



INSTITUTE OF
**READING
DEVELOPMENT**
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

CASE STUDY

Impact of the Reading Skills
Program on Norris School District



NORRIS
SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024

www.readingprograms.org/schoolprograms

INTRODUCTION

Norris School District, situated in Bakersfield, CA, is an educational community serving approximately 4,060 students across its various elementary and middle school campuses. In 2024, Norris School District embarked on a venture to bridge the learning gaps exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The primary objective of this case study is to demonstrate the positive academic gains experienced by Norris School District students who participated in the Institute of Reading Development's (IRD) Reading Skills Program during the summer months. Furthermore, it aims to highlight how such programs can mitigate the effects of the "Summer Slide" and support underserved student populations.

“ I loved that this program offered hands-on, in-person instruction. Engagement is much different when you're in person, and I noticed such a difference with kids.

Spring Thomas, Expanded Programs Manager,
Norris School District



NORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

ENGLISH LEARNERS

4.8%

FOSTER YOUTH

0.6%

HOMELESS

0.1%

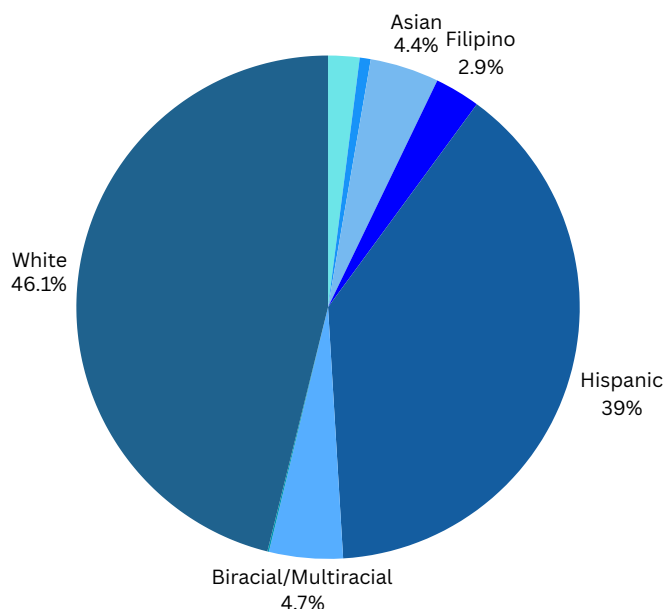
SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

32.9%

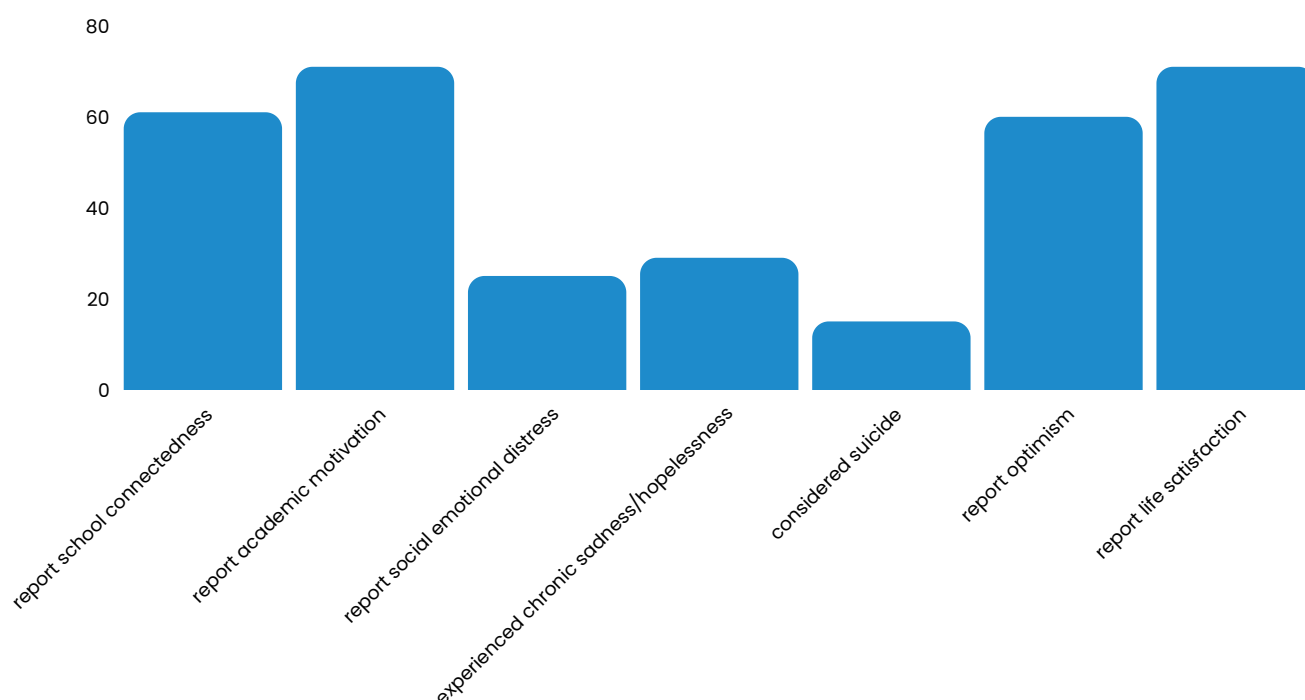
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

8.8%

RACE/ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN



SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL HEALTH



THE READING SKILLS PROGRAM INITIATIVE

04



The district's Expanded Learning Director led the charge to introduce the Reading Skills Program to Norris School District, **seeking creative and innovative approaches to assist students beyond traditional methods.**

Inspired by personal experience as a parent and the success her daughter found with the consumer program, the director introduced the school-based IRD Summer Reading Program to address learning gaps. **The program targeted foster youth, English Learners (EL), homeless students, and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds**—groups that performed lower on the California School Dashboard.

“The instructor was so important to the success of the program...It makes a difference to have someone who really cares about the kids and who shows passion for reading in particular.”

Spring Thomas, Expanded Programs Manager, Norris School District

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

The 5-week Reading Skills Program provided elementary and middle school students with weekly classes focused on foundational skills development, dedicated reading practice, and one-on-one support from instructors. Pre- and post-assessment scores below demonstrate improvements across various reading skills.

Table 1: Improvement in Pre- and Post-Assessment Scores

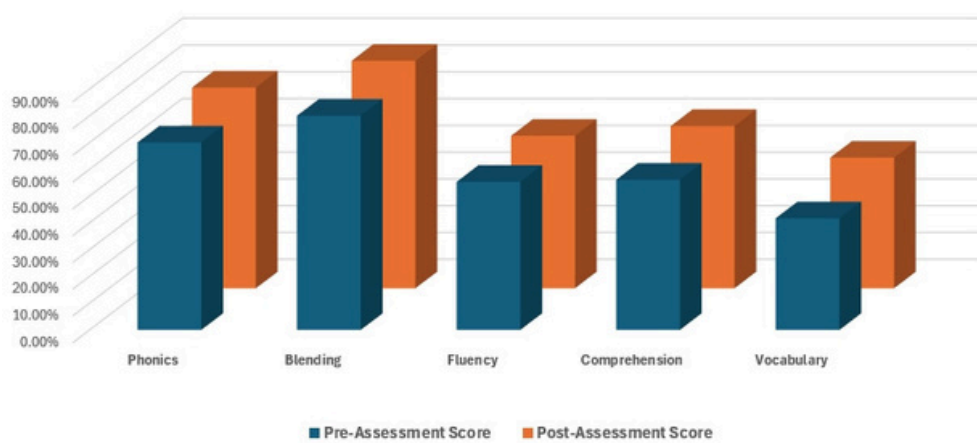
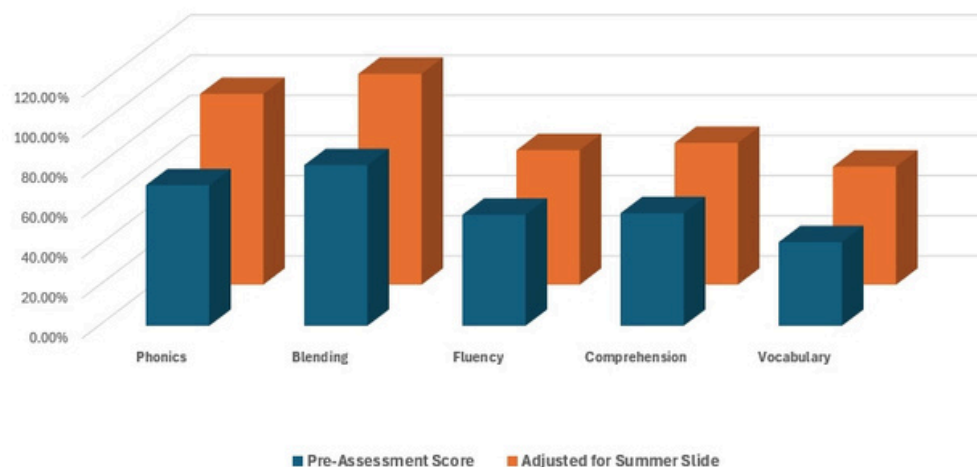


Table 2: Improvement Adjusted for Summer Slide



Fluency Summer Slide data is based on Hasbrouck & Tindal (2007 & 2017)
Phonics, Sight Word, Decoding, Comprehension, and Vocabulary Summer Slide data is based on Atteberry & McEachin (2021)

The data clearly illustrates that students who participated in the program not only improved their reading skills but also outperformed peers who did not participate, compensating for the typical regression associated with the Summer Slide.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

07

“We noticed differences in students, but I also noticed changes in the staff after the IRD Program. Our staff saw how reading chapter books with the kids helped with their engagement; I’m seeing more of our staff reading chapter books with the kids now.”

Spring Thomas, Expanded Programs Manager, Norris School District



Instructor Quality

Passionate and engaging instructors played a crucial role in the program's success. Their enthusiasm for reading and commitment to student growth made a tangible difference.



Communication and Partnership

The open communication between the district and the program facilitators ensured the program met the unique needs of Norris School District students, allowing for adjustments and improvements in real time.



In-Person Engagement

Face-to-face interactions were highly valued over online learning, providing a more effective and immersive learning experience compared to virtual alternatives.

INSTITUTE OF READING DEVELOPMENT

Conclusion

The IRD Reading Skills Program demonstrated remarkable success in improving reading skills among Norris School District students, with significant gains in key assessment areas. This case study underscores the importance of targeted educational initiatives, expert instruction, and collaborative partnerships, particularly in supporting underserved student populations. By fostering a love for reading and learning, programs like these can make a lasting impact, preparing students for future academic success.

The district remains committed to continuous improvement and exploring data trends to refine and expand the program's reach, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to excel.

For more information or to learn how you can bring IRD's Reading Skills Program to your school or district, contact:

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