

# Dinwiddie County Public Schools

DINWIDDIE ELEMENTARY AND SOUTHSIDE ELEMENTARY  
DINWIDDIE, VIRGINIA

## DISTRICT PROFILE

5,885 STUDENTS, GRADES PRE-K-12  
63% White  
36% African-American  
1% Asian and Hispanic

## SECOND AND THIRD GRADE TITLE I STUDENTS REVEALED GROWTH IN WORD LIST CATEGORY OF THE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS LITERACY SCREENING

DURING THE 2002-03 SCHOOL YEAR, SECOND AND THIRD GRADE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED GAINS IN THE WORD LIST CATEGORY OF THE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS LITERACY SCREENING (PALS). SPRING SCORES ON THE PALS SHOWED THAT ALL SECOND AND THIRD GRADE STUDENTS USING PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ MET OR EXCEEDED THE WORD LIST BENCHMARK, WHEREAS ONLY 50.00% OF THE SECOND GRADERS AND 75.00% OF THE THIRD GRADERS MET OR EXCEEDED THE BENCHMARK IN THE FALL.

HOWEVER, THE PERCENTAGE OF SECOND GRADE STUDENTS WHO MET OR EXCEEDED THE SPELLING AND SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARKS DECREASED FROM FALL TO SPRING. SPECIFICALLY, OF THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS USING ACHIEVE NOW AT DINWIDDIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 50.00% MET OR EXCEEDED THE FALL SPELLING BENCHMARK AND 61.54% MET OR EXCEEDED THE FALL SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARK. THAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS DECREASED BY SPRING TO SHOW ONLY 37.50% OF THE STUDENTS MET OR EXCEEDED THE SPELLING BENCHMARK AND 38.46% OF THE STUDENTS MET OR EXCEEDED THE SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARK.

NEVERTHELESS, OF THE THIRD GRADE STUDENTS USING ACHIEVE NOW AT SOUTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THAT TOOK BOTH FALL AND SPRING VERSIONS OF THE PALS ASSESSMENT, NONE MET OR EXCEEDED THE FALL SPELLING AND SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARKS. THAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS INCREASED BY SPRING TO SHOW 37.50% OF THE STUDENTS MET OR EXCEEDED THE SPELLING BENCHMARK AND 62.50% OF THE STUDENTS MET OR EXCEEDED THE SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARK.

THE DISTRICT'S GOAL FOR THE ACHIEVE NOW IMPLEMENTATION WAS FOR 80% OF TARGETED TITLE I SECOND AND THIRD GRADE STUDENTS TO PASS THE SPRING SUMMED SCORE BENCHMARK ON THE PALS ASSESSMENT. BASED ON THE SPRING PALS RESULTS, THE IMPLEMENTATION GOAL WAS NOT MET.

DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PURCHASED PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ WITH TITLE I FUNDS AND BEGAN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER 2001 WITH THIRD GRADE STUDENTS AT SOUTHSIDE ELEMENTARY. THE PROGRAM WAS EXPANDED IN SEPTEMBER 2002 TO INCLUDE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS AT DINWIDDIE ELEMENTARY. THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION DESIGN TARGETED SECOND AND THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IDENTIFIED FOR TITLE I READING SERVICES. STUDENTS USED PLATO ACHIEVE NOW IN THE CLASSROOM AND WERE ASSIGNED ONE ACHIEVE NOW ADVENTURES® CD PER ONE- OR TWO-WEEK PERIOD FOR HOME USE. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS USING THE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS LITERACY SCREENING TOOK PLACE IN SEPTEMBER 2002 FOR ALL TARGETED STUDENTS AND IN MAY 2003 FOR STUDENTS WHO QUALIFIED FOR PALS SPRING TESTING. ADDITIONALLY, QUESTIONNAIRES WERE DISTRIBUTED TO TEACHERS, FAMILIES, AND STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE PROGRAM FOR FEEDBACK ON THE PLATO EXPERIENCE. THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAM WAS TO INCREASE READING/LANGUAGE ARTS PERFORMANCE.

REPORTED IN THIS STUDY IS THE ACHIEVEMENT GROWTH OF PARTICIPATING PLATO STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE PALS ASSESSMENT IN BOTH FALL AND SPRING. FURTHER, HIGHLIGHTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES ARE ALSO REPORTED IN THE STUDY.\*

## PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ IMPLEMENTATION

- Classroom/Family Homework Model
- Third Grade, Title I, Southside Elementary Began September 2001
- Second Grade, Title I Dinwiddie Elementary Began September 2002
- 100% Home Deployment
- Reading/Language Arts Focus

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)

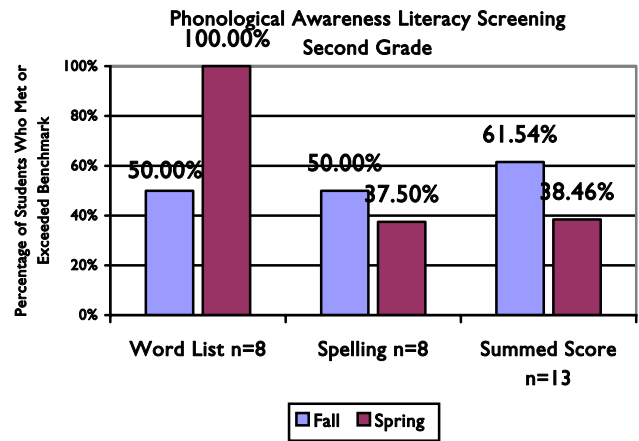
## RESEARCH TIME FRAME

2002-03 School Year

\* Due to rounding, the sum of percentages may not equal to 100%.

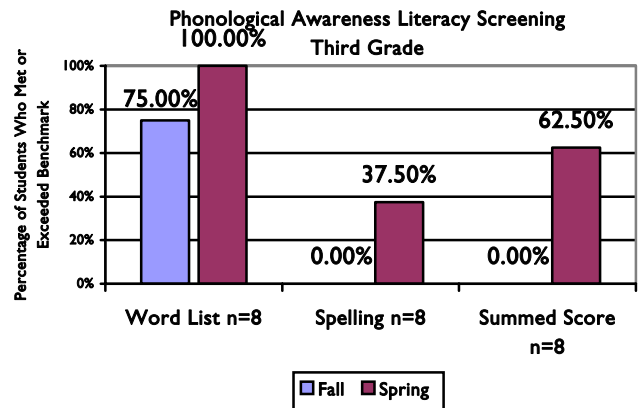
## Dinwiddie Elementary second grade students met Word List benchmark

By spring, 100.00% of second grade students using PLATO Achieve Now met or exceeded the Word List benchmark on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). Nonetheless, the percentage of second grade students who met or exceeded the Spelling and Summed Score benchmarks decreased. In the fall, 50.00% of the students met or exceeded the Spelling benchmark, whereas, only 37.50% of the students met the benchmark by Spring. From Fall to Spring, the percentage of students who met the Summed Score benchmark declined from 61.54% to 38.46%.



## Percentage of Southside Elementary third grade students meeting the PALS benchmarks increased from Fall to Spring

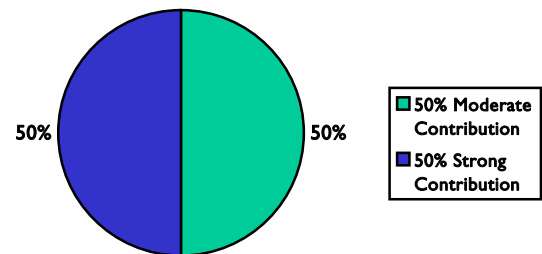
The percentage of students using PLATO Achieve Now that met the PALS benchmarks increased, when pre- to post-test scores were compared. Of the third grade students using PLATO Achieve Now, 75.00% met or exceeded the Fall Word List benchmark while 0.00% met or exceeded the Fall Spelling and Summed Score benchmarks. By Spring, all third grade students met or exceeded the Word List benchmark, 37.50% met or exceeded the Spelling benchmark, and 62.50% met or exceeded the Summed Score benchmark.



## Dinwiddie Elementary Families note PLATO Achieve Now's contribution to reading performance

On the PLATO Achieve Now questionnaire conducted at the end of the school year, 100% of families of second grade Title I students reported they felt PLATO Achieve Now made a moderate to strong contribution to their child's performance in reading.

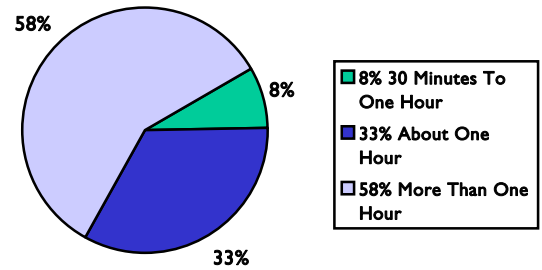
PLATO ACHIEVE NOW'S CONTRIBUTION TO READING PERFORMANCE-FAMILY'S' VIEW



## Dinwiddie Elementary families reported time spent working with their child on PLATO Achieve Now

At home, 100% of families of second grade Title I students reported they averaged thirty minutes or more per day working with their child on PLATO Achieve Now. Fifty-eight percent of families reported working with their child for more than one hour per day, 33% reported working with their child for about one hour, while 8% reported working thirty minutes to one hour per day on PLATO Achieve Now.

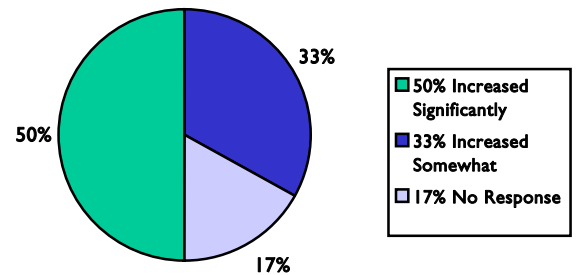
AVERAGE TIME PARENTS REPORT WORKING WITH THEIR CHILD ON PLATO ACHIEVE NOW



## Dinwiddie Elementary families noted increased student motivation

At home, families of second grade Title I students witnessed an improvement in their children's attitude about school and learning. On the PLATO Achieve Now survey conducted at the end of the school year, 83% of families felt their child's interest and motivation toward school increased as a result of working with PLATO Achieve Now.

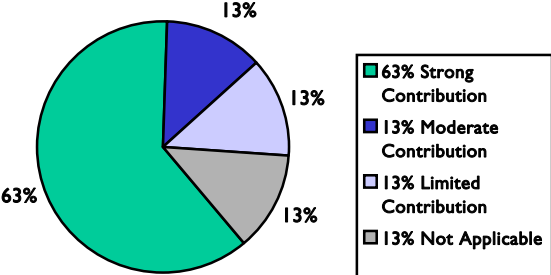
PLATO ACHIEVE NOW'S IMPACT ON STUDENT MOTIVATION-FAMILY'S VIEW



# Southside Elementary families note PLATO Achieve Now's contribution to reading performance

On the PLATO Achieve Now survey conducted at the end of the school year, 75% of families of third grade Title I students reported that they felt PLATO Achieve Now made a moderate to strong contribution in their child's performance in reading.

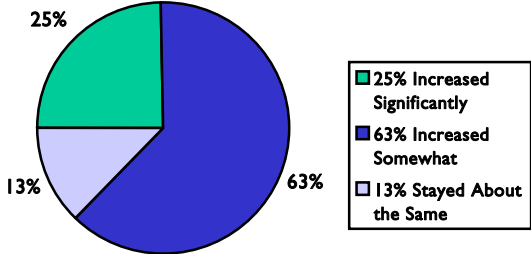
PLATO ACHIEVE NOW'S CONTRIBUTION TO READING PERFORMANCE - FAMILY'S VIEW



# Southside Elementary families reported increased conversations with their child as a result of PLATO Achieve Now

At home, families of Title I third grade students reported an increase in their conversations with their child about school work as a result of working with PLATO Achieve Now. Twenty-five percent of families reported conversations about school work increased significantly, 63% reported conversations increased somewhat, and 13% reported conversations stayed about the same.

INCREASE IN PARENT/CHILD CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SCHOOL WORK



## Dinwiddie County Public Schools Program Background

Dinwiddie County Public School District is located in rural southeast Virginia and has one high school, one middle school, and five elementary schools. The Dinwiddie Public Schools Mission statement is as follows: "The mission of Dinwiddie Public Schools is to involve the total community in a commitment to an educational process which puts the needs of each child at the forefront and provides the necessary resources and structures to enable each individual to develop into a productive citizen prepared for higher education or to enter a field of vocation."

Southside Elementary began implementing the standards-based PLATO Achieve Now™ curriculum in September 2001 with third grade Title I students and Dinwiddie Elementary began in September 2002 with second grade Title I students. Targeted students met with Title I teachers within the regular classroom for daily language arts instruction. In the classroom, the PLATO Achieve Now implementation enhanced the ability

of the teacher to integrate technology, provide small group instruction, and foster independent growth in a learning center. In the home, the implementation helped to foster the home-school connection. In addition to the PLATO Achieve Now program, the schools have access to The PLATO Network<sup>®</sup>, PLATO eduTest Assessment<sup>™</sup> and PLATO Reading Center<sup>™</sup> for assessments and interactive language arts and mathematics learning activities aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning.

Professional development was provided throughout the year, and included modeling classroom lessons, analysis of student data, and alignment of program materials to student needs. Students took home one language arts Achieve Now Adventures<sup>®</sup> CD every week or every two weeks and were encouraged to explore the learning activities contained on that CD at least three times per week. Students had access to a PLATO Achieve Now learning center in their classroom which is used for whole group instruction as well as independent and small group practice. In support of Dinwiddie County's commitment to family involvement, three family nights were held at both schools during the 2002-03 school year to provide time for parents and students to interact with PLATO Achieve Now programs. Opportunities were also provided to familiarize families with the goals of the PLATO Achieve Now program as well as to celebrate student successes.

Results of the implementation were measured by spring and fall administrations of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, teacher surveys, and family surveys. Future plans for the PLATO Achieve Now program include continuing to providing support to teachers in aligning program materials to individual needs, modeling classroom lessons, expanding use of PLATO Achieve Now resources, and integrating the program with The PLATO Network and PLATO eduTest Assessment in the classroom. Through PLATO, access to technology has been made available in an equitable manner for all targeted Title I students. Furthermore, the PLATO Achieve Now program involved families in their children's education, linked families to the school, and motivated student learning at school and at home.



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