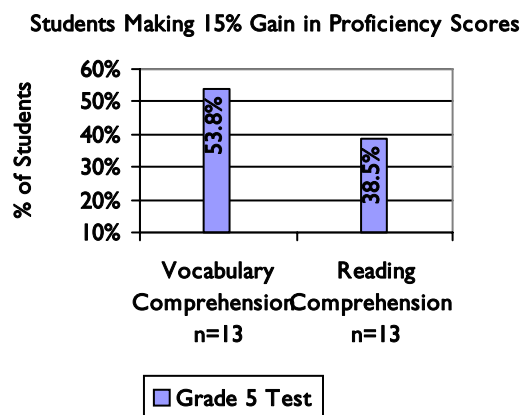
Of the students who took the grade three PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test, 28.6% made a 15% or more gain in Phonics, Decoding and Word Analysis proficiency and 14.3% made a 15% or more gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.



Of the students who took the grade four PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test, 50.0% made a 15% or more gain in Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and 50.0% made a 15% or more gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.

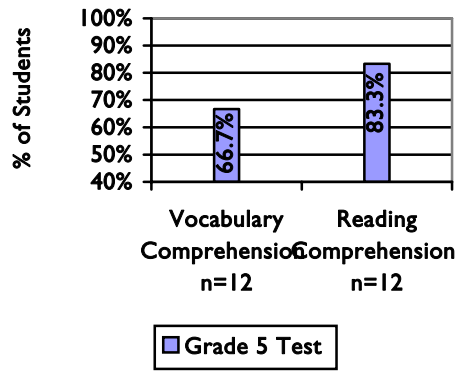


Of the students who took the grade five PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test, 53.8% made a 15% or more gain in Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and 38.5% made a 15% or more gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.



Of the students who took the grade six PLATO Achieve Now Progress Test, 66.7% made a 15% or more gain in Vocabulary Comprehension proficiency scores and 83.3% made a 15% or more gain in Reading Comprehension proficiency scores.

Students Making 15% Gain in Proficiency Scores



Aspira South Youth Leadership Charter School Program Background

In November 2004, the Miami-Dade School District offered parents and students the opportunity to participate in the Supplemental Education Services (SES) after-school program at Aspira South Charter School. Aspira South is one of approximately 40 charter schools in the Miami-Dade School District.

Students were selected to participate based on parent request. The SES after-school program served approximately 37 students grades 6-8. Students were administered the appropriate test level of the Achieve Now Pretest based on their STAR results and Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores. The pretest results were used to determine specific areas of need. Each student had an individual learning path created specifying the areas of need with the correlating CDs/learning activities and assessments identified. Parents were given the opportunity to review this learning path at the initial parent meeting held in May.

Tutors were hired to work with students four afternoons each week for four weeks. These tutors participated in professional development to learn how to use the curriculum to assist students individually as well as in small group instruction. Participating students worked in the areas of reading comprehension and vocabulary or phonics.

Students were evaluated and assessed throughout the course of the program and measured by tutor observations and Achieve Now Progress Checks. Parents were apprised of the students' work on a weekly basis. At the end of the four weeks, students were given the Achieve Now Post Test. The individual results/gains were given to each parent at the End-of-Program Celebration.



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