SOUTH CAROLINA READING FIRST INITIATIVE
EVALUATION REPORT
2008-2009

Volume I: Narrative

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of South Carolina’s Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) and South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) collaborate to evaluate the South Carolina Reading First (SCRF) Initiative. This report presents the evaluation methods, findings, and recommendations for SCRF from the 2008-2009 school year. The 2008-2009 school year was the fifth year of implementation of the SCRF Initiative. A total of 31 schools participated in 2008-2009. Among the 31 schools, 24 schools participated in all five years (Cohort 1 schools) and seven schools were new to SCRF in 2007-2008 (Cohort 2 schools). One of the Cohort 1 schools served kindergarten only and did not have Stanford Reading First results. Hence, 2008-2009 achievement results are reported for a total of 30 schools; 23 Cohort 1 schools and 7 Cohort 2 schools. The report is divided into sections by the types of data reported including implementation rubric development and results, achievement results, and participant group surveys. Each section contains information about the data collection and analysis methods used as well as the key findings. Recommendations based on these findings are located at the end of the report.

Summary of Key Findings

Implementation Rubric Findings

- Individual school reports and summary reports comparing the 19 schools that completed implementation rubrics were developed using MS Excel by embedding pivot tables into a report template. Reports were disseminated to individual schools, shared with state personnel, used to assess the progress schools and districts made during the five years of the initiative, and determine program continuation in 2009-2010.

- Schools were ranked by their school performance score, a combination of rubric scores and achievement measures, to determine their programmatic success. Percentage of school performance score for individual schools ranged from 63.8% to 91.0% with a mean performance score of 80.0%. School performance scores were used by SCRF program staff to make decisions about the continuation of specific SCRF schools.

- Regression equations showed significant associations between school implementation levels and mean increases in the percentages of students at grade level (AGL) for both matched and unmatched students. However, the regression equations showed no
significant relationships between implementation and mean decreases in the percentages of students needing substantial intervention (NSI) for matched and unmatched students.

- More variability in achievement changes was explained by the implementation rubric scores for the AGL models than for the NSI models. This suggests better model fit for the AGL models as compared to the NSI models. However, in all models, additional variation beyond implementation measures remained to be accounted for.

**Achievement Findings**

- All SCRF schools demonstrated gains on the Stanford Reading First assessment between fall 2008 and spring 2009.
- Students’ scores by grade level on the Stanford Reading First assessment improved from fall 2008 to spring 2009. The largest gains were made by students in grade 1 and the smallest gains occurred in grade 2 in 2008-2009, which are consistent with the results for the last four years.
- The matched analysis of students in Cohort 1 schools who progressed from grade 1 to grade 2 to grade 3 in the 2006-2009 matched sample showed growth for all grades with much greater growth than expected in grades 1 and 3.
- In the 2007-2009 matched sample from Cohort 2 schools, large gains were also observed in grade 1 among the grade 1 to 2 students and in grade 3 among the grade 2 to 3 students. These changes indicate achievement of students in SCRF schools is improving.

**Survey Findings**

- Consistent with the results from previous years, participation in professional development activities and workshops was high for all groups, and ratings of the helpfulness of these activities continued to be high for all respondents. Observing in SCRF classrooms and schools was consistently rated as the most helpful activity.
- Participants identified their greatest needs for professional development in the areas of comprehension, instructional strategies to use for students performing below grade level, small group instruction, interpreting score reports for making instructional decisions, and addressing the needs of English language learners.
- Overall, the participant groups highly supported the initiative, understood the program’s goals and their own roles and responsibilities, understood the roles of the individuals and
groups with whom they closely worked, and reported high levels of trust, respect, collaboration, and support. Additionally, overall views of program effectiveness remained high for all participant groups.

- Program benefits were reported in six categories: teacher development, resources, student development, focus on assessment, program organization, and support staff.
- Teacher development and an appreciation for additional resources, such as increased availability of teaching materials and classroom or literacy center books, were the benefits of SCRF most commonly identified in every participant group.
- Areas for program improvement identified by participants included the program organization, study groups, assessments, role/performance of the support staff, professional development, collaboration, and the School Intervention Team and/or School Leadership Team meetings.

**Summary of Recommendations**

- The 2008-2009 SCRF Implementation Rubric served as a useful summative evaluation tool for schools participating in the initiative for five years. The use of implementation rubrics should be considered in future state reading programs for both formative and summative evaluation purposes.
- Regression equations showed significant associations between school implementation levels and mean increases in AGL for both matched and unmatched students. Further analyses exploring the relationship between implementation and achievement are recommended. Future study could include additional achievement measures, such as normal curve equivalents (NCE) scores, scale scores, and mean percentage differences on NAI, as well as analysis by grade level.
- Over the last five years, Stanford Reading First achievement results for students in grade 2 have shown considerably smaller gains between fall and spring semesters compared with students in grades 1 and 3. The assessment administered to students in the spring of grade 2 contains more and longer paragraphs for students to read and then respond to than the test administered in the fall of grade 2. Professional development providers should discuss potential strategies for providing more time for sustained reading for students in grade 2 to improve students’ reading comprehension skills and to prepare them for more extensive text reading expectations.

“We know our students’ strengths and weaknesses and we know how to use that knowledge to instruct and plan.” (Principal)
• All participant groups continued to report the need for more professional development on effective instructional strategies to use with students performing below grade level and English language learners. Additional strategies for working with these students should be shared with SCRF participants.

• The qualitative analysis of two open-ended items within the participant group surveys revealed that teacher development was the most cited benefit, with nearly 32.0% of all participants noting it. The participants’ responses demonstrate that programs such as SCRF that provide specialized coaching are perceived as important for teachers’ professional development. Further studies should be conducted to examine the relationship between coaching program implementation and student performance.

• A large number of participants also recommended changes to program organization (35.6%). As the state considers implementing future reading programs, it may be helpful to address some of these concerns. These included constraints placed on participant groups related to time, flexibility, and paperwork, as well as changes to specific program components, such as emphasizing writing and other aspects more and addressing the needs of specific groups of students.
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INTRODUCTION

The Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) and the South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina serve as evaluators for the South Carolina Reading First (SCRF) Initiative. The OPE and SCEPC work collaboratively with the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to assess the effectiveness of the SCRF Initiative. This on-going joint effort involves regular meetings and communication through which project implementation and evaluation activities are planned and results shared. Highlights of the evaluation findings, including implementation rubric results, Stanford Reading First achievement data, and findings from the 2009 participant group evaluation surveys are provided in the following sections of this report (Volume I). This volume features the highlights of the SCRF Initiative evaluation for the 2008-2009 school year.

Full implementation, achievement, and survey results, as well as the 2009 SCRF Summer Conference evaluation report, can be found in Appendices A – J in Volume II of this report. The 2009 SCRF Summer Conference titled, Building Literacy One Child at a Time, was offered as a professional development opportunity for educators in SCRF schools in the summer of 2009. Over 200 attendees completed a conference evaluation form that was collected and analyzed by OPE and SCEPC staff. The conference received positive feedback from attendees. Please see Appendix J (Volume II) for details.
OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

Reading First, part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, is a nationwide effort to provide states and school districts with support to establish research-based reading programs for students in kindergarten through third grade. The evaluation of the SCRF Initiative is a collaborative effort between the external evaluators, OPE and SCEPC, and personnel at the SCDE. This on-going collaboration involves regular meetings and communication through which project implementation and evaluation activities are planned and results shared. Numerous reports and presentations related to the SCRF Initiative have been completed since the SCRF Initiative began providing program services during the 2004-2005 school year. Evaluation results are shared in annual reports (Dickenson, McGuiness, Monrad, Johnson, Gareau, Gilmore, McCorkendale, Payne, 2005; Sesso-Dahlke, Dickenson, Monrad, Johnson, Gilmore, Rawls, Mindrila, Smith, McGuiness, Wills, Gay, Ermer, 2006; Bennett, Gareau, Dickenson, Monrad, Johnson, Galande, Mindrila, Ermer, Gilmore, Smith, Rawls, Gay, Sesso-Dahlke, 2007; Bennett, Gareau, Dickenson, Monrad, Johnson, Petruulis, Gilmore, Smith, Rawls, Galande, Chiuzan, Gay, Gambone, Price, Mindrila, 2008) as well as at meetings with SCRF project staff, professional development providers, School Leadership Teams (SLT), and regional literacy coaches, who then share the results at the school level. Results have also been reported at national meetings of the American Educational Research Association and American Evaluation Association.

The SCRF Initiative began providing program services during the 2004-2005 school year to approximately 13,000 students in 52 schools from 24 districts in the state. It has origins in the South Carolina Reading Initiative (SCRI), which was created in February, 2000 as a result of input from the first South Carolina Reading Summit, the Governor’s Institute of Reading Task Force, and a review of best practices in the teaching of reading (NCTE, 2008). SCRF requires a daily, 120-minute uninterrupted block of classroom reading instruction and assistance for the lowest achieving students through supplemental intervention services. Reading ability is measured by teachers throughout the school year using the Dominie Reading and Writing Assessment Portfolio, which is a diagnostic assessment measuring achievement in reading, writing, spelling, and phonics (DeFord, 2000). It is intended for use with students in grades kindergarten through eight and assists teachers in documenting growth in achievement and instructional decision-making (Pearson Learning Group, 2004). The Stanford Reading First assessment is used as SCRF’s measure of achievement for the purposes of program evaluation. Also, results from South Carolina’s state assessment (formerly the Palmetto
Achievement Challenge Test, PACT) for grade 3 SCRF students are reported in the APR as an additional measurement of achievement.

The 2005-2006 initiative served approximately 12,800 students in 51 schools from 23 districts in the state, and the 2006-2007 initiative served roughly 13,000 students in 49 schools in 23 districts. In its fourth year, the initiative (2007-2008) served approximately 10,000 students in 37 schools within 19 districts. Of these 37 schools, 30 participated in all four years (Cohort 1 schools) and seven schools were new to the SCRF Initiative in 2007-2008 (Cohort 2 schools). Approximately 8,600 students in 31 schools in 18 districts participated in the 2008-2009 program initiative, 24 Cohort 1 schools and 7 Cohort 2 schools.

The goal of the SCRF Initiative is to improve reading achievement in grades K-3 so that all children are reading at the appropriate grade level. To achieve this goal, SCRF has three objectives:

- Enable and motivate teachers to understand and confidently implement scientifically-based reading research programs, strategies, skills, and assessments in their classrooms.
- Support the change process from the "bottom up" by supporting collaboration and conversation at various levels to ensure the sustainability of this initiative.
- Establish and expand an increasing pool of teachers and administrators who are knowledgeable about, committed to using, and successful in teaching a comprehensive reading program based upon scientific research.

The SCDE’s SCRF staff engage in program monitoring and implementation, record keeping, and professional development. The teachers in SCRF schools are required to attend weekly study groups and professional development sessions focusing on strategies to teach key reading components. The five components of reading instruction that “all K-3 teachers should explicitly and systematically teach include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension” (Reading First Grant Proposal, 2002, p. 5).

In addition, literacy coaches are assigned to each school to assist teachers with implementing the strategies learned in the professional development sessions. Through professional development and support from literacy coaches, the intent is for teachers to be well prepared to provide appropriate instruction that will lead to improved reading achievement for all of their students. Also, interventionists at each school provide targeted reading instruction to the lowest performing students in either one-to-one or small group sessions. Further, SCRF School Leadership Teams (SLT), including teachers, school literacy coaches, media specialists,
principals, and other school/district personnel, participate in professional development to promote collaborative decision-making and responsibility and to receive guidance in the implementation of the grant. The interrelationship between SCDE staff, program participants, and other stakeholders is important to program success.
2009 SCRF IMPLEMENTATION RUBRIC

Development of the SCRF Rubric

OPE and SCEPC evaluators collaborated with SCDE personnel to develop an instrument to measure SCRF implementation. The first goal of the instrument development and subsequent data collection was to assess the progress Cohort 1 schools and districts had made during the five years of the initiative. SCRF program staff planned to use this data to make decisions about the continuation of specific SCRF schools during the 2009-2010 initiative. The second goal of developing the 2008-2009 SCRF Implementation Rubric was to assist Cohort 2 schools with their second year of program implementation as part of their ongoing process evaluation. The following two sections of this report will focus on findings related to the first goal.

Collaborative Meetings

Historically, development of evaluation instruments for SCRF data collection has been a collaborative process between personnel from the SCDE and researchers in the OPE and SCEPC. Similar to previous development processes, a series of meetings were held to design the 2008-2009 SCRF Implementation Rubric and determine a schedule for dissemination. Table 1 displays a timeline of rubric development and administration.

Table 1: 2008-2009 SCRF Implementation Rubric Development and Administration Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>September 9, 2008</td>
<td>• Discussion of data collected during the 2007-2008 academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determination of data collection needs for the 2008-2009 academic year, including discussions of developing a measure to collect data on implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20, 2008</td>
<td>• Initial development meeting for the SCRF Implementation Rubric with the SCDE, OPE, and SCEPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review of Reading First implementation measures from other states and implementation measures from other reading programs in South Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Beginning stages of identifying the essential SCRF components to be included in the rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 22, 2008</td>
<td>• Internal OPE/SCEPC meeting to continue development of the SCRF Implementation Rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 19, 2008</td>
<td>• Rubric development meeting with SCDE, OPE, and SCEPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10, 2008</td>
<td>• Internal OPE/SCEPC meeting to finalize SCRF Implementation Rubric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rubric Components

During development meetings, components of the rubric were developed and/or edited to accurately represent program components considered essential for successful implementation of the SCRF Initiative. The implementation rubric contained eight main components that stakeholders expressed as essential to the initiative. Three of the main components included sub-components. Table 2 identifies each essential SCRF component, sub-components (where appropriate), and the number of items used to measure each component. Please note that certain items were completed by all participant groups, while other items were completed by SCDE personnel only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential SCRF Component</th>
<th>Sub-component(s)</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Leadership</td>
<td>- School Leadership Team (SLT)</td>
<td>11 items (3 out of 11 were completed by SCDE only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Scheduling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Principal Observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Assessment</td>
<td>- Stanford for Outcome-based</td>
<td>9 items (1 out of 9 completed by SCDE only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dominie for Screening/Progress Monitoring/Diagnostic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. School Intervention Team</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5 items (1 out of 5 completed by SCDE only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Intervention Strategies</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4 items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Instruction</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8 items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Professional Development</td>
<td>- Study Group</td>
<td>12 items (3 out of 12 completed by SCDE only)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- School Literacy Coach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Environment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6 items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. District</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2 items</td>
</tr>
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Individual items on the rubric were measured using three response types:
1. Dichotomous (Yes, No); 2. Likert scale [ranging from 0 to 3, with 0 (a) representing lower levels of implementation and 3 (d) representing higher levels of implementation for an individual item]; and 3. List (response of a, b, c, or d was determined by the number of items chosen from a list). See Table 3 for examples of each measurement type. To view a full version of the SCRF Implementation Rubric, please see Appendix A.
### Table 3: Response types for SCRF Implementation Rubric

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Example: Dichotomous</th>
<th>Study group sessions meet at least twice per month after school for a minimum of 45 contact hours.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>Study group sessions meet at least twice per month after school for a minimum of 45 contact hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ No</td>
<td>Study group sessions meet at least twice per month after school for a minimum of 45 contact hours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: Likert Scale</th>
<th>Required participants do not arrive on time and are not present for the duration of study group meetings.</th>
<th>Some required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</th>
<th>Most required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</th>
<th>All required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ A</td>
<td>Required participants do not arrive on time and are not present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Some required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Most required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>All required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ B</td>
<td>Required participants do not arrive on time and are not present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Some required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Most required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>All required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ C</td>
<td>Required participants do not arrive on time and are not present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Some required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Most required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>All required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ D</td>
<td>Required participants do not arrive on time and are not present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Some required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>Most required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
<td>All required participants arrive on time and are present for the duration of study group meetings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: List</th>
<th>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 0-2 of the following characteristics.</th>
<th>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 3-4 of the following characteristics.</th>
<th>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 5-6 of the following characteristics.</th>
<th>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 7-8 of the following characteristics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ A</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 0-2 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 3-4 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 5-6 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 7-8 of the following characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ B</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 0-2 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 3-4 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 5-6 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 7-8 of the following characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ C</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 0-2 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 3-4 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 5-6 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 7-8 of the following characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ D</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 0-2 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school demonstrates 3-4 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 5-6 of the following characteristics.</td>
<td>The literacy coach at this school consistently demonstrates 7-8 of the following characteristics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check all that apply to their practices at this school. The Literacy Coach at this school...
- Plan and facilitate ongoing, responsive study groups.
- Helps to connect the theory behind teacher practices in coaching and study group settings.
- Encourages teachers to use active listening.
- Encourages teachers to be active kidwatchers.
- Encourages teachers in reflective practice to improve instruction.
- Encourages teachers to try new instructional practices to improve student engagement and learning.
- Assists teachers in administering, scoring, recording, sharing, analyzing, and interpreting student data to inform their instruction.
- Assists in the identification and implementation of interventions.
Scoring Process

Schools from Cohort 1 that participated in their fifth year of the initiative completed the SCRF implementation rubric in January, 2009 and were given a total rubric score after completion. They were also ranked by their average achievement over four years (2004-2008) to determine their overall achievement rank. The sum of a school’s total rubric score and overall achievement rank made up their school performance score (see Appendix B for the schools’ scoring sheets). These schools were then ranked by their school performance score to determine their programmatic success, and this data was used by SCRF program staff to make decisions about the continuation of specific SCRF schools during the 2009-2010 school year.

Total Rubric Score

Data from the 2008-2009 SCRF implementation rubric provided information on the degree to which the SCRF program was implemented in participating schools for each of the rubric components described above. School and state personnel were asked to complete the rubric retrospectively for each school as part of their ongoing summative evaluation.

For this analysis, rubrics were provided to 19 Cohort 1 schools. These schools were chosen based on two criteria: first, they were eligible to participate in the initiative during the 2009-2010 school year, and second, they were not kindergarten-only schools, as kindergarten-only schools do not report standardized achievement level data. Cohort 2 schools that participated in the initiative for just two years did not participate in this analysis; instead, they used the rubric as a formative, rather than summative, evaluation instrument.

The rubric was completed by five personnel for each school, two individuals at the school level and three individuals at the state level (see Appendix B). At the school level, the school’s principal and project director completed the rubric. Their total points represented the school rubric score and accounted for 33% (n = 224 possible points) of the school performance score. At the state level, the regional intervention specialist and regional literacy specialist responsible for the school completed the rubric, as well as a SCDE liaison. The sum of their points represented the state rubric score, which accounted for 57% (n = 390 points possible) of the school performance score. The sum of the school rubric score and state rubric score equaled the school’s total rubric score and 90% of the school performance score. The remaining 10% of the school performance score was accounted for by the overall achievement rank.
**Overall Achievement Rank**

Achievement data were collected from multiple administrations of the Stanford Reading First assessment, a version of the norm-referenced, vertically equated Stanford 10. (Additional information on this assessment may be read in section three of this evaluation report). Four achievement categories (At Grade Level - AGL and Needs Substantial Intervention - NSI for unmatched and matched students) were used to calculate a school’s overall achievement ranking representing 10% (n = 69 points possible) of their school performance score (see Appendix B for school performance score sheets). Achievement data from 2008-2009 were not yet available at the time of the ranking, and, therefore, were not used in these calculations. The four categories are described below:

1. The first category was the average (mean) difference in the percentage of students who scored AGL for each year of the SCRF program (year 1 to year 4) among all students tested. The difference from fall to spring for each year was determined and then the average across four years was calculated. A positive difference indicated progress in moving students from lower score categories into AGL.

2. The second category was a calculation of the average (mean) difference in percentage of students who scored AGL from year 2 to year 4 for only matched students who participated in the most recent three years. This category includes only three years, since only students who progressed from grade 1 in 2005-2006 to grade 2 in 2006-2007 to grade 3 in 2007-2008 were included.

3. The third category was the average (mean) difference in the percentage of students who scored NSI for each year of participation (year 1 to year 4) among all students tested. Categories one and three were the same, except one measured the percentage of students in the highest score category, while the other measured the percentage of students in the lowest score category. A negative difference indicated progress in moving students out of NSI.

4. The fourth category was a calculation of the average (mean) difference in percentage of students who scored NSI from year 2 to year 4 for only matched students who participated across the most recent three years (grade 1 in 2005-2006, grade 2 in 2006-2007, and grade 3 in 2007-2008), thus categories two and four were similar.

The overall achievement rankings were determined relative to all 23 SCRF schools that had participated in the initiative for five years. A school’s rankings in each of these four achievement categories were averaged to calculate an average overall rank. This number was
then reverse coded so that schools with lower ranks would receive fewer achievement points in the school performance score. In order to assure that the achievement was weighted as 10% of the school performance score, the overall achievement rank was based on 69 potential points (or 23 potential points multiplied by 3 for the highest ranked school).

School Performance Score

The sum of a school’s total rubric score (n = 614 points possible) and overall achievement rank (n = 69 points possible) made up their school performance score (n = 683 points possible). Data from all rubrics were entered into a spreadsheet created in Microsoft (MS) Excel. All data were double keyed, and the accuracy of the data entry was validated using the compare procedure in SAS. Any codes identified as non-matching using the compare procedure were then re-checked against the completed rubric documents for final data resolution. Once data were validated, data were summarized descriptively and formatted using pivot tables in MS Excel.

In order to present the data graphically, a template of the score report was developed using MS Excel. Pivot tables were embedded within the score report template corresponding to the rubric categories and then summed to create the various rubric scores. Next, schools were sorted in order of increasing values of the school performance score and were provided a ranking based on the school performance score. The pivot tables were then updated to create summary reports for each school. The individual reports were then printed to Adobe PDF files prior to dissemination. The use of pivot tables for report generation eliminated the necessity of data being manually transferred into table format and thus, decreased the possibility of error in report creation.

School Performance Score Results

Table 4 provides a summary of the 2008-2009 rubric scores (including the school, state, and total rubric scores), overall achievement rank scores, and school performance scores. The last column depicts each school’s total overall ranking. School J and School F had the same school performance scores. Therefore, their total overall ranking was the same. The highest school performance score (school B) was 622 total points, or 91.0% (i.e., 622/683). The lowest school performance score (School L) was 436 total points, representing 63.8% of the school performance score. Mean implementation was 549.5 points or 80.0% of the school performance score.
Table 4: Summary of Schools' Implementation Rubric Statistics Ranked by School Performance Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Codea</th>
<th>School Rubric Score (33%)</th>
<th>State Rubric Score (57%)</th>
<th>Total Rubric Score</th>
<th>Overall Achievement Rank Score (10%)</th>
<th>School Performance Score</th>
<th>Total Overall Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School H</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School O</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Q</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School I</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School M</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School P</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School R</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School K</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School N</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School J</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>16b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>16b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School S</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School L</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a School identifiers were removed for this reporting.
b Indicates schools with the same school performance score and, therefore, ranking.

Dissemination of Results

SCDE personnel were given summary results for each school that completed implementation rubrics during 2008-2009. They used the ranked school performance scores to make decisions about the continuation of specific SCRF schools during the 2009-2010 school year. Individual school results were also shared by the SCDE with school personnel to use implementation and achievement summary data for continued programmatic improvements during the 2009-2010 initiative.

Section Summary

Meetings were held to collaborate on the development of an implementation rubric to evaluate participating schools' programmatic success related to the implementation of the
SCRF initiative. Nineteen schools that participated in the initiative for five years completed the SCRF implementation rubric. The rubric was completed by five personnel for each school, two individuals at the school level (the school’s principal and the project director) and three individuals at the state level (the regional intervention specialist, regional literacy specialist, and SCDE liaison). Rubrics were tallied and schools were given a total rubric score after completion.

The school performance score represents the points for the school rubric score (33% of the performance score), the state rubric score (57% of the school score), and the overall achievement rank (10% of the school score). The overall achievement rank represents a composite score of (1) the mean percentage difference of students who scored AGL, for all students and for matched students only, and (2) the mean percentage difference of students who scored NSI, for all students and for matched students only, for 2004-2008 achievement data.

Schools were ranked by their school performance score to determine their programmatic success (highest school performance score was 622 total points and lowest school performance score was 436 total points). Individual school reports and summary reports comparing the 19 schools that completed rubrics were developed using MS Excel by embedding pivot tables into a report template. Reports were disseminated to individual schools, shared with state personnel, and used to assess the progress schools and districts made during the five years of the initiative. SCRF program staff used this data to make decisions about the continuation of specific SCRF schools during the 2009-2010 initiative.
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL LEVEL SCRF IMPLEMENTATION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Background

Implementation data were collected for 19 of the 23 schools that participated in the initiative for five years. The four schools that did not complete the rubric were not planning to continue the initiative during the next year. Analyses were then conducted to determine if these schools’ implementation levels were related to student achievement at the school level. Schools were grouped into three implementation groups using their total rubric score percentages. This percentage included only the points from completion of the implementation rubrics by school and state personnel. These groups’ percentage differences on the four student achievement categories used to calculate the overall achievement rank were then compared using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression.

Methodology

SCRF Implementation Levels

Development of Implementation Groups

Total rubric score percentages for the 19 schools that completed the 2008-2009 SCRF Implementation Rubric were ranked and sorted. Percentages of rubric points were computed (divided by 614) as a relative measure of implementation. The distribution was inspected and cut-scores for high, average, and low implementation levels were determined based on observed clustering of scores. The selected groupings were confirmed through cluster analysis. Cluster analysis is a multivariate analysis technique that seeks to organize information about variables so that relatively homogeneous groups, or “clusters,” can be formed (Thapalia, 2009). Data points with smallest distances are grouped together, and the cluster is interpreted by observing the grouping pattern produced by the cluster procedure in SAS v. 9.2 (University of Idaho Statistical Programs, 2009). Total rubric score percentages were used to create three clusters of high, average, and low implementing schools that varied on their levels of program implementation on eight main components of the initiative (Table 5).

Figure 1 shows a bar graph of the actual scores (percentages) of each school in each implementation level. The descriptive statistics of total rubric score percentages of each level of implementation group are displayed in Table 5. High implementing schools had a mean implementation percentage of 90.5% and ranged from 88.9% to 92.3%. Average implementing schools had a mean implementation score of 83.2% and ranged from 80.6% to 85.7%. Low
implementing schools had a mean implementation score of 73.2% and ranged from 68.7% to 78.3%. There was very little observed variability within the groupings though there was more variability in the low implementation group compared to the high and average implementation groups.

![Figure 1. Schools' total rubric score percentage separated by three implementation levels.](image)

**Table 5: Summary Statistics of Implementation Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Q1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Q3&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Implementing</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools (N=7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Implementing</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools (N=8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Implementing</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools (N=4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Q1 = quartile 1 and Q3 = quartile 3

**Overall Achievement Rank Data**

As noted in the previous section, SCRF evaluators collected achievement data over time to determine a school’s *overall achievement rank*, which represented a school’s progress in four achievement categories. Performance level data were analyzed by school for matched and unmatched samples of students. Average percentage difference scores were calculated by computing the mean of the changes in AGL and NSI between fall and spring semesters over
four years of the school’s involvement with SCRF. A positive mean difference in the percentage scoring AGL and a negative mean difference in the percentage scoring NSI both indicated gains in student achievement. Matched students must have attended the SCRF school for three consecutive school years. Additionally, the students from the matched sample must have been promoted to the next grade level between each school year and had test scores in six test administrations.

Comparison of Implementation Groups and Student Achievement

Descriptive Statistics

Mean differences across each of the four achievement measures (AGL and NSI for unmatched and matched students) for each SCRF implementation level category were calculated. In addition, side-by-side box plots offering visual displays of summary statistics across implementation levels were constructed. Box plots depict the five-number summary, which include the minimum, first quartile (Q1), median, third quartile (Q3), and the maximum. Comparisons of statistics and distributions by implementation levels were noted.

Simple Linear Regression

To determine if level of implementation, as measured by the rubric score, was a statistically significant predictor of student achievement gains, simple linear regression models were estimated. The goal of linear regression is to find the line that best predicts the value of a dependent variable, denoted as Y, from an independent variable, denoted as X. Linear regression does this by finding the line that minimizes the sum of the squares of the vertical distances of the points from the line. Intercept and slope parameters are estimated in simple linear regression models. Statistical significance of the slope parameters were of interest to investigate whether a positive relationship exists between total rubric score and achievement outcomes. The independent or predictor variable for each model was the total rubric score percentage. The dependent or outcome variables in each of the four simple linear regression models were the four achievement measures (mean differences for AGL and NSI for unmatched and matched students from 2004-2008). SCRF program staff expected that schools with higher levels of implementation would have greater achievement gains.
Results

**Descriptive Results**

**Mean Differences**

Table 6 shows the mean differences across each of the four achievement measures (mean differences for four years in AGL and NSI for unmatched and matched students) for each SCRF implementation level category (high, average, and low implementing groups). The means for the high and average implementing schools were similar, while the low implementing schools had lower mean difference in achievement across all four measures.

Table 6: **Mean Differences across Achievement Measures for Matched and Unmatched Samples of Students for High, Average, and Low Implementing Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Implementing Schools</th>
<th>Average Implementing Schools</th>
<th>Low Implementing Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=7</td>
<td>N=8</td>
<td>N=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unmatched Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference AGL</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference NSI</td>
<td>-20.2%</td>
<td>-20.4%</td>
<td>-16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matched Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference AGL</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference NSI</td>
<td>-18.9%</td>
<td>-19.9%</td>
<td>-16.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*At grade level.*

For unmatched samples of students, high implementing schools had a mean increase of 21.8% for students scoring AGL and ranged from 18.5% to 27.0%; average implementing schools had a mean increase of 22.0% and ranged from 15.6% to 32.4%; and low implementing schools had a mean increase of 16.3% and ranged from 11.4% to 23.3%. For matched samples of students, high implementing schools had a mean increase of 24.2% for matched students scoring AGL and ranged from 12.1% to 33.3%; average implementing schools had a mean increase of 24.1% and ranged from 14.9% to 38.2%; and low implementing schools had a mean increase of 15.3% and ranged from 8.6% to 21.6%.
For unmatched samples of students, average percentage differences show the high implementing schools with a mean decrease of 20.2% and the decrease ranged from 13.2% to 25.1%; average implementing schools had a mean decrease of 20.4% and the decrease ranged from 11.6% to 28.6%; and low implementing schools had a mean decrease of 16.7% and the decrease ranged from 26.8% to 7.3% (Table 6). For matched samples of students, high implementing schools had a mean decrease of 18.9% for students scoring NSI and the decrease ranged from 10.2% to 26.8%; average implementing schools showed a mean decrease of 19.9% and the decrease ranged from 9.2% to 33.3%; and low implementing schools displayed a mean decrease of 16.4% and the decrease ranged from 7.6% to 24.7%.

**Box Plots**

For unmatched samples of students, high and average implementing schools displayed a slightly skewed distribution of mean percentage differences in students who scored AGL as seen in the box plots in Figure 2. The high implementing schools had the least spread (lowest range and inter-quartile range) and the greatest median among the three levels of implementation. Box plots in Figure 3 illustrate the distribution of mean percentage difference of matched students AGL for each implementation group. The range and inter-quartile range were wider for high and average implementing schools and narrower for low implementing schools. The quartiles of the mean percentage differences for AGL of matched students were higher for high implementing schools and lowest for average and low implementing schools.

For unmatched samples of students, high implementing schools had the least spread (lowest range and inter-quartile range). The median was lowest (indicating greater decrease) for high, but close to the median of average implementing schools. Low implementing schools had a greater median than the high and low implementing schools, thus depicting a smaller average decrease. Box plots for mean percentage differences of matched students scoring NSI are presented in Figure 5. In the matched analysis, there were strong outliers at both ends of the average implementing distribution, which resulted in this group having the largest range. The inter-quartile ranges for
all three groups were similar. Average implementing schools also had the lowest median indicating they had the largest average annual shift out of NSI.

Figure 2. Box plots of mean percentage differences of students scoring at grade level (unmatched) by implementation levels.
Figure 3. Box plots of mean percentage differences of students scoring at grade level (matched) by implementation levels.

Figure 4. Box plots of mean percentage differences of students scoring needs substantial intervention (unmatched) by implementation levels.
Regression Results

Table 7 provides values for the slope estimates, t-statistics, p-values, and $R^2$ resulting from the simple linear regression models analyzing the relationship between \textit{total rubric score} and each of the four achievement measures (AGL and NSI for matched and unmatched students). Scatterplots representing each of these relationships may be found in Appendix C.

Table 7: Results from Simple Linear Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement Measure</th>
<th>Slope Estimate</th>
<th>t-statistic (df = 17)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unmatched AGL</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched AGL</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmatched NSI</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.70</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched NSI</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.90</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At grade level.

The slope estimate for the AGL regression equation was positive and statistically significant (see Table 7). This means the relationship between the percentage increase of matched students scoring AGL and implementation scores was statistically significant. Higher scores on the implementation rubric were associated with larger increases in percentage of students scoring AGL. Based on the R² value, about 17% of the variability in achievement differences for AGL was explained by a relationship with implementation rubric scores. The current research does not account for additional variability in achievement changes.

The slope estimate for the matched AGL regression equation was also positive and statistically significant (see Table 7). This means that the association between the percentage increase of matched students scoring AGL and school implementation rubric scores was statistically significant. Higher scores on the implementation rubric were associated with larger increases in percentages of matched students scoring AGL. Based on the R² value, about 22% of the variability in average achievement differences for AGL was explained by a relationship with implementation rubric scores. This is the greatest amount of variability accounted for among the four models. However, the current research does not account for additional variability in achievement changes.

Needs substantial intervention.

The slope estimate for the NSI regression equation was negative and not statistically significant (see Table 7). This means that the decrease in students scoring NSI was not significantly associated with school implementation levels. Based on the R² value, only about 3% of the variability in achievement differences for NSI was explained by a relationship with implementation rubric scores. The current research does not account for substantial variability in achievement changes.

The slope estimate for the matched NSI regression equation was negative and not statistically significant (see Table 7). This means that there was not a significant relationship between changes in matched students scoring NSI and school implementation levels. Based on the R² value, only about 5% of the variability in achievement differences for NSI was explained by a relationship with implementation rubric scores. The current research does not account for substantial variability in achievement changes.
Section summary

The results from analyses exploring the relationship between school level SCRF implementation and student achievement revealed that there is a growth trend for AGL for unmatched and matched students. High and average implementing schools showed greater gains in students scoring AGL than low implementing schools. Regression equations showed significant associations between school implementation levels and mean increases in AGL for both matched and unmatched students. However, the regression equations showed no significant relationships between mean decreases in NSI for matched and unmatched students and implementation levels. The implementation rubric scores for the AGL models explained more variability in achievement changes than for the NSI models. This suggests better model fit for the AGL models as compared to the NSI models. However, in all models, additional variation beyond implementation measures remained to be accounted.
ANALYSIS OF STANFORD READING FIRST ACHIEVEMENT DATA

Methodology

A variety of reports on achievement results have been shared with personnel from the SCDE and other SCRF stakeholders over the past year. This section provides background information on the achievement measure, describes the analysis methods, and summarizes key findings from the various reports.

Achievement Measure

To measure achievement, students enrolled in SCRF schools in grades 1-3 complete the Stanford Reading First assessment in the fall and spring of each academic school year. The Stanford Reading First assessment is a version of the norm-referenced, vertically equated Stanford 10. Harcourt Educational Measurement developed Stanford Reading First specifically for the national Reading First Initiative. (Please note that Pearson Education, Inc. currently distributes the Stanford Reading First assessment.) The normative group is a nationally representative sample of students who participated in the 2002 National Reading Program for the standardization of Stanford 10 (Harcourt Assessment, 2004). It is important to note that students in Reading First schools typically have lower reading achievement compared to the nation overall. Therefore, the overall score patterns may differ between SCRF students and the normative sample.

The total score for a student on the Stanford Reading First assessment is composed of the score on a multiple choice section and the score on a teacher-administered, oral fluency section. Five components are assessed on the multiple choice section: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies. Two components are assessed on the oral fluency section: speaking vocabulary and oral reading fluency. Information on the total score as well as the individual components are presented in this report.

Scores are reported in three categories: at grade level (AGL), needs additional intervention (NAI), and needs substantial intervention (NSI). Students scoring AGL scored at the 40th percentile or higher as compared to the nationally representative group on which the assessment was normed. Students scoring NAI scored between the 20th and the 40th percentile, and students scoring NSI scored below the 20th percentile.

Students take four developmentally appropriate levels of the Stanford Reading First assessment across three years of participation in SCRF. The SESAT2 level assesses
kindergarten material, the Primary 1 level assesses grade 1 material, the Primary 2 level assesses grade 2 materials, and the Primary 3 level assesses grade 3 material. Students take the SESAT2 level of Stanford Reading First in the fall of grade 1 as a baseline measure. Students take alternate forms of the Primary 1 level of Stanford Reading First in spring of grade 1 and in fall of grade 2. Likewise, students take alternate forms of the Primary 2 level of Stanford Reading First in spring of grade 2 and in fall of grade 3. Finally, students take the Primary 3 level of Stanford Reading First in spring of grade 3. Fall and spring testing permits investigation of summer effects on test scores.

In the next sections, methods and results from student achievement reports shared with SCRF stakeholders are described. Analysis of absolute performance levels for all students tested in 2008-2009 are presented, followed by results of an analysis on longitudinally matched samples of students which utilized normal curve equivalent scores.

Overview of Data Analysis Methods

Three analyses on Stanford Reading First achievement results were conducted and include:

- Analysis of the performance levels for the overall score;
- Analysis of the performance levels for the seven components; and
- Matched analysis of normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores on Stanford Reading First for two matched samples of students.

Data reports with results from the above analyses are provided to each school at the beginning of each school year. These reports include school data and state data (all SCRF schools). The state level results are provided in Appendix D. Please note that results presented in Appendix D include performance level data for all SCRF schools that participated in each year of the initiative. This report focuses on performance level results in the most recent year of SCRF implementation, 2008-2009. The three types of analyses are described in the following sections.

Analysis of the Performance Level for the Overall Score

Results for this analysis are presented for all students tested in each test administration during fall 2008 and spring 2009. The performance levels on Stanford Reading First are provided for the overall test score which is composed of a multiple choice section and an oral fluency section. The three performance levels are:
1. At grade level (AGL),
2. Needs additional intervention (NAI), and

Results in Appendix D are provided in separate tables for all five fall administrations and for all five spring administrations for all students enrolled in SCRF schools each year. Appendix D presents results for all grades combined, by grade level, and by grade level disaggregated by each of five subgroups (i.e., economic status, ethnicity, English proficiency status, special education status, and gender). The subgroup categories on the performance level analyses are reported for the status of the students at the time of the test administration. For example, if a student did not receive free or reduced lunch at the time of the fall 2008 testing, then the scores for that student are reported in the full pay lunch category. If in spring 2009, the student was receiving free or reduced lunch, then his or her scores are reported in the free/reduced lunch category. These classifications are consistent with the federal reporting requirements. These results are presented in Appendix D in the Performance Level Results. Note that percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Analysis of the Performance Level for the Seven Components

Results from this analysis are presented for all students tested in 2008-2009. The performance levels are provided for the five multiple choice components (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies) and the two oral fluency components (i.e., speaking vocabulary and oral reading fluency). The results are presented for all grades combined and by grade level in Appendix D as the Performance Level Results. The results in Appendix D are also provided in separate tables for the five fall and spring administrations for all students enrolled in SCRF schools each year. This report highlights results for schools that participated in SCRF in 2008-2009.

Matched Analysis of NCE Scores

Matched analyses of students who participated in consecutive years were performed to investigate the performance of students who fully participated in SCRF. The matched analyses on Stanford Reading First data were completed using normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores.

Results for the 2004-2007 and the 2005-2008 matched samples for schools that started SCRF implementation in the 2004-2005 school year can be seen in previous evaluation reports (OPE and SCEPC, 2008). This report presents NCE analyses for the two longitudinally
matched samples from schools that participated in SCRF in 2008-2009. The three-year longitudinally matched sample (2006-2009) included students who were:

1. In an SCRF Cohort 1 school in three consecutive school years;
2. Were promoted to the next grade level between each school year; and
3. Had test scores in six test administrations.

The two-year longitudinally matched sample (2007-2009) included students who were:

1. In an SCRF Cohort 2 school in two consecutive school years;
2. Were promoted to the next grade level between school years; and
3. Had test scores in four test administrations.

More specifically, the 2006-2009 matched sample included students from 23 SCRF Cohort 1 schools who progressed from grade 1 in 2006-2007 to grade 2 in 2007-2008 to grade 3 in 2008-2009. The 2007-2009 matched sample included 2 groups of students from 7 SCRF Cohort 2 schools. The first group of students in the 2007-2009 matched sample were enrolled in grade 1 in 2007-2008 and progressed to grade 2 in 2008-2009. The second group of students in the 2007-2009 matched sample were enrolled in grade 2 in 2007-2008 and progressed to grade 3 in 2008-2009. The results are presented by the school that the student attended in the spring of 2009. Note that students could have been enrolled in one SCRF school and transferred to another school.

The matched analysis provides a meaningful measure of growth in reading achievement for students who participated in the SCRF program for more than one year. The NCE score on the overall test was used for the analysis. NCEs are converted from percentile ranks, but have an advantage over percentile ranks because NCEs provide an equal-interval scale and permit valid reporting of statistics such as means and standard deviations. NCEs range from 1 to 99 and have a mean of 50. Therefore, if a student has an NCE of 50, this means he/she is performing average as compared to a norm reference group. Analysis of NCE scores over time provides a measure of growth compared to the sample on which the Stanford Reading First assessment was normed.

Average NCE scores were computed for each of the test administrations for each matched sample. Tables with the mean NCE scores for the fall and spring of each school year are provided in Appendix D. Figures plotting the mean NCE scores for each semester of the 2006-2009 and 2007-2009 matched samples are provided and discussed in this section. In addition to the mean NCE for each semester, tables of annual and overall differences are presented in Appendix D. The differences represent annual gains (spring minus fall) for each
school year and overall gains (final spring minus initial fall). The results in Appendix D are presented for all matched samples, as well as, disaggregated by each of five subgroups. The subgroups include those required for the federal report (i.e., economic status, ethnicity, English proficiency status, and special education status) and gender. The subgroup categories for the NCE analyses are reported for the status of the students in the last semester they were tested.

**Summary of Schools Included in Analyses**

Thirty-one schools participated in the SCRF Initiative during the entire 2008-2009 school year. Among these schools, 24 were Cohort 1 schools that participated in all five years of SCRF implementation (2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009). Seven schools were Cohort 2 schools that participated in only the two most recent years of SCRF (2007-2008 and 2008-2009). Please note that one of the Cohort 1 schools served kindergarten only and did not have Stanford Reading First results. Hence, 2008-2009 achievement results are reported for a total of 30 schools; 23 Cohort 1 schools and 7 Cohort 2 schools.

**Summary of Achievement Analyses**

The 2008-2009 results provide information on the performance of the schools that participated in the most recent year of SCRF implementation. Performance level results are provided for fall 2008 and spring 2009 for all students tested for both the overall score and for the seven components. The matched student performance is summarized for schools that participated in consecutive years of SCRF and provides results on mean NCE scores for two longitudinally matched samples of students.

The achievement results are presented in the following sections:

- Achievement Results for 2008-2009 SCRF Schools, and

**Achievement Results for 2008-2009 SCRF Schools**

**Student Performance Level Analysis for the Overall Score**

The purpose of this analysis was to examine the achievement of students who received SCRF services in the 2008-2009 school year. Summary information was based on all students in SCRF schools who took the Stanford Reading First Assessment in the fall 2008 and spring 2009 test administrations. The evaluation report for the United States Department of Education (US DOE) requires reporting for all students who take the assessment in each administration.
rather than for the group of students who have taken the assessment in both test
administrations. The number of students in grades 1-3 who took the assessment in the fall and
spring of 2008-2009 are shown in Table 8. The numbers reported represent the 30 schools with
Stanford Reading First results from grades 1-3 that participated in SCRF in 2008-2009. Note
that one school that participated in SCRF in 2008-2009 only included kindergarten students,
thus no achievement data was available for this school. Among the 30 schools that were
included, 23 were among the original 52 schools that began SCRF implementation in 2004-
2005 and 7 schools entered SCRF in 2007-2008. The total number of students tested differs by
semester due to individual students entering or leaving the schools participating in the SCRF
Initiative.

Table 8: Students Who Took the Stanford Reading First Assessment by Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade level</th>
<th>Fall 2008</th>
<th>Spring 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>2,051</td>
<td>2,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>2,072</td>
<td>2,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>2,016</td>
<td>2,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,139</td>
<td>6,162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores from the Stanford Reading First achievement test classify a student’s
performance into one of three proficiency levels. The performance levels are at grade level
(AGL), needs additional intervention (NAI), and needs substantial intervention (NSI). Students
in the AGL category scored at or above the 40th percentile, students in the NAI category scored
between the 20th and the 39th percentiles, and students in the NSI category scored below the
20th percentile.

Fall and Spring Student Performance

The percentages of students by grade level who scored AGL and NSI in the fall 2008
and spring 2009 are presented in Figures 6 (AGL) and 7 (NSI). The difference between fall and
spring in each category indicates how the students’ scores change over the school year. A
positive difference in the percentage of students who scored AGL and a negative difference in
the percentage of students who scored NSI both indicate gains in student achievement. Larger
changes in scores from fall to spring indicate more substantial achievement gains.

Figure 6 represents the change in AGL for the 2008-2009 implementation year. Grade 1
students made the largest gain in the percentage of students who scored AGL across fall to
spring semesters with a 32.3% increase. Grade 3 students also showed a large increase in the percentage of students scoring AGL between fall 2008 and spring 2009 with an 18.8% increase. The smallest increase occurred in Grade 2 with a 0.9% increase in students scoring AGL from fall to spring.

Figure 6. Results for at grade level (AGL) by grade level.

Grades 1 and 3 also showed the largest declines in the percentage of students categorized as NSI between fall and spring in 2008-2009. Figure 7 shows that the percentage of students scoring NSI declined by 30.0% for grade 1 and 19.7% for grade 3 between fall 2008 and spring 2009. For grade 2, the percentage of students who scored NSI slightly increased (0.6%) between the fall and spring of 2008-2009.
Figure 7. Fall results for needs substantial intervention (NSI) by grade level.

Grade 2 had the smallest increase in percentage AGL (0.9%) and a small increase in percentage NSI (0.6%) from fall 2008 to spring 2009 among the three grade levels. Similar achievement trends have been observed for all five years of SCRF implementation. This outcome may be due to the test used in the spring of second grade having greater reading demands than the test used in the fall. Specifically, the reading comprehension section on the grade 2 assessment appears to be more challenging in the spring as compared to the fall. The comprehension items in the spring are entirely based on reading passages, where the items in the fall are a mix of short sentence reading and passage-based items. The reading passages are also considerably longer on the spring assessment than on the fall assessment.

Performance Level Analysis for the Seven Components

The total score on the Stanford Reading First assessment provides a measure of how students perform overall. An analysis was also conducted to determine how students performed on each of the five multiple choice components and the two oral fluency components of the assessment. Table 9 contains the results for all three grades combined for each test administration for all schools participating in the SCRF Initiative during the 2008-2009 implementation year.
Table 9: Performance Levels for Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 for All Grades Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Semester</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phonemic Awareness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>-5.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>-6.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Phonics**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>-13.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>-8.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Fluency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>-12.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Comprehension Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>-11.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>-11.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Reading Fluency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>-5.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>-14.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows all performance levels (AGL, NAI, and NSI) for fall 2008 and spring 2009 along with differences by component for all grades combined. The largest gains in the percentage of students who scored AGL between fall 2008 and spring 2009 were in oral reading fluency (19.7%), speaking vocabulary (14.1%), reading comprehension strategies (12.5%), and phonemic awareness (12.1%). The smallest gain observed occurred on vocabulary development (3.6%).

The percentage of students who scored NSI decreased on most components from fall 2008 to spring 2009. There were slight increases in the percentage scoring NSI for phonics (3.8%) and vocabulary development (5.0%). The largest declines in the percentage of students scoring NSI were observed for oral reading fluency and reading fluency. A decrease of 14.6% in the percentage of students classified as NSI on oral reading fluency was observed between
fall 2008 and spring 2009. The percentage of students classified as NSI on reading fluency decreased by 12% between fall 2008 and spring 2009.

Student performance levels (AGL, NAI, and NSI) by grade level for each component for the 2008-2009 school year were also examined. The full results of this analysis are presented in Appendix D. The percentage of students categorized as AGL generally increased from fall 2008 to spring 2009 for most components for all grades. Specifically, marked gains were observed from fall 2008 to spring 2009 for grade 1 reading comprehension strategies (increase of 49.4%), grade 1 oral reading fluency (increase of 47.7%), grade 1 speaking vocabulary (increase of 31.4%), grade 2 phonemic awareness (increase of 26.7%), and grade 3 phonics (increase of 30.4%). Some decreases in the percentage of students scoring AGL were also observed for the 2008-2009 school year: grade 1 phonics (decrease of 9.2%), grade 2 reading comprehension strategies (decrease of 31.2%), grade 3 phonemic awareness (decrease of 12.8%), and grade 3 vocabulary development (decrease of 11.0%).

Analysis of NCE Scores for Longitudinally Matched Samples of Students

In addition to the analyses of absolute performance levels (i.e., proficiency levels), an analysis of normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores on the Stanford Reading First assessment was conducted after matching individual students who completed consecutive test administrations of the Stanford Reading First achievement test. The matched sample analysis provides a meaningful measure of growth in reading achievement for students who participated in the SCRF initiative for three consecutive school years (2006-2009 for Cohort 1 schools) and two consecutive school years (2007-2009 for Cohort 2 schools).

Data pertaining to the previous two matched samples for schools that participated since 2004-2005 were reported in previous evaluation reports. Three groups of students have completed six consecutive test administrations of the Stanford Reading First achievement test. The first matched sample (2004-2007) of students participated in SCRF as first graders during the 2004-2005 academic year, second graders during 2005-2006, and third graders in 2006-2007. This sample included students from the 47 schools with grades 1-3 that participated in the first three years of SCRF. The second matched sample (2005-2008) of students participated in SCRF as first graders during the 2005-2006 academic year, second graders during 2006-2007, and third graders in 2007-2008. This sample included students from the 28 schools with grades 1-3 that participated in all four years of SCRF.
Results from analysis of the 2006-2009 matched sample of students from Cohort 1 schools are presented in this report. These students participated in SCRF as first graders during the 2006-2007 academic year, second graders during 2007-2008, and third graders in 2008-2009. This sample includes students from the 23 schools with grades 1-3 that participated in all five years of SCRF. Student scores were matched across the years only if the students participated in SCRF throughout all three years of implementation (2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009) and were promoted to the next grade level each year. In total, data for 987 students could be matched for the 2006-2009 matched sample. [Please note that the total number of students (n=987) includes 17 students who started in a Cohort 1 school, but finished in a Cohort 2 school.]

NCE scores (NCEs) were reported based on the total test score on the Stanford Reading First achievement test. Figure 8 presents mean NCE Scores on Stanford Reading First for the 2006-2009 matched samples of students who completed three years of SCRF. On the Stanford Reading First assessment, the 40th percentile is the cut-off for students who score at grade level (AGL), which is equivalent to an NCE score of 45 (see the green “At Grade Level” reference line on Figure 8).

![Figure 8. Average NCE Scores on Stanford Reading First for matched SCRF students (2006-2009) with AGL Reference Line.](image-url)
The light blue line in Figure 8 displays the mean NCE scores for the 2006-2009 matched sample of students who participated in SCRF from fall 2006 through spring 2009. On average, students showed gains between each fall and spring semester. These gains were similar to results reported for previous matched samples. Like the 2004-2007 and 2005-2008 matched samples, students in the 2006-2009 matched sample made the largest gains in grade 1 with a mean increase of 16.3 NCEs. The next largest gain was made during grade 3 with a mean increase of 10.1 NCEs. Relatively small gains were made in grade 2 with a mean increase of 2.9 NCEs, which is slightly larger than the mean increase for the 2004-2007 and the 2005-2008 matched samples.

For norm-referenced assessments such as the Stanford Reading First exam, growth in NCE scores is expected to be flat if students perform similarly to the group on which the assessment was normed. The fact that all annual changes were positive suggests that SCRF students in the 2006-2009 matched sample made more progress than expected. Further, the large increases in grades 1 and 3 indicate substantially greater growth than expected. There was a mean loss of 10.2 NCEs from spring of grade 1 to fall of grade 2, which was larger than observed for the 2004-2007 and 2005-2008 matched samples. The mean loss from spring of grade 2 to fall of grade 3 was 7.3 NCEs. This was smaller than the 2005-2008 matched sample and about the same as the 2004-2007 matched sample.

**2007-2009 Matched Sample**

The 2007-2009 matched sample included students from the 7 Cohort 2 schools with grades 1-3 that participated in SCRF during 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. Two groups of students in Cohort 2 schools have completed four consecutive test administrations of the Stanford Reading First achievement test. The students in the grade 1 to 2 group participated in SCRF as first graders during the 2007-2008 academic year and progressed to second grade during 2008-2009. Students in the grade 2 to 3 group participated in SCRF as second graders during the 2007-2008 academic year and progressed to third grade during 2008-2009. Student scores were matched across the years only if the students participated in SCRF throughout both years of implementation and advanced to the next grade level in 2008-2009. In total, data of 624 students (grade 1 to 2 = 295; grade 2 to 3 = 329) could be matched for the 2007-2009 matched sample.

NCE scores (NCEs) were reported based on the total test score on the Stanford Reading First achievement test. Figure 9 presents mean NCE scores on Stanford Reading First for the 2007-2009 matched sample of students who have completed two years of SCRF. Recall
that the green reference line represents the cut-off for students who score AGL, which is equivalent to an NCE score of 45.

![Graph showing average NCE scores on Stanford Reading First for matched SCRF students (2007-2009) with AGL Reference Line.]

**Figure 9.** Average NCE Scores on Stanford Reading First for matched SCRF students (2007-2009) with AGL Reference Line.

The light blue line in Figure 9 displays the mean NCE scores for the 2007-2009 grade 1 to 2 matched sample who participated in SCRF from fall 2007 through spring 2009. Like previous matched samples, students in this grade 1 to 2 matched sample made large gains in grade 1 with a mean increase of 15.8 NCEs. Small losses were observed during grade 2 with a mean decrease of 1.1 NCEs, which differs slightly from trends of previous matched samples that show small increases in grade 2 NCEs. As previously discussed, growth in NCE scores on norm-referenced assessments is expected to be flat if students perform similarly to the group on which the assessment was normed. The fact that grade 1 annual changes were positive suggests that SCRF students in the 2007-2009 matched sample made more progress than expected during grade 1. There was an average loss of 4.8 NCEs from spring of grade 1 to fall of grade 2. The summer decline is smaller than those observed for the 2004-2007, 2005-2008, and 2006-2009 matched samples.

The dark purple line in Figure 9 displays the mean NCE scores for the 2007-2009 grade 2 to 3 matched sample who participated in SCRF from fall 2007 through spring 2009. During grade 2, these students had a mean increase of 3.1 NCEs, which mimics small gains for grade 2 seen in previous matched samples. Larger gains were observed during grade 3, with a mean
increase of 9.4 NCEs. These gains for grade 3 in the 2007-2009 matched sample were slightly lower than grade 3 gains reported for the 2004-2007 and 2005-2008 matched samples. Similar to the grade 1 to 2 group, the average summer loss for the grade 2 to 3 group (mean decrease of 5.1 NCEs) was smaller than those observed for previous matched samples.

Section Summary

In summary, students in grades 1 and 3 who participated in the SCRF Initiative during 2008-2009 demonstrated notable increases in the percentage of students who scored AGL between the fall and spring administrations. Students in grade 2 showed only a slight increase in the percentage of students who scored AGL from fall 2008 to spring 2009. The percentage of students who scored NSI showed declines between the fall and spring semester for grades 1 and 3, with grade 1 demonstrating the most marked decrease.

The matched analysis of students in Cohort 1 schools who progressed from grade 1 to grade 2 to grade 3 in the 2006-2009 matched sample showed growth for all grades. Positive annual changes suggest that SCRF students made more progress than expected. Further, the substantially large increases in grades 1 and 3 indicate much greater growth than expected. In the 2007-2009 matched sample from Cohort 2 schools, large gains were also observed in grade 1 among the grade 1 to 2 students and in grade 3 among the grade 2 to 3 students. These changes indicate achievement of students in SCRF schools is improving.
QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT SURVEYS

Methodology

Survey results for the five participant groups are summarized in this section. Complete results by participant group are provided in Appendices E-I. Developed collaboratively with SCRF staff, participant group surveys served as the source for gathering information about participants’ perceptions about the SCRF Initiative, as well as information about the extent to which program services were provided. Additionally, surveys included questions about program implementation, level of support, participants’ roles and responsibilities, professional development participation and needs, and overall effectiveness. The surveys were comprised of a series of closed and open-ended questions. Survey items differed slightly by participant group and between each year’s forms as a result of integrating annual changes suggested by SCDE professional development providers.

The OPE and SCEPC staff mailed packets of surveys to school literacy coaches via certified mail in spring 2009. Surveys were mailed on March 24, 2009 with all surveys confirmed received by March 27, 2009. The school-based literacy coaches were responsible for coordinating survey administration at each school and were provided with a roster of individuals at each school who needed to complete the surveys. Surveys were completed by interventionists, literacy coaches, principals, teachers, and study group members (i.e., assistant principals, media specialists, speech pathologists, and resource teachers). Completed survey packets were returned to the OPE/SCEPC staff on April 28-29, 2009 at the School Leadership Team (SLT) meeting. Table 10 presents the response rates by group with 98.5% of all participant group surveys returned, a strong overall response rate.

Table 10: Participant Response Rates for Spring 2009 SCRF Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Group</th>
<th>Surveys Provided</th>
<th>Surveys Collected</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Coaches</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>98.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventionists</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Group Members</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results

*Preparation and Professional Development*

The first section of each survey included questions about participation in and helpfulness of various SCRF preparation and professional development activities. Respondents were also asked to report on how they used the core reading program and to identify overall professional development needs as well as professional development needs specific to the Dominie assessment.

*Participation in SCRF Preparation and Professional Development Activities*

The results shown in Figure 10 indicate that participation in SCRF meetings was high for all groups. For example, 100.0% of teachers, interventionists, and principals reported they participated in study group activities. All principals, interventionists, and literacy coaches responded that they participated in School Intervention Team (SIT) meetings, but participation by teachers (66.2%) and study group members (67.4%) was substantially lower, since they were not all required to attend.

Another key professional development activity involved observation in SCRF classrooms and other SCRF schools. As expected, Figure 10 shows that all principals and literacy coaches (100.0%) reported observing in SCRF classrooms. However, there was far less participation in observation of other SCRF schools. Slightly less than three quarters of literacy coaches (74.3%) reported observing in other SCRF schools, and only 23.6% of teachers and 29.0% of principals reported engaging in this outside observation. This finding was lower than the results from the 2008 survey administration where nearly all literacy coaches (94.9%) had reported they observed in other SCRF schools.
Figure 10. Percentage of respondents, by group, who reported participation in various SCRF professional development activities.

Note. Not all groups were asked to answer all survey items represented in the above figure as indicated by the absence of a bar.

Figure 11 shows that receipt of assistance from the regional SCRF literacy coach was reported by all principals and literacy coaches. A large percentage of teachers (86.9%) also reported they received assistance from the regional literacy coach. Similar results were reported for respondents who received assistance from the SCRF regional intervention coach, with 95.1% of interventionists and 96.7% of principals indicating they received assistance from their regional intervention coach.
Helpfulness of SCRF Preparation and Professional Development Activities

Participants who completed the surveys were also asked to assess the helpfulness of SCRF professional development activities. Figure 12 shows the percentage of respondents by group, who found the SCRF activities helpful or very helpful. Overall, all respondent groups rated the professional development activities positively with more than 90% of literacy coaches, 80% of principals, interventionists, and study group members, and greater than 75% of teachers having rated the professional development and preparation activities as helpful or very helpful.

For those who observed in other SCRF classrooms and/or schools, these observations were typically rated as the most helpful activities across all respondent groups. Also, the SIT meetings were viewed as helpful by all respondent groups with 100.0% of principals and interventionists and more than 90% of literacy coaches and study group members who rated this activity highly. Besides classroom observations, teachers reported the information sessions led by the SLT to be the most helpful activity. Study groups were rated lower on helpfulness than all other professional development activities by those groups participating in all activities.
Figure 12. Percentage of participants’ rating SCRF activities as helpful and very helpful.

Note. Not all groups were asked to answer all survey items represented in the above figure as indicated by the absence of a bar.

Professional Development Needs

Respondents were asked to identify the areas where they needed more professional development. As shown in Figure 13, all groups noted that some additional professional development was needed in the five components of effective reading instruction. Comprehension was the area identified by all participant groups as having the greatest professional development need. Vocabulary was another area identified by over one quarter of each participant group as an area requiring additional professional development. Also, as compared with other respondent groups, the interventionist group indicated an interest in more professional development in the area of fluency.
The SCRF participants also reported professional development needs in other areas beyond the five areas of effective reading instruction. As shown in Figure 14, the areas of professional development identified as having the greatest need were “effective instructional strategies to use for students performing below grade level,” “small group instruction,” and “selecting supplemental activities for students who need additional help with reading.” For teachers, effective instructional strategies and selecting supplemental activities were the two greatest areas of need reported; whereas, literacy coaches identified the most need in addressing the needs of English Language Learners.
Interpreting Stanford Reading First score reports

Dominie administration

The core reading program

Instructional strategies for students performing below grade level

Small group instruction

Using SC English language arts standards

Needs of English language learners

Selecting supplemental activities for students needing reading help

Professional Development Needs

Figure 14. Percentage, by group, who agreed and strongly agreed they needed professional development not related to the five components of reading instruction.

Note. Not all groups were asked to answer all survey items represented in the above figure as indicated by the absence of a bar.

Participant groups were asked to identify their professional development needs related to the use of the Dominie assessments. Figure 15 provides a summary of the respondents’ perceptions of the need for additional professional development on the use of the Dominie. Few respondents reported a need for additional professional development on the use of the Dominie assessment. Of the areas presented, participants indicated the greatest professional development need for the use of the Dominie for diagnosing specific needs of individual students and for using the Dominie results in making instructional decisions. In particular, almost half of the literacy coaches indicated a need for additional professional development in using the Dominie for diagnosing specific student needs.
Context and Implementation

This section summarizes the information about the perceptions of the principals, teachers, literacy coaches, interventionists and study groups regarding the context and culture of implementation. Particularly, the respondents reported (1) their level of support for the initiative, (2) their understanding of each other’s roles and responsibilities, (3) collaboration, (4) support between participants, (5) coaching activities, and (6) services provided to students.

Support for the Initiative

All the participants were asked to rate their level of support for the SCRF initiative and rate their principal’s support of the initiative. As Figure 16 shows, interventionists and literacy coaches strongly supported (100.0%) the SCRF initiative. Similarly, 96.7% of principals and 90.8% of study group members also strongly supported the SCRF Initiative. All the participant groups also perceived their principal to be supportive of the SCRF initiative. As Figure 16 shows, 93.1% of study group members, 91.5% of the literacy coaches, and 90.3% of the interventionists agreed or strongly agreed that the principal supports the SCRF initiative. Similarly, 89.7% of the teachers indicated the principal as supportive of the SCRF initiative.

Figure 15. Percentage of participants who indicated a need for further professional development on the use of the Dominie.

Note. Not all groups were asked to answer all survey items represented in the above figure as indicated by the absence of a bar.
Figure 16. Levels of support for the SCRF Initiative (agreed and strongly agreed).

Note. Not all groups were asked to answer all survey items represented in the above figure as indicated by the absence of a bar.

Understanding Roles and Responsibilities

SCRF participant groups indicated that they understood their roles and responsibilities within the initiative. As shown in Figure 17, all of the principals, literacy coaches, and interventionists expressed understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the SCRF initiative. A high percentage of the teachers (93.7%) and study group members (93.1%) also agreed or strongly agreed that they understood their roles and responsibilities.
As shown in Figure 18, all of the literacy coaches, 98.4% of the interventionists, 96.7% of the principals, and 96.2% of the study group members reported that they understood the roles and responsibilities of the teachers. All literacy coaches and principals also clearly expressed understanding of the role of interventionists. The role of SCRF interventionists was also reported as clear to the study group members and teachers. A high percentage of study group members (94.7%) and teachers (90.0%) agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the role of the SCRF interventionists. Similarly, the role of the SCRF literacy coach was also reported as clear to most participants as 100.0% of interventionists, 100.0% of principals, and 87.6% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the role of the SCRF literacy coaches. The majority of the literacy coaches and principals also agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the roles of other SCRF groups including regional literacy coaches, regional intervention coaches, SLT, and SIT. More than 70.0% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the roles and responsibilities of the regional literacy coach (70.7%), regional intervention coach (71.3%), and school leadership team (76.2%).

Figure 17. Percentage of participants agreeing and strongly agreeing they understood their roles and responsibilities within the SCRF initiative.
Overall, the data suggest that all the participant groups understood their roles and responsibilities within the SCRF Initiative and the roles of other SCRF groups. In addition to understanding individual roles and responsibilities, the majority of the participant groups reported understanding the goals of the SCRF Initiative. One hundred percent of the interventionists, principals and literacy coaches agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the goals of the SCRF Initiative, as well as 97.7% of the study group members and 93.6% of teachers.

**Collaboration**

Previous research has shown that collaboration is a crucial factor in school reform efforts. Collaboration has the potential to reduce the alienation that teachers may experience by building trust, provide opportunities for sharing successful strategies that may assist in closing the achievement gap, empower teachers, and increase teacher efficacy (Friend & Cook, 1990; Clark & Astuto, 1994; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Ainscow, Muijs, & West, 2006; & Levin & Marcus, 2008). Additionally, teacher collaboration efforts for overall school improvement have been linked to student achievement on high stakes assessments (Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007).
Relationships between participants were examined in the areas of respect and collaboration. Participants’ responses showed high levels of mutual respect between all the participant groups. One hundred percent of principals and study group members and over 95.0% of interventionists and teachers indicated that they respected their literacy coaches. Confirming these responses, over 97.0% the literacy coaches agreed or strongly agreed that teachers treated them with respect, and all the literacy coaches (100.0%) reported that they respected their teachers. In addition, all the literacy coaches also agreed or strongly agreed that their principals treated them with respect. The majority of the interventionists (96.8%) reported that they respect their teachers and literacy coaches, and over 93.0% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they received support from teachers as well as literacy coaches. Similarly, a high percentage (90.3%) of interventionists agreed or strongly agreed that their principals treated them with respect, and 96.7% agreed or strongly agreed that their literacy coach treated them with respect.

The SCRF respondents also generally rated collaboration with other participants as high. The majority of the literacy coaches indicated that they worked collaboratively with teachers to address student needs and shared similar views on reading (94.3% agreed or strongly agreed). Similarly, over 86.0% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they worked collaboratively with literacy coaches and shared similar views on reading with teachers. The interventionists also rated working collaboratively with literacy coaches as high (92.0% agreed or strongly agreed). Most of the literacy coaches (82.9% agreed or strongly agreed) reported that they worked collaboratively with their principal to provide school level professional development opportunities for teachers in reading. In addition, a high percentage of principals (96.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the literacy coaches responded to their requests for consultation, and 87.1% agreed or strongly agreed that their SCRF literacy coach helped teachers work together as a team. In addition, many teachers (88.1% agreed or strongly agreed) indicated that they shared similar views with interventionists on how to teach reading and reported that they worked together with teachers as a team (82.3% agreed or strongly agreed).

Support between participants

Support between participants was defined as responding to requests for consultation, providing professional development consistent with needs, and providing feedback about performance. Perceptions of the participant groups were examined to conclude if their designated support person had sufficient knowledge about content and assessment to meet their needs. This is particularly important considering that recent research has demonstrated a
link between coaches’ ability to support teachers as learners and the frequency with which coaches review assessment data with teachers and positive outcomes (Marsh, McCombs, Lockwood, Martorell, Gershwin, Naftell, Le, Shea, Barney, & Crego, 2008).

The majority of teachers (90.4% agreed or strongly agreed) reported that they received support from the literacy coach. In addition, a high percentage of teachers (92.1%) indicated that they used the instructional strategies learned from their SCRF literacy coach and stated that the literacy coach responded to requests for assistance (89.3% agreed or strongly agreed). Teachers also generally indicated that the literacy coach provided professional development consistent with their needs (84.5% agreed or strongly agreed).

A high percentage of interventionists reported that they received support from their SCRF literacy coaches (95.1% agreed or strongly agreed) as well as from SCRF teachers (93.5% agreed or strongly agreed). Over 96% of interventionists stated that their regional intervention coach provided them feedback about their teaching. Similarly, the majority of interventionists agreed or strongly agreed (93.4%) that the SCRF teachers incorporated intervention strategies into their instruction, and 91.9% indicated that teachers supported their intervention methods. In addition, the majority of interventionists agreed or strongly agreed (93.5%) that their regional intervention coach provided them assistance based on their professional development needs and responded to their requests for assistance (96.8% agreed or strongly agreed). At least 90.0% of participant groups agreed or strongly agreed that the regional intervention coach provided assistance based on professional development needs, responded to requests for assistance, and had the content knowledge and knowledge about assessment to help them.

Principals reported that they were highly supported by interventionists, literacy coaches, regional literacy coaches, and regional interventionist coaches. At least 96.0% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that their interventionist(s) had the content knowledge and knowledge about assessment to help the lowest performing students. A high percentage of principals (96.8%) reported that literacy coaches had the content knowledge necessary to help the SCRF teachers and they responded to their requests for consultation. In addition, 100.0% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that their literacy coaches had enough knowledge about assessment to help their SCRF teachers. Similarly, the majority of principals also indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that their SCRF regional literacy coaches had the content knowledge (93.5%) and knowledge about assessment (96.7%) to help SCRF teachers, and perceived that they responded to their requests for consultation (96.8%). In addition, the majority of principals agreed or strongly agreed that their SCRF regional intervention coach had the content
knowledge necessary to help SCRF interventionists (96.7%). One hundred percent of principals agreed or strongly agreed that their SCRF regional intervention coach had the knowledge about assessment to help SCRF interventionists and responded to their requests for consultation.

Literacy coaches also indicated that their regional literacy coach supported them. All the literacy coaches reported that their regional literacy coach responded to requests for assistance and had enough knowledge about assessment and content to help them. Additionally, 94.3% of the literacy coaches reported that their regional literacy coach provided (1) feedback about coaching and study group facilitation, (2) assistance based on professional development needs, and (3) worked collaboratively to ensure that school level professional development needs were met.

**Coaching Activities**

The SCRF model calls for a full-time, school-based literacy coach to facilitate after-school study groups and work with teachers individually to improve their use of scientifically-based reading research instructional practices. Research has shown, for example, a relationship between the number of hours a coach spends in the classroom and students' alphabet recognition scores (Shidler, 2009). Additionally, Shidler (2009) demonstrated that a coaching model that focused coaching for instructional efficacy in specific content and teaching methods resulted in teachers putting theory to practice.

Literacy coaches and teachers provided information about the frequency of these coaching activities as shown in Table 11. Similar to the previous years' reports, teachers and literacy coaches had different perceptions about the frequency of coaching activities. Literacy coaches reported high levels of involvement across the range of possible coaching activities. The frequency of teachers participating in these coaching activities was highest for sharing or demonstrating scientifically-based reading strategies, helping use student assessment data to improve teaching, providing meaningful feedback, helping analyze student assessment results, and using the core reading program. Inconsistency in the perception of the frequency of coaching activities between coaches and teachers may be the result of variation in the needs of individual teachers. For instance, some teachers may request assistance with using student assessment data to improve teaching, while other teachers have mastered that skill. The coach would indicate that teachers were helped with using assessment data, but only some of the teachers would have received that type of assistance. Therefore, although the majority of literacy coaches may be conducting all activities, individual teachers do not necessarily receive all possible services from the coach.
Table 11: Perception of Frequency of Coaching Activities between Literacy Coaches and Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Literacy Coaches(^a)</th>
<th>Teachers(^a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-teaching</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping with management</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping with organization</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating or modeling lessons</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping plan or develop lesson</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating SC English language</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting supplemental activities for students who need additional help in reading</td>
<td>94.3%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping analyze student assessment results</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing meaningful feedback</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping use student assessment data to improve teaching</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing teaching</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing or demonstrating scientifically-based reading strategies for instruction</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping develop assessments</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the core reading program</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Percentage of respondents in the group who reported that the activity occurred *sometimes* or *often*.

Teachers and literacy coaches also identified areas of interest for future activities. Literacy coaches expressed the most interest in continued professional development related to developing assessments for reading (60.0%), incorporating SC English language arts standards within lessons (51.4%), helping plan or develop lesson plans (48.6%), and selecting supplemental activities for students who need additional help (48.6%). Somewhat consistent with the responses of the literacy coaches, teachers also expressed interest in gaining more information on developing assessments for reading (24.7%) and selecting supplemental activities for students needing additional help in reading (26.4%). Additionally, 28.0% of teachers expressed interest in gaining more information in demonstrating or modeling lessons, and 79.5% of teachers indicated the need for continued professional development on sharing or demonstrating scientifically-based reading strategies.
Services Provided to Students

The SCRF Initiative uses a variety of activities to accomplish its goal of increasing students’ reading ability including intervention services, instructional services based on the five components (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), supplemental reading activities, and additional services to enhance student growth. The majority of teachers (71.6%) indicated that the school-based interventionist had worked with at least one of their students during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Intervention services provided to students.

Interventionists responded to items related to the structure of their services to students, the number and grade level of students they served, the frequency and length of time they spent serving students, and their pattern of reporting student progress to teachers. Reading intervention services were divided into one-to-one services and small groups. These services were provided to students in kindergarten through grade 3. All interventionists reported serving students in grade 1, whereas only 12.9% reported serving students in kindergarten.

In one-to-one settings, interventionists predominantly served students in grade 1. Interventionists averaged 7.8 students served in grade 1 while averaging under 0.3 students served in the other grades. A majority of interventionists reported working with 4 students each day (73.8%) and for 21-30 minutes per student each day (63.9%).

In small group settings, interventionists served the greatest number of students in grades 1 and 2 (both averaged 9.8 students served) with slightly fewer students served in grade 3 (an average of 8.2 students served). Interventionists reported serving far fewer students in kindergarten in small group interventions; an average of 0.5 students. Most small groups consisted of 4-5 students and lasted for 31-40 minutes per day. Only 19.4% of the small group intervention sessions lasted more than 40 minutes per day. Roughly three-fourths of interventionists (77.4%) reported working with three small groups of students each day. Over 95% of interventionists reported that they “sometimes” (described as several times during the service period) or “often” (weekly or more) reported their students’ progress to teachers.

Teachers also provided information about intervention services at their school. As Table 12 shows, 93.3% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that interventionists had content knowledge necessary to help the teacher, and 91.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they had the knowledge about assessment to assist them. Most teachers also indicated that interventionists responded to their requests for assistance (89.9%), had similar views about
teaching reading (88.1%), had improved the reading ability of their low-performing students (85.6%), and worked together as a team (82.3%).

Table 12: Teachers’ perceptions of interventionists and related activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage Agreeing³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist has/have the content knowledge necessary to help me.</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist has/have enough knowledge about assessment to help me.</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist respond(s) to my requests for assistance.</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist and I have similar view on how to teach reading.</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist has/have been effective in improving the reading ability of my low-performing students.</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My SCRF interventionist help(s) teachers work together as a team.</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³Percentage of respondents in the group who indicated that they either Agree or Strongly Agree with the item.

Instructional services provided to students.

SCRF interventionists and teachers provided instructional services to students based on the five components of reading instruction including reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, phonics, and phonemic awareness. Refer to Appendices E and H for detailed information about the percentage of interventionists and teachers using specific strategies. The majority of the teachers (88.6%) indicated that they used the core reading program to teach reading comprehension. Slightly fewer teachers reported that they used the core reading program to teach fluency (82.3%), phonemic awareness (80.7%), and vocabulary (78.9%). During the 2008-2009 school year, teachers used several instructional methods often or very often including one-to-one instructional sessions (89.6%), whole group instruction (86.5%), and small group instruction (96.2%).

Effectiveness of SCRF

SCRF participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of the SCRF Initiative at their school. They responded on a scale of 1 (not effective) to 4 (very effective). As illustrated in Figure 19, the majority of the participants rated the SCRF Initiative to be effective or very effective. Specifically, over 90% of interventionists and literacy coaches rated the SCRF Initiative effective or very effective. Similarly, principals, study group members, and teachers
also rated the initiative positively (89.5% of principals, 88.1% of study group members, and 84.4% of teachers).

**Figure 19.** Effectiveness ratings for SCRF survey participant groups.

**Section Summary**

The 2008-2009 survey results confirmed many strengths of the SCRF Initiative. Consistent with the results from previous years, participation in professional development activities and workshops was high for all groups, and ratings of the helpfulness of these activities continued to be high for all respondents. Observing in SCRF classrooms and schools was consistently rated as the most helpful activity. In addition, participants expressed the helpfulness of SIT meetings and reported that they provided valuable information. Participants identified their greatest needs for professional development in the areas of reading comprehension, vocabulary, effective instructional strategies for students performing “below grade level,” and small group instruction. In addition, participants also identified the need for professional development in interpretation of score reports for making instructional decisions and addressing the needs of English language learners.

Overall, the participant groups indicated that they highly supported the initiative, understood the program’s goals and their own roles and responsibilities, understood the roles of the individuals and groups with whom they closely work, and indicated high levels of trust, respect, collaboration, and support. Additionally, overall reports of program effectiveness remained high for all participant groups including principals, literacy coaches, interventionists,
study groups, and teachers. According to responses, the roles of other SCRF groups seem to be clearly understood by literacy coaches, principals and mostly understood by interventionists; however, fewer teachers indicated that they understood the roles and responsibilities of the other groups.
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT SURVEYS

Methodology

Two open-ended items were included in the annual SCRF participant surveys. Participants were asked to describe one benefit of the initiative and to identify one aspect of the program they would like to see changed. Coding of the open-ended responses proceeded through several steps using a sequence of convergence and divergence. According to Guba, “The task of converting [responses] about issues and concerns into systematic categories is a difficult one. No infallible procedure exists for performing it” (as cited in Patton, 2002). This being acknowledged, the SCRF evaluators utilized numerous procedures to ensure that the results were reliable and representative of participants’ responses. A team of trained coders was used throughout the coding process.

Using the previous years’ coding structure as a basis, two experienced coders reviewed 20.0% of the returned surveys, eliminated irrelevant codes, and added any new necessary codes. The process culminated with a list of initial codes and inclusion criteria or code definitions which provided a more objective framework for distinguishing a positive instance of a code from a negative instance (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). All responses were then coded by two trained coders. When coders disagreed on the appropriate categorization or indicated that a response was unaccounted for in existing codes, a trained, neutral party with no previous exposure to the data and the coding team leader made final coding decisions. The coding scheme was then reviewed for internal consistency. Codes that were not mutually exclusive or failed to provide sufficiently unique information were combined and, when needed, new codes were added. The following sections present the results of this coding schema. The first section focuses on the identified benefits of the SCRF Initiative, while the second section focuses on the recommended changes to the SCRF Initiative.

Results

Summative figures provided in this report represent overall results. Table 13 at the end of this section summarizes results across all participant groups. In addition, full results combined for all participant groups with quotes were shared using comprehensive tables (Appendices E-I). With the exception of identifying information, participant group quotes were transcribed as written on the survey. No changes were made to correct for grammar or spelling. Identifying information was deleted and gender references were changed to protect confidentiality.
**Benefits of the SCRF Initiative**

A benefit of the SCRF Initiative was identified by 662 of the 723 respondents, or 91.6% (415 teachers, 59 interventionists, 34 literacy coaches, 29 principals, and 125 study group members). As shown in Figure 20, the six benefits most commonly identified by the respondents included teacher development, resources, student development, focus on assessment, program organization, and support staff.

**Figure 20. Identified benefits of the SCRF Initiative**

**Teacher Development**

Teacher development was the most commonly identified benefit by the respondents (32%, n=212). In particular, the respondents reported that the professionalism of the teachers was enhanced as they learned new strategies and information in content areas. In addition, respondents reported increased collaboration, sense of community, support, and shared vision as contributing to teacher development. Participants also noted that study groups, professional literature, and other professional development enhanced teacher development. Figure 21 presents percentages of each participant group who reported teacher development as a benefit of the SCRF Initiative.
Figure 21. Percentage of participants groups that identified teacher development as a benefit.

As seen in Figure 21, 27.7% (n=115) of the teachers who responded suggested some aspect of teacher development as a benefit. One teacher noted, “It provides new and innovative teaching strategies to enhance my teaching lessons.” About 30% of interventionists (n=18) reported teacher development as a benefit. An interventionist responded, “The on-going professional development and reading resources and materials have been a tremendous benefit to our school. We are in a small district in a rural area. Therefore, funding for resources and access to professional development are not easily available.” Similar reflections of teacher development were reported by more than half of literacy coaches (58.8%, n=20). One literacy coach wrote, “SCRF participants have become true advocates for teaching children well.” A study group member reflected on the professionalism of the teachers and stated, “Since I have been involved in the initiative I have observed several teachers grow in their teaching abilities and classroom management.” A comparable response was stated by 36.0% (n=45) of study group members. This improved teacher professionalism was also noticed by 48.3% (n=14) of principals. One principal discerned, “We were able to develop an effective, strong professional learning community as a result of our teachers and staff’s active involvement in study sessions.” Overall, the most identified benefit of the initiative suggested the professionalism of SCRF teachers improved.
Resources

As shown in Figure 22, the second benefit of the SCRF Initiative highly regarded by the participants was resources (18.4%, n=122). Representatives from all participant groups noted the receipt of additional books and materials in their schools and classrooms. Approximately 21% of teachers (n=86) and study group members (n=26) cited additional resources as a benefit. One study group member responded, “The library was able to receive many, many new books that were needed to enhance the classroom curriculum.” Fewer principals (10.3%, n=3), interventionists (8.5%, n=5), and literacy coaches (5.9%, n=2) identified additional books and materials as a benefit. A principal stated, “Our long term test scores show no sustained improvement. One benefit is materials.”

![Figure 22. Percentage of participants groups that identified resources as a benefit.](image)

One interventionist reported, “We have a wonderful abundance of books in our book room. It gives me lots of books to use with my small groups for independent reading. They are fiction + non-fiction.” A few teachers (3.9%, n=16) and study group members (2.4%, n=3) made general comments about the benefits of resources. One teacher stated, “Having a variety of resources for students as well as for myself has been most beneficial in being more effective in the classroom.” Another aspect of the resources benefit exclusively noted by teachers (1.4%, n=6) was the extra funding/money received. The resources received by the schools as a part of their participation in the initiative was viewed as beneficial.
Student Development

Student development (18.1%, n=120) was the third most identified benefit of the initiative (see Figure 23 for percentages by participant groups). Around 22% of interventionists (n=13) and study group members (n=27) recognized the development of students as a benefit of SCRF. Fewer teachers (18.1%, n=75), principals (13.8%, n=4), and literacy coaches (2.9%, n=1) expressed this view. Students were described by all participant groups as having increased enthusiasm, motivation, confidence for learning, and/or perceptions of learning.

![Figure 23. Percentage of participants groups that identified student development as a benefit.](image)

A study group member stated, “Students are so interested in reading and it has truly enhanced my teaching and the learning of my students.” A teacher stated this about the initiative, “It is extremely effective in assisting students to become comprehensive students who truly enjoy reading.” Another area of student development noted by interventionists, principals, and study group members included improved academic performance. As stated by a principal, “Students have improved reading skills.” A study group member similarly acknowledged the benefit of improved academic performance by stating, “The SCRF Initiative provides a solid foundation that helps to build students into very strong, proficient readers.”

A final student development category common across teachers, interventionists, and study group members was the benefit of extra help for students. This identified benefit included specific strategies that provided additional help for students such as the one-to-one and small
group instructional formats. For example, a teacher quoted, “Small groups has helped to see exactly where the student’s levels are.” An interventionist, another provider of the small group instruction, stated, “The SCRF Initiative allows us the opportunity to identify students needing substantial assistance. We can then focus on individual or small group instruction for that student in an effort to accelerate learning.” In addition, study group members identified extra help for students as a benefit of the initiative. For example, a study group member quoted, “Greater numbers of struggling readers are getting the help that they need.” Overall, various aspects of student development were identified in some capacity by all participant groups as benefits of the SCRF Initiative.

**Focus on Assessment**

The fourth most identified benefit by all participant groups was focus on assessment with 12.2% (n=81) of the respondents listing a benefit in this category (Figure 24). All participant groups reported the increased awareness of students' needs, strengths, and/or weaknesses; improved use of assessments; and use of assessment data to guide instruction as benefits of the initiative. In particular, an interventionist stated, “We are addressing the needs of our struggling readers as well as proficient readers and we are differentiating our instruction to meet the needs of all our students as a results of the proper monitoring.” A literacy coach stated, “The teachers are taking a closer look at the needs of the students and beginning to change their instruction to meet these needs.” The teachers (4.3%; n=18) and a principal (3.4%) mentioned the progress monitoring or Dominie as a benefit of the initiative. A teacher stated, “Progress monitoring keep me up to date with student understanding of several print concepts: Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary, + Comprehension. It’s more than grades; its growth.” The teachers and interventionists mentioned assessment in general as a benefit. An interventionist noted, “Assessment + Monitoring of NSI and NAI students” as a benefit. Overall, the focus on assessment was a useful tool for teachers (13.5%, n=56), interventionists (20.3%, n=12), literacy coaches (5.9%, n=2), principals (10.3%, n=3), and study group members (6.4%, n=8).
Figure 24. Percentage of participant groups that identified focus on assessment as a benefit.

**Program Organization**

The program organization was identified as a fifth benefit of the initiative by at least one person from each of the participant groups (10.3%, n=68). As seen in Figure 25, the percentages of study group members and principals who cited program organization as a benefit were 8.0% and 3.4%, respectively. A larger percentage of interventionists (15.3%, n=9), literacy coaches (14.7%, n=5), and teachers (10.4%, n=43) recognized the organizational benefits of SCRF including the uninterrupted block for reading, focus on reading, common reading language, and positive effects of the program. Of these benefits, the uninterrupted block for reading was identified by every participant group. As a principal responded, “The SCRF Initiative that has been most beneficial is the 120 minute block of time devoted solely to reading.” All participant groups except principals mentioned the common reading language for teachers, students, and/or the school. For example, a literacy coach expressed the existence of a common language at her school by stating, “There is a common language at our school which helps across the grade levels.” In addition, teachers, interventionists, and study group members mentioned the focus on reading, as quoted by an interventionist who stated that reading “keeps the children focused… over an extended period of time.” A positive aspect of the program cited by teachers and study group members was regular efforts to improve the performance of students. As a teacher quoted, “It is a constant effort to work better on the standards set for improvement and a basis from which to understand and improve students’ performance.”
Overall, the program organization was expressed as a benefit from various perspectives and all participant groups.

![Bar chart showing percentage of participant groups that identified program organization as a benefit.]

**Figure 25.** Percentage of participant groups that identified program organization as a benefit.

**Support Staff**

The final benefit respondents mentioned was the presence of support staff (7.3%, n=48) which was mentioned by 7.7% of teachers (n=32), 3.4% of interventionists (n=2), 11.8% of the literacy coaches (n=4), 10.3% of principals (n=3), and 5.6% of study group members (n=7). As stated by a teacher, “[SCRF] Provides us with a lot of support staff – Reading Recovery, Interventionists, coaches at the state + district levels.” The presence of interventionists and literacy coaches were often described as a great help to teachers, as a principal noted, “Excellent coaches/interventionists on site to help teachers and students.” The literacy coaches also cited the presence of regional coaches and interventionists as a great asset of the SCRF Initiative. As a literacy coach indicated, “One benefit of the SCRF Initiative is the extensive support network provided by the SLT, Regional Coaches, Coaches, Interventionists, etc.” Overall, the support staff was identified as an asset of the SCRF Initiative.

**Other Benefits**

Approximately 1.1% (n=7) of respondents, specifically five teachers (1.3%), one principal (3.4%), and one study group member (0.8%), reported unique areas of benefit not mentioned by
other participants. One study group member responded, “SCRF provides a structure to the ELA block.” Some participants indicated there were no benefits of the SCRF Initiative or the question was not applicable. This was shared by a total of four respondents (0.6%), three teachers (0.7%) and one study group member (0.8%). In general, the majority of the respondents identified some aspect of teacher development, resources, student development, focus on assessment, program organization, and support staff as a benefit of the SCRF Initiative.

Program Changes Recommended by Participants

Categories or themes similar to those identified as a benefit were also recommended as a component of the SCRF Initiative the respondents would like to see changed (Figure 26). Nearly 79% of respondents (n=570; 354 teachers, 52 interventionists, 29 literacy coaches, 27 principals, and 108 study group members) recommended changes to the following areas: program organization, study groups, assessments, role/performance of the support staff, professional development, collaboration, and the School Intervention Team and/or School Leadership Team meetings.

Figure 26. Recommended changes to the SCRF Initiative.

Note. Absence of the bar indicates that none of the participants in that particular group suggested that recommendation.
**Program Organization**

As seen in Figure 27, representatives from all participant groups recommended changes to the program organization (35.6%, n=203). These changes included:

- modifications to the 120-minute block,
- modifications to SCRF to accommodate the needs of specific grade levels or groups of students,
- an increase in the writing emphasis,
- the need for more flexibility in general,
- changes to other general time/scheduling constraints,
- changes to the interventionist’s schedule for providing services,
- reducing the amount of paperwork,
- more emphasis on specific strategies/components, and
- changes to the number of years a school could participate in the program.

Overall, program organization was stated as important to more than one third of interventionists (46.2%, n=24), teachers (37.3%, n=132), and principals (37.0%, n=10). There was a strong representation from study group members (29.6%, n=32) and literacy coaches (17.2%, n=5) as well.

![Bar chart showing percentage of participant groups that recommended changes to program organization](image)

*Figure 27. Percentage of participant groups that recommended a change in program organization.*
An increase in the emphasis on writing was noted by 6.5% of teachers (n=23), 5.8% of interventionists (n=3), 10.3% of literacy coaches (n=3), 7.4% of principals (n=2), and 2.7% of study group members (n=3). This recommendation from a principal summarizes the expressions from all groups, “The inclusion of teaching writing during the two hour block.” Other changes recommended within the realm of program organization noted by all participant groups except literacy coaches included modifications to the 120-minute block and modifications to SCRF to accommodate needs of specific grade levels or groups of students.

The recommendations from the various participant groups about modifications to the 120-minute block were somewhat unique to the participant (9.3% of teachers [n=33], 1.9% of interventionists [n=1], 14.8% of principals [n=4], and 9.2% of study group members [n=10]). A teacher noted, “I would like more flexibility with the 120 minute block, for instance, allowing the time to broken up during the day to accommodate school schedules and other conflicts.” A principal recommended, “I would extend the ELA Block and focus more on integrating subjects through the Read Alouds, Guided Reading, and Independent Reading components. I would use the additional time to include time for additional phonics instruction and writing.” In the area of modifications to SCRF to accommodate needs of specific grade levels or groups of students, a teacher wanted to “be able to provide assistance to any grade level student who is still in need of their services.” This sentiment was similarly expressed by a principal, “I would like for it to target 4th and 5th grades” and an interventionist, “More emphasis placed on K and Pre-K.” Modifications to SCRF to accommodate needs of specific students were identified by 3.7% of teachers (n=13), 3.8% of interventionists (n=2), 3.7% of principals (n=1) and 5.5% of study group members (n=6).

Other participant groups, with the exception of principals, made recommendations about the need for more flexibility in general. Teachers (3.4%, n=12), an interventionist (1.9%, n=1), a literacy coach (3.4%, n=1), and study group members (1.8%, n=2) requested flexibility of the initiative as a whole, not specifically stating the 120-minute block or time/scheduling constraints. One teacher quoted, “The rigid structures could be loosened and still be effective.” An interventionist and literacy coach recommended changing “the strictness!” and “inflexibility,” respectively. Other recommendations about general time/scheduling constraints were noted by 4.2% of teachers (n=15), 9.6% of interventionists (n=5), and 3.7% of study group members (n=4). As a teacher reported, “More freedom to tailor my schedule to accommodate the specific/changing needs of my students.” Overall, each of the participant groups recommended more flexibility in general.
Another area of interest within program organization for some of the responding teachers (3.4%, n=12), an interventionist (1.9%, n=1), and a principal (3.7%, n=1) was the need to reduce the amount of paperwork associated with the initiative. These participants specifically referred to paperwork not related to the study groups, projects, or notebooks. An interventionist recommended changes to “the amount of paperwork required.”

Areas of program organization that were not commonly cited by the participants groups included more emphasis on specific strategies and/or components. For example, slightly less than 5.0% of teachers (n=15) and 2.7% of study group members (n=3) wanted the initiative to include more emphasis on specific strategies/components. In particular, a teacher responded, “I think letters and letter sounds need to be taught to kindergarteners in isolation. They also need to have the opportunity to write and practice handwriting.” A study group member recommended, “More emphasis on phonics and phonemic awareness especially in the small group and help from the interventionist.” The teachers (1.1%, n=4) were the only participant group to suggest the need for additional resources/personnel. One teacher noted, “More support in assessment area/perhaps an additional coach on site and more small group assistance.” The principals (7.4%, n=2) were the only participant group to recommend a change to the number of years a school can participate in the program. One principal suggested, “Limit the number of years a school can participate in the program,” while the other stated, “I would like to see it extended beyond next year.”

**Study Groups**

As shown in Figure 28, the next major recommendation from all participant groups was to change some aspects of the study groups (23.3%, n=133). Potential changes in the study groups were mentioned by 32.4% of study group members (n=35), 29.6% of principals (n=8), 21.5% of teachers (n=76), 17.3% of interventionists (n=9), and 17.2% of literacy coaches (n=5). All participant groups, except literacy coaches, specifically recommended reducing the number/length of meetings for study group. One teacher suggested, “Study Group – meet less often after you’ve been involved for 3+ years.” One study group member was interested in reducing the number/length of the meetings in the following way, “I would like to see the meetings to be reduced for non-classroom teachers (2 x per quarter).”
Another recommendation for study groups was a reduction of work, specifically referring to the project. One teacher noted “Written notebook more of a hindrance than help. Too much repeating paperwork – waste of time in lots of areas. You can do what need to be done with half of the bureaucracy.” An interventionist suggested, “The intensity of the projects are somewhat overwhelming at times. Instead of using the experience to help you become better at what you do, it becomes a driving force that is removed from what you do – a separate entity.” A study group member noted, “The project for the study group is time demanding. The time could be better spent focusing on teaching.” This reduction of work was requested by less than 5% of each participant group except the literacy coaches, who did not identify reduction of work as a recommended change to study groups.

A small percentage of teachers (0.8%, n=3), literacy coaches (10.3%, n=3), and study group members (4.6%, n=5) were interested in changing the time of day for study group meetings. A literacy coach suggested, “Study group during the day not after school when teachers are tired, ready to go home, thinking about what they have to do when they get home.” Other teachers (1.7%, n=6) and an interventionist (1.9%) recommended making study groups optional or not requiring attendance. An interventionist noted, “The class component should be optional after the first year. Teachers should still have to audit the class (study group sessions) but after year on they should choose whether to do the coursework for a grade/graduate hours.”

Three teachers (0.8%) and four study group members (3.7%) recommended a change to the format or structure of study group. A study group member responded, “It would be nice to be part of a study/support group in which goals are teacher generated and more relevant to
classroom/teacher needs.” Nine of the teachers (2.5%) recommended elimination of the study groups. An additional three teachers noted, “No after-school study groups,” “No more study group/prof. development,” and “Book clubs elimination/other forms of staff development.”

**Assessment**

A recommendation mentioned by 15.0% (n=84) of the respondents was a change to assessments (Figure 29). Every participant group suggested changes to assessments ranging from altering aspects of Dominie to the reduction in the frequency of testing or elimination of testing (53 teachers [15.0%], 13 literacy coaches [44.8%], 8 study group members [7.4%], 6 interventionists [11.5%], and 4 principals [14.8%]).

![Figure 29. Percentage of participant groups that recommended a change in assessment.](image)

One teacher wanted to lessen the frequency of Dominie testing; while another wrote, “I would like to see a change in the Text Leveling. The testing part. It is a long process to go through.” A similar response from a literacy coach stated, “Progress monitoring is very important but giving Dominie every 3 wks is ‘too much’.” A teacher specifically suggested reducing the amount/frequency of testing/elimination and noted, “Too much time away from the students because of testing.” A literacy coach responded, “While I feel testing is vital at fall, midyear, and spring, teachers spend a lot of instructional time administering tests and have less time to focus instruction based on test results.” Less than 3% of teachers (n=8) and 7% of literacy coaches (n=2) recommended changes to assessments, use of data in general, and a
desire to receive the test results sooner. A teacher stated, “Stanford – we receive very little feedback and the information is not useful in planning instruction.” Another teacher responded, “I don’t think my students nor my instruction gain a lot from the Core Reading Assessment or SWS.”

Three teachers (0.9%) recommended other changes, which included assistance with testing, more time with testing, and the elimination of Dominie. One teacher responded, “I would like to do away with the Dominie testing and Progress Monitoring testing.” Another teacher noted, “Would like a sub in the classroom when it is time for testing.”

Role/Performance of Support Staff

A few of the participant groups recommended changes to the role/performance of support staff (3.3%, n=19). A few teachers (2.5%, n=9) and study group members (2.7%, n=3) specifically noted changes to the role/performance of the literacy coach. A teacher noted, “I know that my Literacy Coach is very busy, and attending conferences etc., I would like to see her more in my classroom.” A study group member suggested, “Give the school literacy coaches more direction (help info-PD) in learning how to coach.” Four teachers (1.1%) and two interventionists (3.8%) were also interested in seeing changes in state leadership (i.e., visits from state department staff, regional coach). An interventionist recommended, “More positive feedback to the classroom teachers concerning the state level SCRF coaches.” A teacher stated, “The amount of people that comes in for an observation should be limited to one.”

Professional Development

The fifth area recommended for change, professional development, was only noted by eight teachers (2.7%), two interventionists (3.8%), and three literacy coaches (2.3%). These participants recommended increasing the professional development effectiveness and/or opportunities to participate. One teacher noted the need for, “More training on the 120 minute block, shared reading, Dominie, and small group instruction.” The interventionists recommended changes to professional development to include increasing the modeling of effective ELA instruction and small group/one-to-one. One interventionist noted, “I would like to see more examples of effective small group lessons – either thru videotape, other interventionists, or through the Regional coach modeling.” The literacy coaches expressed the need to continue learning through collaborating with other literacy coaches and providing professional development specifically designed for non-classroom teachers. One literacy coach
suggested, “We need to return to meeting as a group in Columbia or meet as regions in a group to have time to learn from each other & lean on our friends for support.”

**Collaboration**

The final category commonly cited by teachers, interventionists, and literacy coaches recommended changes to collaboration (1.2%, n=7). Two teachers (0.6%), one interventionist (1.9%), and one literacy coach (3.4%) recommended the increased support of SCRF and more teamwork/collaboration between SCRF participants. One literacy coach stated, “I feel that teachers must be willing to participate. Their willingness equals commitment, therefore, they are more receptive to information presented and committed to the time devoted to the program.” Two teachers (0.6%) and one interventionist (1.9%) recognized the need for improved communication. One teacher requested, “More contact with teachers as feedback to them.” An interventionist requested, “Increased affirmations on a job well done instead of criticism.”

**Other Recommendations**

Two interventionists (3.8%) made recommendations for changes to School Intervention Team meetings and/or School Leadership Team meetings. Other changes unique to the participant groups accounted for 6.3% of the responses to this item (n=36). As one teacher noted, “The SCRF program should be more standard driven.” An interventionist stated, “I didn’t like all the changes that were made w/in the grant as we went thru out five year cycle. The requirements during the first year’s work were far less than the requirements of the interventionists during the fourth and fifth year of the grant.” Other participants recommended no changes or expressed that the question was not applicable (12.8%, n=73). As one teacher stated, “I have really enjoyed it all and can’t find anything I would want changed.” Overall the percentage of respondents who recommended changes to the SCRF Initiative (78.8%, n=570) was less than the percentage of respondents who identified a benefit of the program (91.6%, n=662).

**Section summary**

Participants shared information on program benefits (91.6%) and ideas for program improvements (78.8%) through the two open-ended response items provided on the participant group surveys. Nearly 153 more participants noted a benefit as compared with the number that suggested a recommendation for program change.
Program benefits were reported in six categories: teacher development, resources, student development, focus on assessment, program organization, and support staff. The development of teacher knowledge, skill, or experience and an appreciation for additional resources, such as increased availability of teaching materials and classroom or literacy center books, were the benefits of SCRF most commonly identified in every participant group. Participants identified areas for improvement for the program in the following areas: program organization, study groups, assessments, role/performance of the support staff, professional development, collaboration, and the School Intervention Team and/or School Leadership Team meetings.
South Carolina Reading First Initiative
Participant Group Qualitative Results, 2008 – 2009

Table 1
Participants' Identified Benefits of the SCRF Initiative

Please describe one benefit of the Reading First Initiative.

Teacher development includes the following subcategories:
- Learned new strategies or information in content areas
- Improved instruction/better teachers
- Study groups/valuable professional development/professional literature available
- Increased collaboration/sense of community/support/working with a team/shared vision

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<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Interventionists</th>
<th>Literacy Coaches</th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Study Group Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;It has been very beneficial in reading instruction AND achievement in my classroom. Moreover, my kids love reading!&quot;</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>&quot;A more united front to reading throughout the school&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The study groups are a wonderful way to ask questions and get answers and examples from your peers.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Our faculty has become unified in our passion to meet the needs of struggling readers and moving toward the goal of all children At Grade Level.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Classroom teachers have learned more about teaching struggling readers.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The students have been taught reading using authentic literature and individual needs are being met more.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Gave teachers strategies to incorporate in reading – research based instruction&quot;.</td>
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<td>&quot;Giving teachers a research based belief for why they do what they are doing&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;We have built a learning community.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The initiative has provided our teachers with a variety of methods and strategies to address the needs of struggling readers.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The strength in changing how we teach reading to our students.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Study group - continuous learning based on the needs of our children.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;It is a learning community creator, with us focus on building a knowledge base and collegiality.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;It equips teachers with various strategies to improve students’ literacy skills.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I am a much better teacher in teaching reading than I was before.&quot;</td>
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### Resources

Resources includes the following subcategories:
- Additional books and materials
- Resources in general
- Extra funding/money

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**Sample Quotes**
- “Massive Reading First Library allows me to teach small groups daily.”
- “The SCRF initiative has propelled teachers to realize how important it is to have books for students to read at their developmental levels and just simply having access to books in general.”
- “Money – with budget cuts having this extra money has been helpful.”
- “We have a wonderful abundance of books in our book room. It gives me lots of books to use with my small groups for independent reading. They are fiction + non-fiction.”
- “Books in classroom”
- “Instructional supplies and materials”
- “Our long term test scores show no sustained improvement. One benefit is materials”
- “Providing lots of reading material and lots of exposure to different genres of books”
- “Having access to numerous materials, books, and professional development was a benefit.”
- “The library was able to receive many, many new books that were needed to enhance the classroom curriculum.”

### Student Development

Student development includes the following subcategories:
- Improved academic performance
- Extra help for students
- Increased enthusiasm, motivation, confidence for/perceptions of learning

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**Sample Quotes**
- “I have really seen the growth in the students since the program.”
- “Intervention for struggling readers to help them be successful”
- “More students are choosing to read because they can.”
- “Students have improved reading skills.”
- “Our students are able to read fluently and comprehend what they read.”
"It provides additional help for students."

"It helps the students become interested in books."

"Many students become confident life long learners."

"SCRF has helped our school by building classroom libraries that have peaked our students interest in reading."

"Greater numbers of struggling readers are getting the help that they need."

"Students more positively involved in learning to read."

**Focus on assessment** includes the following subcategories:

- Progress monitoring/Dominie
- Improved use of assessments/use of assessment data to guide instruction
- Increased awareness of students’ needs/strengths/weaknesses
- Assessment in general

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Sample Quotes:

"The Dominie assessment is an excellent tool for evaluating the reading levels of students."

"Being able to diagnose specific needs of my students."

"Helping me to use student assessment data to improve my teaching."

"Data Driven Instruction is used to assess the needs of the students on a regular basis."

"Makes us aware of student needs."

"Assessment + Monitoring of NSI and NAI students."

"Data driven instructional decisions."

"The teachers are taking a closer look at the needs of the students and beginning to change their instruction to meet these needs."

"We know our students strengths and weaknesses and we know how to use that knowledge to instruct and plan.”

"Children are being assessed more often and these assessments are used for more individualized small group planning."

© Office of Program Evaluation/South Carolina Educational Policy Center – College of Education, University of South Carolina
**Program organization includes the following subcategories:**

- Uninterrupted block for reading
- Focus on reading
- Common reading language for teachers, students, and/or the school.
- Positive program

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**Sample Quotes**

- “I think the time frame and having the uninterrupted 120 minutes daily is crucial to the students.”
- “Students have literacy immersion every day!”
- “The uninterrupted reading block has worked well.”
- “Common language, goals, and improved targeted instruction”
- “Teachers all using the same language.”
- “Teachers have 120 minutes of uninterrupted instruction.”
- “Teachers, administrators, and students talking the same language”
- “The SCRF Initiative that has been most beneficial in the 120 minute block of time devoted solely to reading.”
- “Students receive 120 minutes devoted to reading strategies and techniques that will help them become better readers.”
- “All teachers and students are speaking and implementing the same reading language and strategies.”

**Support staff includes the following subcategories:**

- Support from the literacy coach, interventionist, and/or SCRF support staff

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<th>Interventionists</th>
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**Sample Quotes**

- “One benefit I could say is the knowledge of the coaches and other members I’ve worked with.”
- “Intervention services are the most effective part of the Reading First initiative along with school-wide Dominie assessment.”
- “One benefit of the SCRF Initiative is the extensive support network provided by the SLT, Regional Coaches, Coaches, Interventionists, etc.”
- “Excellent coaches/interventionists on site to help teachers and students”
- “Provides coaching and support for teachers”
- “Working with my literacy coach to work on my needs”
“Provides us with a lot of support staff - Reading Recovery, Interventionists, coaches at the state + district levels.”

“The teachers know they have someone to help them analyze data and get suggestions.”

“Reading Interventionists”

None/not applicable does not include any subcategories.

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Sample Quotes

“I didn’t see any Benefit - more than 2/3 of the class was at least 1 to 2 years below grade level and the initiative was at this school for 5 years - what happened to these kids?? It didn’t work!! Maybe Free books?”

“None”

Other benefit includes comments not fitting any of the above categories.

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Sample Quotes

“Very structured”

“Continuity”

“SCRF provides a structure to the ELA block.”

Overall Total

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a With the exception of identifying information, quotes are transcribed as written on the survey. No changes have been made to correct for grammar or spelling.

Identifying information was deleted and gender references were changed to suppress specific information.

b Total of individual percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Table 2
Participants' recommended changes to the SCRF Initiative

Describe one component of the SCRF initiative you would like to see changed.

Program organization includes the following subcategories:
- Modifications to the 120 minute block
- Modifications to accommodate needs of specific grade levels or groups of students
- Extension of SCRF/ resources/support staff for additional years
- More emphasis of specific strategies/components
- Increase writing emphasis
- Reduce paperwork
- General time/scheduling constraints
- Need for additional resources/personnel
- Need for more flexibility in general

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Sample Quotes

“I would like to have more flexibility during the block.”
“I would like writing to have a more important role within the 120 minute block.”
“I would like to see the writing component’s time extended.”
“The rigid structures could be loosened and still be effective.”
“I would like to be able to include writing workshop.”
“We are not continuing next year in SCRF. If I could continue…that is what I would change.”
“The amount paperwork required”
“Lack of writing component”
“The inclusion of teaching writing during the two hour block”
“I would like to see it extended beyond next year.”
“The demands on interventionists w/ paperwork”
“More emphasis on phonics and phonemic awareness especially in the small group and help from the interventionist”
“I think 4th and 5th grade should be included and that instruction using Best practices in reading should continue.”
“I wish the SCRF initiative was not grant-funded but rather State and District mandated and fully funded forever.”
### Study groups

Study groups includes the following subcategories:
- Reduce number/length of meetings
- Make study groups optional/do not require attendance
- Change the format/structure of study group
- Reduce amount of required work
- General comments about study groups
- Change time of day for study group meetings

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**Study groups Sample Quotes**

- “Study Group – meet less often after you’ve been involved for 3+ years.”
- “The work load in study group”
- “Adjustments in the biweekly study group sessions is needed.”
- “Study group could be more tailored to the specific needs or concerns of teachers.”
- “After 5 years, the teachers are tired of study group.”
- “The class component should be optional after the first year. Teachers should still have to audit the class (study group sessions) but after year on they should choose whether to do the coursework for a grade/graduate hours.”
- “Study group during the day not after school when teachers are tired, ready to go home, thinking about what they have to do when they get home.”
- “Study group could be more dynamic and interesting.”
- “I benefit greatly from study group, but wish it was once each month instead of twice per month.”
- “I would like to be able to expand the size of a study group if necessary.”
- “The components of study group”
- “Study groups-not everything is applicable to media specialists.”
- “It would be nice to be part of a study / support group in which goals are teacher generated and more relevant to classroom/ teacher needs.”
Assessments includes the following subcategories:

- Alter aspects of Dominie
- Changes to assessments/use of data (in general)/get results sooner
- Eliminate Dominie
- Reduce amount/frequency of testing
- Assistance with testing/more time needed with testing

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<td>44.8%</td>
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Sample Quotes

- "Lessen the frequency of Dominie testing."
- "Too much time spent on assessment means less time teaching."
- "The extensive progress monitoring of Dominie. I understand the need but it is very time consuming."
- "I would like to use MAP as a nationally normed test instead of Stanford."
- "The length of time to complete the 3rd grade Dominie"
- "Amount of assessments"
- "It is difficult to conduct the testing throughout the year. It takes too much time away from instruction."

- "Too much testing"
- "Progress monitoring I feel testing at the beg./middle/end of year is sufficient."
- "Too much testing"
- "Stanford Reading First Assessments"
Role/performance of support staff includes the following subcategories:

- Literacy coach
- State leadership

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Sample Quotes

- "More positive feedback after regional coach observes would be helpful/encouraging."
- "More positive feedback to the classroom teachers concerning the state level SCRF coaches."
- "The complete lack of transparency on the part of anyone involved in SCRF outside of my school. Things are secretive and people are judgmental and passively aggressive. That has not truly been an attitude of support."
- "Give the school literacy coaches more direction (help info-PD) in learning how to coach."

Professional development includes the following subcategories:

- Increase professional development effectiveness and/or opportunities to participate
- Increase modeling of effective ELA instruction
- Continue learning through collaborating with other literacy coaches

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- "More training on the 120 minute block, shared reading, Dominie, and small group instruction"
- "I would like to see more examples of good group lessons (videos or in person)."
- "Even towards the end of the initiative, I'd like to see continued contact for coaches together in all regions. We learn so much from each other. The learning needs to continue."
Collaboration includes the following subcategories:

- Increase support of SCRF/more teamwork/collaboration between SCRF participants
- The need for improved communication

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Sample Quotes:
- "More togetherness with the program and better coaches"
- "Increased affirmations on a job well done instead of criticism"
- "I feel that teachers must be willing to participate. Their willingness equals commitment, therefore, they are more receptive to information presented and committed to the time devoted to the program."

Changes to the SIT and/or SLT meetings does not include any subcategories:

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Sample Quotes:
- "combine SIT + SLT"

None/not applicable does not include any subcategories:

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Sample Quotes:
- "I do not believe there should be any changes."
- "I don’t think of one."
- "It is working well as it is at our school."
"I have really enjoyed it all and can't find anything I would want changed."
"Don't change a thing! Everything is well in place and it all comes together! It builds on one another."

"It has been a wonderful initiative at our school."

Other changes include comments not fitting any of the above categories.

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Sample Quotes

"The SCRF program should be more standard driven."
"I didn't like all the changes that were made within the grant as we went thru out five year cycle. The requirements during the first year's work were far less than the requirements of the interventionists during the fourth and fifth year of the grant."

"Less emphasis should be placed on the core reading program."
"We are working on sustainability."

"Make it voluntary - other groups are using different programs - we don't need 2."

Overall Total

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<tr>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>354</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of identifying information, quotes are transcribed as written on the survey. No changes have been made to correct for grammar or spelling.
Identifying information was deleted and gender references were changed to suppress specific information.
Total of individual percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Professional development needs varied for each participant group. These subcategories may not apply to each group.
2008-2009 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCRF

The following section contains recommendations based on the findings presented in this report. Please note that the following recommendations are provided from the perspective of the external evaluation team and are meant to serve as topics for further discussion with SCDE administrators. Factors such as resources, capacities, political context, and organizational context will affect the extent to which these recommendations can and should be implemented. However, the recommendations should provide guidance for interpreting and using the data collected during the 2008-2009 school year.

• **Implementation:** Analysis of SCRF school’s level of program implementation showed significant associations between school implementation levels and mean increases in the percentages of students at grade level (AGL) for both matched and unmatched students. The use of implementation rubrics should be considered in future state reading programs for both formative and summative evaluation purposes.

  The implementation rubric scores for the AGL models explained more variability in achievement changes than did the NSI models suggesting better model fit for the AGL models. Future study could include additional achievement measures, such as normal curve equivalents (NCE) scores, scale scores, and mean percentage differences on NAI, as well as analysis by grade level.

• **Student achievement:** Over the last five years, Stanford Reading First achievement results for students in grade 2 showed considerably smaller gains between fall and spring semesters compared with students in grades 1 and 3. The assessment administered to students in the spring of grade 2 contains more and longer paragraphs for students to read and then respond to than the test administered in the fall of grade 2. Professional development providers should discuss potential strategies for providing more time for sustained reading for students in grade 2 to improve students’ reading comprehension skills and to prepare them for more extensive text reading expectations.

  In addition to analyzing changes in total scores on the Stanford Reading First assessment across grade levels, the percentage of students categorized as AGL for each component of the total score on the Stanford Reading First assessment tool was also examined for the 2008-2009 school year. The percentage of students categorized as AGL increased from fall 2008 to spring 2009 for all components except grade 1 phonics (decrease of 9.2%), grade 2 reading comprehension strategies (decrease of
31.2%), grade 3 phonemic awareness (decrease of 12.8%), and grade 3 vocabulary development (decrease of 11.0%). These components should be considered in planning additional professional development to improve achievement scores in subsequent years.

The results of two matched sample analyses for SCRF students provided additional evidence of the effectiveness of the SCRF Initiative in improving reading achievement. Specifically, SCRF students in Cohort 1 schools who progressed from grade 1 to 2 to 3 between 2006-2009 showed growth for all grades with much greater growth than expected in grades 1 and 3. Large gains were also observed among the 2007-2009 matched sample which included students in Cohort 2 schools who progressed from grade 1 to 2 or from grade 2 to 3. Specifically, large gains were observed in grade 1 among the grade 1 to 2 students and in grade 3 among the grade 2 to 3 students. These changes indicate achievement of students in SCRF schools is improving.

- **Program Organization:** A large number of participants recommended changes to program organization (35.6%). As the state considers implementing future reading programs, it may be helpful to address some of these concerns. These included constraints placed on participant groups related to time, flexibility, and paperwork, as well as changes to specific program components, such as emphasizing writing and other aspects more and addressing the needs of specific groups of students.

- **Professional development:** Overall, survey results show that participants value the professional development opportunities provided as a part of the SCRF Initiative. However, all groups continued to report the need for more professional development on effective instructional strategies to use with students performing below grade level. They also reported needing additional information on how to teach comprehension, small group instruction, interpreting score reports for making instructional decisions, and addressing the needs of English language learners. Professional development activities with SCRF participants should target these areas.

**2008-2009 SCRF HIGHLIGHTS**

Similar to the previous years’ results, students’ scores on the Stanford Reading First assessment improved from fall 2008 to spring 2009. The largest gains were made by students
in grade 1 and the lowest gains occurred for grade 2 in 2008-2009, which is consistent with data from the last four years. The results of two matched sample analyses for students in Cohort 1 schools who progressed from grade 1 to 2 to 3 over three years of participation in SCRF and students in Cohort 2 schools who progressed from grade 1 to 2 or grade 2 to 3 during 2007-2009 provided additional evidence of the effectiveness of the SCRF Initiative in improving reading achievement.

Overall, the SCRF participant groups highly supported the initiative, understood the program’s goals and their own roles and responsibilities, understood the roles of the individuals and groups with whom they closely worked, and reported high levels of trust, respect, collaboration, and support. Additionally, overall views of program effectiveness remained high for all participant groups. According to qualitative survey data, program benefits were conveyed in the following six main categories: teacher development, resources, student development, focus on assessment, program organization, and support staff. Teacher development and an appreciation for additional resources, such as increased availability of teaching materials and classroom or literacy center books, were the benefits of SCRF most commonly identified in every participant group.
REFERENCES


State of South Carolina State Department of Education. (2002). South Carolina Reading First Grant Proposal.

