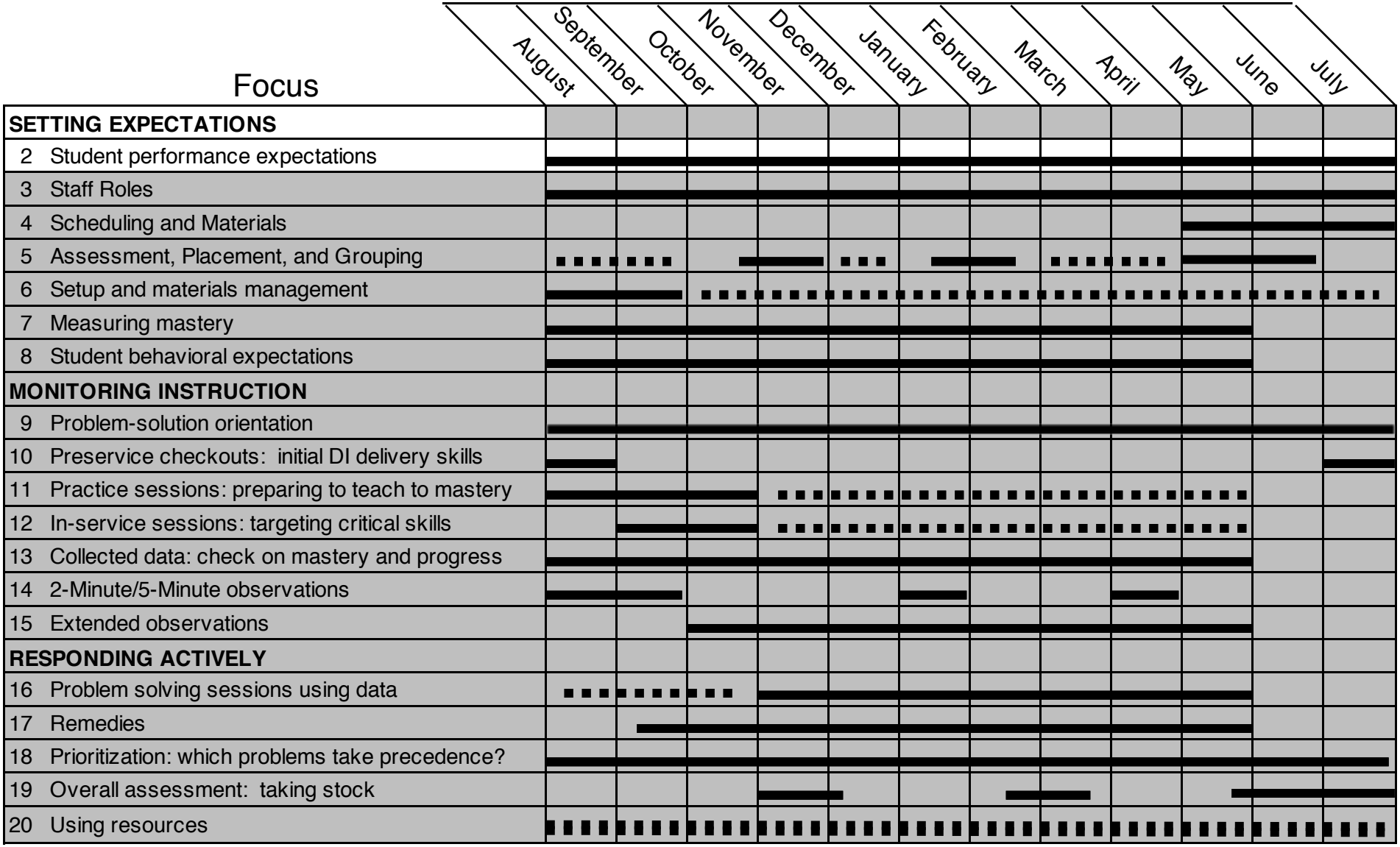
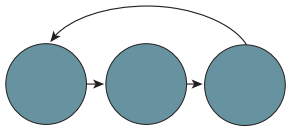
SECTION 2: STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Administrator Leadership Institute
Kurt Engelmann/Tara Davis

Calendar for Full Implementation of Direct Instruction (DI)





Minimum End-of-Year Lesson Progress Expectations for Continuing Students, grades K-5

Students who start Direct Instruction (DI) as Kindergartners should finish the following levels (at mastery) of Reading Mastery Signature Edition or Transformations and DISTAR Arithmetic/Connecting Math Concepts Comprehensive Edition (CMC CE) by the end of the school year:

Grade level	Reading Mastery	Mathematics
Kindergarten	grade K	DISTAR Arithmetic I
1st grade	grade 1	CMC CE B
2nd grade	grade 2	CMC CE C
3rd grade	grade 3	CMC CE D
4th grade	grade 4	CMC CE E
5th grade	grade 5	CMC CE F

These are minimum benchmarks for continuing students (those who start DI as Kindergartners). Many continuing students may achieve higher than these benchmarks. All students in grades 2 and above who meet these benchmarks do not need a 2nd reading period devoted to DI, although DI twice a day may still be recommended. All students in K-1 and students in grades 2 and above who do **not** meet these benchmarks **do** need a 2nd DI reading period.

Elementary students who complete the Reading Mastery Signature Edition (RMSE) series go on to one of the following:

- *Corrective Reading Comprehension*, Level C, McGraw-Hill, publisher.
- *Understanding U.S. History*, University of Oregon Bookstore, publisher.
- Structured novel studies with pre-taught vocabulary, interspersed comprehension questions and other direct instruction techniques.
- *REWARDS Intermediate/Secondary*, Voyager Sopris Learning, publisher

These programs also meet grade-level expectations for middle school students in the full immersion Direct Instruction model.

My name is _____.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

z

e z

Rice is another seed we eat. Rice grows in dirt that is really wet. We cook rice before we eat it.

The beans, corn, wheat and rice we eat are seeds. If we plant those seeds, we can grow bean, corn, wheat or rice plants.

fold

Seeds We Eat

We eat seeds that grow on plants.

Beans are seeds we eat. Beans grow in pods that grow on bean plants. We cook a lot of beans before we eat them. We do not eat many kinds of bean pods.

One class of animals is birds.

Each bird has two legs, two wings, one beak, and lots of feathers.

A lot of birds have bones that are filled with air. These birds can fly.

Birds with bones filled with more than air can't fly.

Some birds are so big that they can run with a man on them.

1. dock	1. hunted	1. before	1. baby
2. which	2. showing	2. female	2. funny
3. sell	3. winter	3. inside	3. hurry
4. wet	4. diving	4. picture	4. many

We eat corn that grows on corn plants. A corn seed is a kernel. Kernels grow on corn cobs.

Corn cobs grow inside green leaves. The whole thing is an ear of corn. We cook some corn before we eat it. Some corn kernels pop when they get hot.

We eat some kinds of grass. We don't eat the other parts of this grass, just the seeds.

We grind up part of wheat seeds to make a powder. We mix that powder with eggs and milk to make things like pancakes and bread.

Hispanic Students in Nebraska Post Impressive Gains with NIFDI Support

Students at Schuyler Elementary, a school in Eastern Nebraska with a large Hispanic population, have demonstrated incredible improvements in academic achievement over the past few years. In 2009-10, less than half (44%) of Schuyler's third graders met the state standards as measured by the Nebraska State Assessment (NeSA), and only three students exceeded the state standards. In 2010-11, 67% of Schuyler's third graders achieved passing scores, with eight percent of the students exceeding the state standards. The following year (2011-12) Schuyler experienced another improvement in student performance when 86% of students passed the NeSA – 10% higher than the average state performance (see Figure 1).

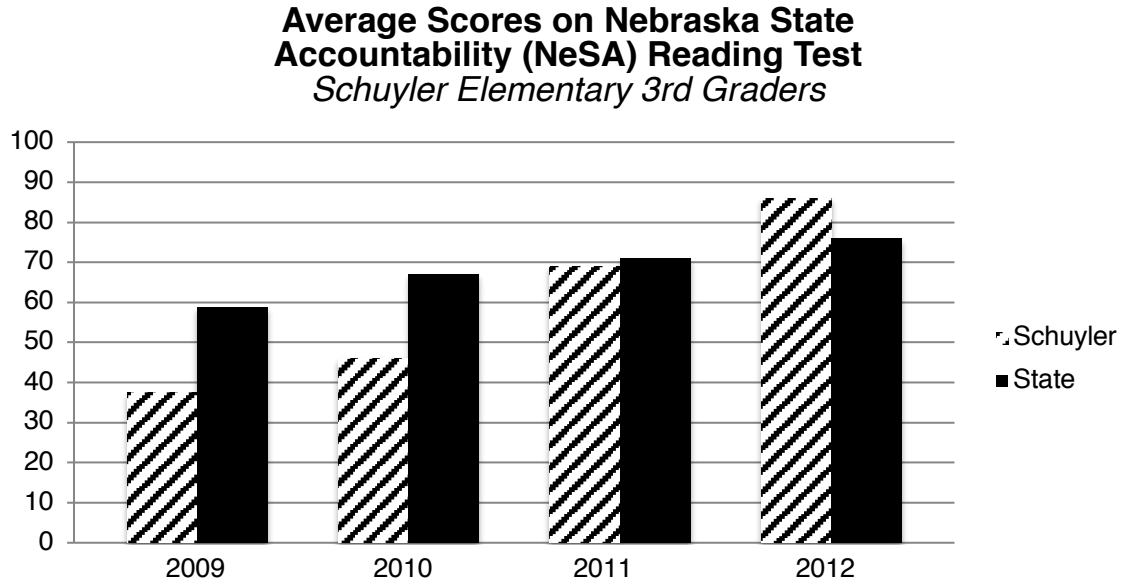


Figure 1

How well did Hispanic students score?

Driving these gains is the progress made by Schuyler's Hispanic students, who *comprise nearly ninety percent of the school's population* (see Figure 2).

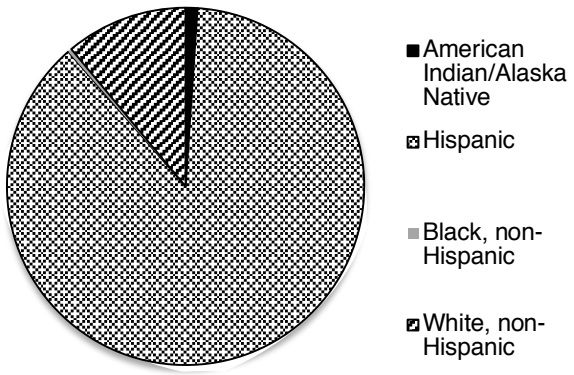


Figure 2

In 2009-10, a mere 39% of Schuyler's Hispanic students in 3rd grade passed the NeSA. Not a single one exceeded the state standards. In 2010-11, 57% of 3rd grade Hispanic students met and eight percent exceeded the standards, totaling 65% of the school's Hispanic population in 3rd grade. The following year, Schuyler made marked progress again, when 64% of the school's Hispanic students met and 20% exceeded the state standards (see Figure 3).

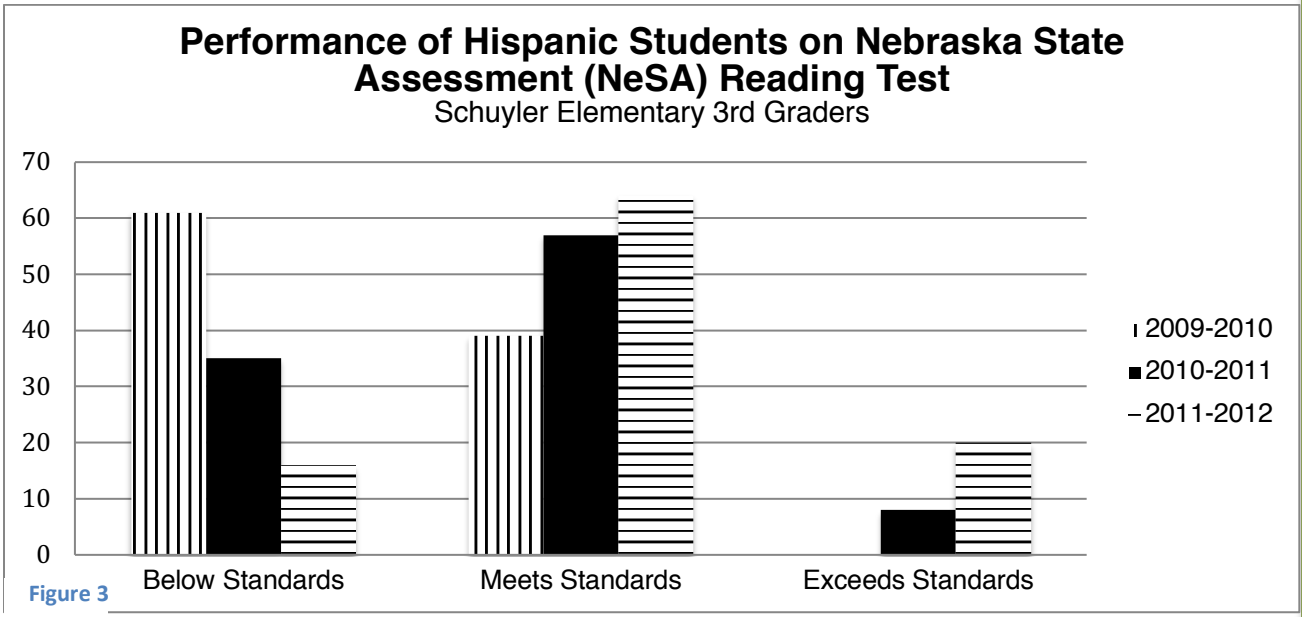


Figure 3

How has Schuyler achieved such positive results?

In 2008-09, Schuyler Elementary began implementing Direct Instruction (DI) with support from the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI). Bill Comley, co-principal at Schuyler Elementary, attributes the school's success primarily to the professional development and coaching support provided by NIFDI. "The professional development and on-site support NIFDI provides is critical in preparing teachers to teach our students effectively and implement the program with fidelity," Comley says. "Their staff knows the ins and outs of the program and ensures we learn them, too, so that our students can experience the greatest success possible."

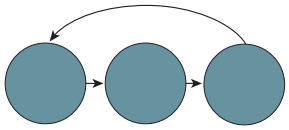
Darli Jo Vrba, Comley's co-principal, also noted one particularly relevant element of the program itself – the language component. Principal Vrba explained that providing the students with an introduction and practice in essential language skills was vital to students' success in school. "It helps students to hear and understand what language should actually sound like versus the language they hear on the street," she says. "It gives children the tools to learn, not just the ability to speak. They were already able to speak independently quite well."

Principal Comley also attributed students' impressive improvement to the weekly data analysis and problem-solving sessions with NIFDI. Each week, student performance data in the Reading Mastery curriculum is reviewed by NIFDI consultants. Based on the data, the consultants, along with school staff, make changes in the students' instructional programming including advancing students in the curriculum and/or providing additional support to students who need assistance in mastering the skills. This unique feature of NIFDI support is vital to a successful implementation of DI.

Principal Comley attributes students' impressive improvement to the weekly data analysis and problem-solving sessions with NIFDI.

Ms. Vrba shared her co-administrator's sentiments and added that the Coaches' Training and conference calls provided by NIFDI has built highly skilled literacy coaches in their school. She says, "NIFDI spends a lot of time ensuring coaches are strong in the programs so they can continue the implementation when NIFDI isn't here. This implementation wouldn't have happened without the support of NIFDI and our teacher's buy-in, which only came after NIFDI showed such care and enthusiasm for Direct Instruction and how it could help our students."

The results at Schuyler are consistent with other schools with large Hispanic populations that have implemented the NIFDI model. Schools in both Crete and Gering, Nebraska have enjoyed similar results after implementing Direct Instruction with support from NIFDI. To learn more about Gering's story of how they implemented DI successfully to improve student outcomes, view the video, *Closing the Performance Gap*, online at http://www.nifdi.org/videos/nifdi-schools.



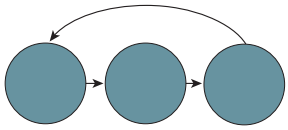
Minimum End-of-Year Progress Expectations for Remedial Students

Remedial students in grades four and above may receive instruction in the *Corrective Reading* program, which contains two tracks: *Decoding* and *Comprehension*. Students' progress through the programs will depend on their placement as well as their attendance.

Here are the grade-level equivalent outcomes for each level of the *Decoding* program:

Program level	Fluency outcome*	Grade-level equivalent
A	60 wpm	1.5
B1	90 wpm	2.5
B2	130 wpm	3.5
C	150 wpm	7.4

*Words per minute at 98% accuracy.



Minimum End-of-Year Progress Expectations for Students, Year 4 and Above

For Decoding:

A Students who begin at **Level A**

↓

should complete A and B1 in a school year
(a total of **123** lessons)

B_1 Students who begin at **Level B1**

↓

should complete B1 and B2 in a school year
(a total of **130** lessons)

B_2 Students who begin at **Level B2**

↓

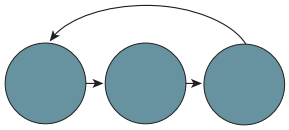
should complete B2 and most of C in a year

C Students who begin at **Level C**

↓

should complete C and additional outside reading in a school year

Adapted from the *Corrective Reading Series Guide*, p. 18.



Minimum End-of-Year Progress Expectations for Students, Year 4 and Above

For Comprehension:

A Students who begin at **Level A**

↓

should complete A and B1 in a school year
(a total of **125** lessons)

B1 Students who begin at **Level B1**

↓

should complete B1 and B2 in a school year
(a total of **125** lessons)

C Students who begin at **Level C**

↓

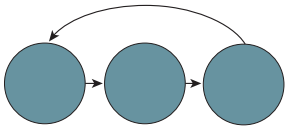
should complete C and additional outside reading in a school year

Adapted from the *Corrective Reading Series Guide*, p. 41.

Decoding A
Pronunciation Guide

Symbols	Sound Pronounced	As In	Voiced or Unvoiced*	Continuous or Stop	Introduced in Lesson
m	mmm	mat	v	continuous	1
a	ăăă	and	v	continuous	1
s	sss	sat	uv	continuous	1
e	ēēē	me	v	continuous	1
t	t	tap	uv	stop	1
r	rrr	run	v	continuous	2
d	d	dad	v	stop	3
i	ĭĭĭ	if	v	continuous	4
f	fff	fit	uv	continuous	6
h	h	hat	uv	stop	7
c	k	cat	uv	stop	8
th	ththth	them	v	continuous	9
sh	shshsh	ship	uv	continuous	12
n	nnn	not	v	continuous	14
o	ŏŏŏ	odd	v	continuous	18
ing	ing	sing	-	continuous	22
g	g	go	v	stop	22
e	ĕĕĕ	end	v	continuous	23
k	k	kid	uv	stop	27
ck	k	sack	uv	stop	27
w	www	will	v	continuous	31
wh	www	when	v	continuous	31
o	ōōō	note	v	continuous	32
l	lll	lip	v	continuous	33
ol	ōl	cold	v	continuous	35
er	er	her	v	continuous	36
p	p	pan	uv	stop	38
u	ŭŭŭ	up	v	continuous	39
x	kss	ox	uv	continuous	41
or	or	fort	v	continuous	42
b	b	bag	v	stop	44
y	yēēē	yell	v	continuous	46
ch	ch	chip	uv	stop	51
j	j	jump	v	stop	54
v	vvv	van	v	continuous	56
z	zzz	zip	v	continuous	59
qu	kwww	quit	v	continuous	62

*Voiced sounds are sounds you make by vibrating your vocal cords.
You do not use your vocal cords for unvoiced sounds
- you use air only.

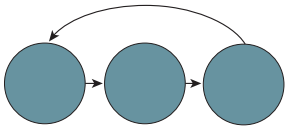


Decoding A Skills Acquisition Activity

The incremental step design indicates which skills are acquired
All Direct Instruction (DI) programs incorporate an incremental step design that facilitates students' acquisition of essential skills. The lessons students finish *at mastery* in each program indicates the specific skills they can be expected to demonstrate reliably in a variety of contexts.

In Decoding A, each lesson represents the acquisition of basic literacy skills
In the Decoding A program, the lowest level in the *Corrective Reading* decoding track, students learn sound-symbol relations and other very basic literacy skills. The *Decoding A Pronunciation Guide* (previous page) indicates the order the letter symbols (graphemes) are introduced, how they are pronounced (the matching phonemes), and the specific lessons in which they first appear. Once a letter symbol is introduced, students practice identifying the sound for three lessons before they start to read words containing the sound. At any particular point in the program, the symbols students can identify reliably are those that have been introduced up through 2-3 lessons prior (if they have been taught to mastery) as they are still working on identifying letter symbols that were introduced recently. A few lessons later, after students have had guided practice reading words that contain the new symbols, they should be able to read many short words with those symbols independently.

Step 1: Setup for the Decoding A activity
In this activity, you and a partner will generate words that students should be able to read if they have completed half of the Decoding A program, which contains 65 lessons. Most students who have mastered half of this level of the program should be able to read short words with letters that were introduced up through Lesson 27, as indicated by the dashed line on the *Decoding A Pronunciation Guide*. You will also generate words that students can be expected to **not** be able to read – words that contain any of the letter symbols introduced in Lessons 27-65.



Step 2: Generate words students can be expected to read
Based on the symbols introduced in Lessons 1-27, write down **three words** that you would expect students who have been taught to mastery through half the program **are able to read**:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Step 3: Generate words students cannot read
Based on the symbols introduced in Lessons 31-65, write down **five words** that you would expect students who have been taught to mastery through half the program **are not able to read**:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 4: How can this exercise be useful to teachers?
This exercise and similar exercises can be used to convey to the teaching staff how lesson progress expectations are not arbitrary, meaningless requirements of the DI model, but they are directly related to the skills students acquire through the DI programs. **With your partner, be prepared to discuss how you might use this or similar exercises with teachers** who may not realize that lesson gains directly represent student outcomes on in-program assessments and outside assessments. Describe the other DI resources (Teacher Presentation Books, Teacher's Guide, Series Guide, etc.) you might use for this activity with your teachers.

EXERCISE 4

WORD READING THE FAST WAY

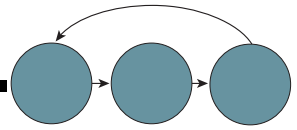
1. You're going to read these words the fast way.
2. (For each word: Touch the ball of the arrow. Pause.) What word? (Slash right.)
3. (Repeat each list until firm.)

tree
street
trot
cans

hams
fins
cats
cast
mast

sing
singing
ringing
dinging

has
had
hand
when
dent
wheel



Direct Instruction's Effect on Student Performance Over Time

The following is true for an elementary school that implements Direct Instruction (DI) with fidelity with all students:

- It takes less time to boost the performance of students in the lower grades than in the higher grades because the performance gap for struggling students is smaller in the lower grades than it is in the higher grades.

- Direct Instruction works very well in the upper grades as long as students are placed at their performance level and taught to mastery. The peak effect of DI occurs when students who started DI in Kindergarten make their way up the grades.

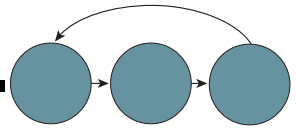
- Peak performance at any specific grade level depends on the number of years Direct Instruction is implemented. The formula for calculating the amount of time it takes for the first cohort of students who started DI in Kindergarten to complete a particular grade is:

Year of first full DI cohort to reach a specific grade = grade level + 1 year

- However, teachers usually require at least a couple of years of coaching and support before they become highly effective with the DI methodology. So the year of peak student performance is usually a couple of years after the first full DI cohort (students who started DI in Kindergarten) reach a particular grade. The formula is:

Year of peak performance for a specific grade = grade level + 3 years

- Great strides can be taken to narrow the achievement gap in the upper grades before the peak performance cohort reaches a specific grade level. Individual students will exceed the general performance pattern.



Optimal Comprehensive Approach: A Direct Instruction Feeder System

From the students' standpoint, it is best to start DI at the earliest grade to prevent failure and close any performance gaps as soon as possible. But is it fair just to wait until the DI cohorts make their way up the grades if many students are behind in middle school and high school?

If the full immersion DI model is implemented only at elementary schools, performance at the local middle schools will reach its height after 9-10 years of implementation. Kindergarten teachers start producing consistently high-performing students only after about three years because they often need that much time to really understand DI and anticipate what's coming up in the program. It takes another six years before these students reach the middle school.

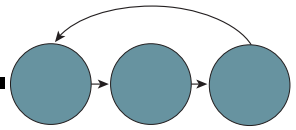
Here are the options for implementing DI at the different school levels and their consequences:

- If the full immersion DI model is implemented at the elementary school level only, it will take several years before student performance improves at the middle school level.

- If the model is implemented at the middle school level only, performance at the elementary schools will not change, and performance at the middle school will only improve moderately because many students will still leave elementary school unprepared to succeed at higher grades.

- If the full immersion model is implemented at both the middle school and elementary school levels together, performance at all schools will improve dramatically over the short and long run.

The best way of implementing the model to serve all students is a coordinated approach at the elementary, middle and high schools levels. All students at elementary schools would receive DI. Only students who place into the DI programs would receive DI at the middle and high schools.



Video Guide for *Helping Kids Soar:*

Children Reaching Their Full Potential with Direct Instruction

16:07 minutes

Video Summary:

Although often used to help students who are struggling academically, Direct Instruction programs can also be used effectively to accelerate the learning of higher performing students. This video portrays two schools in different parts of the United States. One school is Emerson Elementary in Alliance, Nebraska. The other is Fickett Elementary in Atlanta, Georgia. Both schools have used Direct Instruction programs successfully with all children, including high performing students: The video shows how a careful implementation of Direct Instruction can help bring out the joy and wonder of reading as it prepares students for advanced content.

Topics to Discuss:

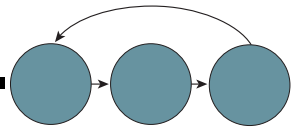
1. **In the video, several statements are made by teachers regarding the practices that allow for high achieving students to "soar" through the levels.**
   a. What are some practices mentioned?

   b. How important are those practices in promoting acceleration?

2. **In Atlanta, a kindergarten teacher says, "I've really come to like DI because I've seen how much it does for the children."**
   a. What do you think she means by that statement?

   b. How does this relate to your own experience.

   c. Discuss your feelings regarding expectations for student performance.



3. **Third grade teacher, Melanie Johnson, mentions that almost all the students at Fickett Elementary School are fluent readers by 3rd grade.**
    a. How does that relate to your expectations?

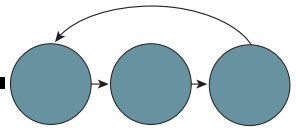
    b. Discuss the practices currently in place in your building to ensure students are fluent readers by 3rd grade.

4. **Melanie Johnson also says, "I love the flexibility."**
    a. How does flexibility relate to grouping?

    b. How might flexibility be beneficial in accelerating students?

5. **Although the student population in the elementary schools in Emerson, NE and Atlanta, GA differ, the outcome of the curriculum is the same. Discuss the factors that result in consistently high-achieving students in both rural NE and big-city Atlanta.**

6. **Teachers with 20-30 years of experience are not always open to new methodology. That does not seem to be the case with the teachers in this video. Discuss why feelings are so strongly in favor of Direct Instruction practices.**



7. **This video describes several types of on-going support provided by the National Institute for Direct Instruction.**
    a. List some of the types of support provided by NIFDI.

    b. Discuss the benefits of each type of support listed.

8. **As NIFDI provides support for a school system, the focus is on student performance rather than teacher performance.**
    a. Discuss why this is important.

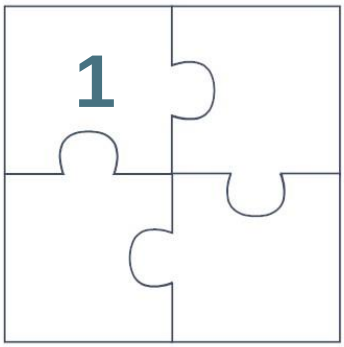
    b. Is student performance related to teacher performance? Discuss.

9. **After watching this video, describe your feelings about the Direct Instruction programs and how they promote the acceleration of high performing students.**

Student-Program Alignment
and
Teaching to Mastery

What Is a Mastery Learning Program?

Jigsaw Activity



Instructions: Everybody reads Chapter 1 from the ***beginning on page 12 to the middle of page 13. Stop after you complete the paragraph ending before item #1.*** Now read items #1, #2 & #6.

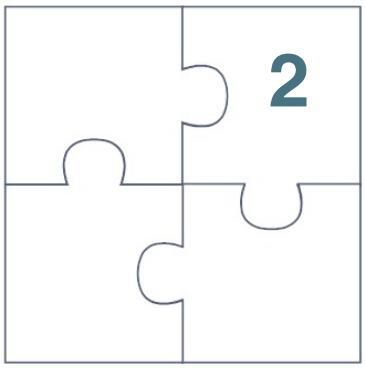
Group discussion for items #1 & #2:
As a group, identify and discuss a time when you knew students were overwhelmed with the amount of learning being asked of them.

Briefly record your group's responses. Prepare to share these responses along with a summary of items #1 & 2 once back with your original group at the end of the reading time.

Student-Program Alignment
and
Teaching to Mastery

What Is a Mastery Learning Program?

Jigsaw Activity



Instructions: Everybody reads Chapter 1 from the ***beginning on page 12 to the middle of page 13. Stop after you complete the paragraph ending before item #1.*** Now read items #3 & #6.

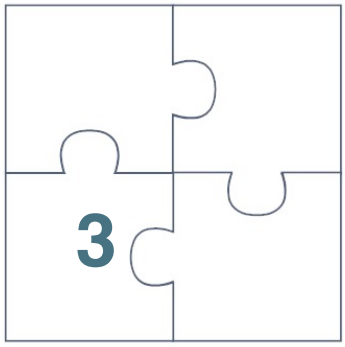
Group discussion for item #3:
As an intelligent person, identify and discuss a time when you have been overwhelmed with the amount of learning being asked of you.

Briefly record your group's responses. Prepare to share these responses along with a summary of item #3 once back with your original group at the end of the reading time.

Student-Program Alignment
and
Teaching to Mastery

What Is a Mastery Learning Program?

Jigsaw Activity



Instructions: Everybody reads Chapter 1 from the ***beginning on page 12 to the middle of page 13. Stop after you complete the paragraph ending before item #1.*** Now read items #4 & #6.

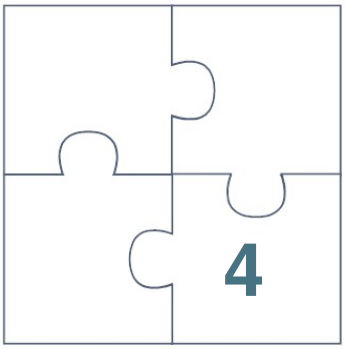
Group discussion for item #4:
As a group, identify and discuss the dangers of having a systematic design.

Briefly record your group's responses. Prepare to share these responses along with a summary of item #4 once back with your original group at the end of the reading time.

Student-Program Alignment
and
Teaching to Mastery

What Is a Mastery Learning Program?

Jigsaw Activity



Instructions: Everybody reads Chapter 1 from the ***beginning on page 12 to the middle of page 13. Stop after you complete the paragraph ending before item #1.*** Now read items #5 and #6.

Group discussion for item #5:
As a group, identify and discuss the example given as a pre-skill that students must master before they can be successful with the next targeted skill. Now discuss what would happen if the student was not able to follow the first direction (pre-skill).

Briefly record your group's responses. Prepare to share these responses along with a summary of item #5 once back with your original group at the end of the reading time.

The National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI) is a non-profit organization providing the world's foremost Direct Instruction (DI) implementation support. NIFDI has an established history working with schools in the United States and abroad, including middle schools in Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Nebraska, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, Guam and Australia. Below are the experiences of two high-poverty middle schools that implemented DI with support from NIFDI.

City Springs School – Baltimore, MD

City Springs School located in Baltimore, Maryland is a high-poverty school with a student population that is 99% African American (see Figure 1). The school, a K-8 campus, had a history of low performance. Only 33% of 7th grade students met or exceeded the benchmark standards on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA) exam in 2004-05. This means two out of every three children were failing!

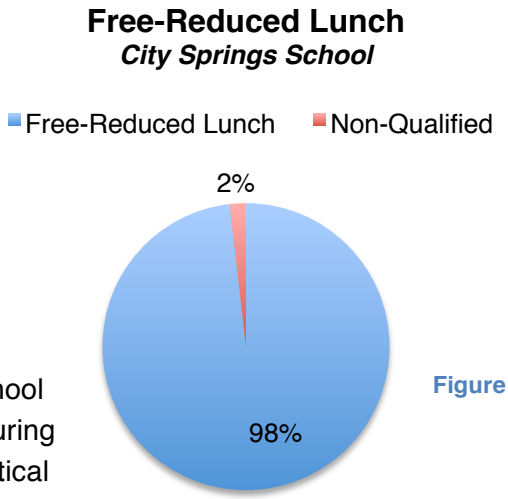


Figure 1

Over the course of the next five years, City Springs School implemented Direct Instruction with NIFDI's support. During this time, the school's teaching staff were trained on critical aspects of the program, including student assessment, program delivery and adjusting instruction to react to individual students' needs. Through NIFDI's coaches training model, the school's leadership team developed the skills necessary to effectively lead a full-immersion DI implementation. As a result, the percentage of 7th graders meeting or exceeding the state benchmark more than doubled, from 33% to 79% (see Figure 2).

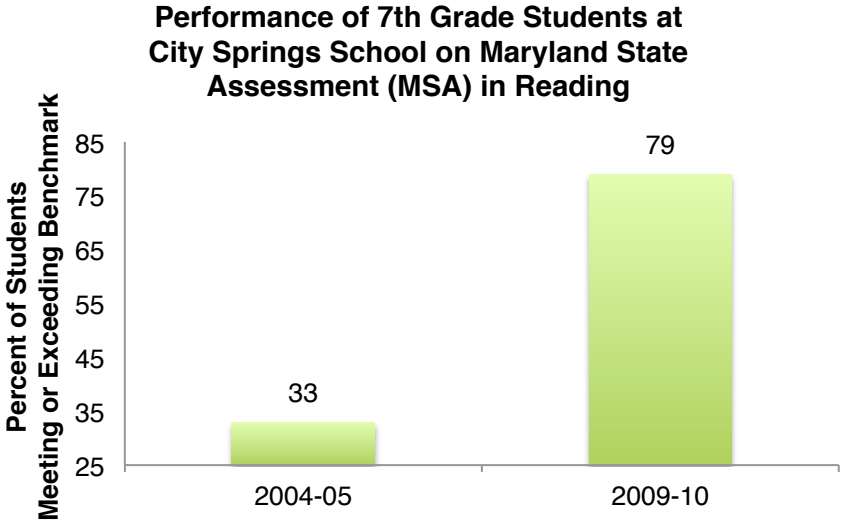


Figure 2

Bunche Middle School – Atlanta, GA

Students at Bunche Middle School in Atlanta, Georgia demonstrated significant improvements from the time they entered middle school as 6th graders to spring of their 8th grade year as a result of Direct Instruction. Bunche Middle School is comprised almost exclusively of African American students with 98% of the student body qualifying for the federal free-reduced lunch program (see Figure 3). With NIFDI support for implementing Direct Instruction, every cohort enjoyed significant gains from 2005 to 2009. The first group through the program went from 87% of students meeting or exceeding the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) their first year in middle school to 96% of students passing the exam as 8th graders (see Figure 4). Similar results are evident for subsequent cohorts, including the 2006-07 cohort with 92% of students passing. Just two years later, 94 percent of students were passing – a difficult gain to achieve with already high-performing students!

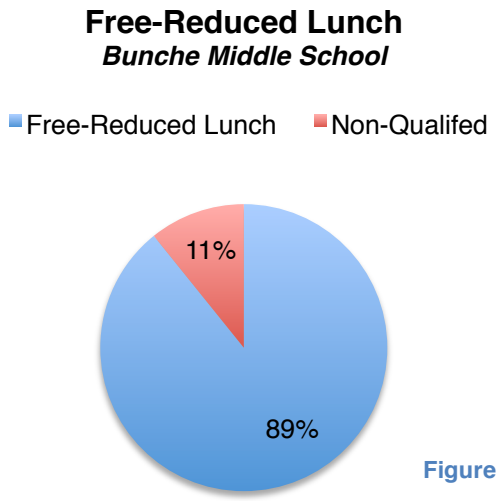


Figure 3

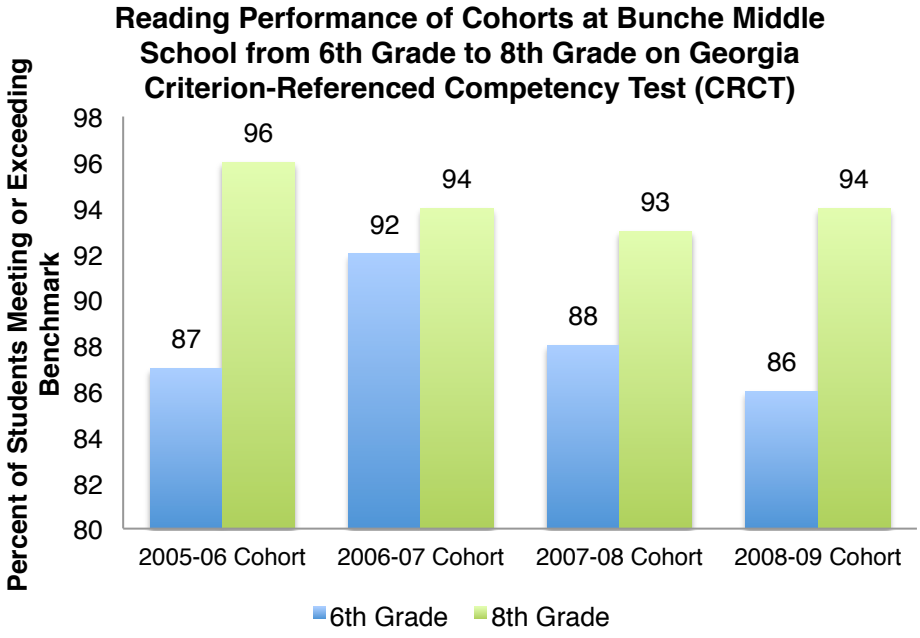
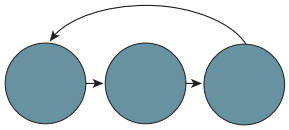


Figure 4

For more information, contact the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI) toll-free at 877.485.1973 or at info@nifdi.org.



Atlanta Middle School Placement Changes

Percent of 8th graders in Reading Programs

	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2006
Remedial Reading (Corrective Decoding)	40.5	7.9	3.5
Literature Programs (Reading Mastery Gr. 4 & 5)	59.5	92.1	62.4
Structured Novel Studies (Post-Direct Instruction)	0.0	0.0	34.1