Success in an Intermediate School

November 2004—February 2005

Applied Scholastics formed a partnership with a public intermediate school in Mid St. Louis County. The school of about 300 students in grades four though six is located in a neighborhood just outside the city limits of St. Louis. Ninety-six percent of the students are African-American and 89% come from low-income families.

With pre-testing on the Wide Range Achievement Tests for Reading and Spelling in November 2004, it was determined that the majority of students performed below grade level. A phonics tutoring program was instituted by Applied Scholastics, using volunteers trained by Applied Scholastics specifically for the tutoring project.

Simultaneously, students were receiving classroom instruction on comprehension strategies as presented in the *Learning How to Learn* workbook. Teachers utilized the corresponding teacher's manual.

Fourteen tutors were trained for 15 hours to deliver Applied Scholastics' highly precise reading and comprehension remediation program. The one tutor without prior Study Technology training received an additional 24 hours of basic training.

Only four of the tutors had either prior classroom teaching experience or had home schooled their own children. Six of the fourteen have bachelor's degrees and the other eight graduated high school.

Tutoring was focused on fourth grade students who scored below grade level in reading. The conditions under which it took place were far less than optimum. Tutors worked on school premises during the day in crowded, noisy spaces that allowed much distraction. Additionally, the tutors were changed often, as volunteers departed and new ones took their place.

The records of tutoring time were based on the students' time in the tutoring space, where usually

Data Table

Student	Reading						Spelling						Tutoring Time
	Raw Score		Standard Score		Grade Level		Raw Score		Standard Score		Grade Level		
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	
1	27	33	77	90	2	4	22	25	80	81	2	2	23 hours 46 min
2	31	34	88	96	3	4	23	26	82	87	2	3	15 hours 55 min
3	30	33	89	97	3	4	27	30	96	104	4	5	3 hours 30 min
4	31	34	91	96	3	4	23	28	85	92	2	3	6 hours 52 min
5	31	36	91	105	3	5	24	28	88	95	3	3	17 hours 39 min
6	32	34	84	99	4	4	23	30	75	102	2	4	12 hours 13 min
7	32	37	94	108	4	6	27	30	96	102	4	4	12 hours 40 min
8	32	36	97	105	4	5	28	29	102	98	4	4	14 hours 18 min
9	23	32	69	91	1	3	23	25	85	84	2	2	28 hours 34 min
10	24	30	69	86	2	3	24	24	85	81	3	2	28 hours 23 min
11	26	33	75	94	2	4	22	29	80	95	2	4	26 hours 18 min
12	28	33	83	97	2	4	23	31	85	105	2	5	27 hours 30 min
13	30	37	85	105	3	6	23	28	82	92	2	3	19 hours 17 min
14	30	35	89	102	3	4	25	30	75	102	2	4	13 hours 31 min
15	29	36	89	105	3	5	22	29	84	98	2	4	26 hours 58 min
16	30	33	89	97	3	4	22	27	82	92	2	3	15 hours 59 min
17	31	36	91	105	3	5	27	29	96	98	4	4	6 hours 15 min
18	31	35	91	104	3	4	22	26	82	89	2	3	20 hours 10 min
19	29	33	92	97	3	4	23	28	90	95	2	3	13 hours 20 min
20	31	37	95	111	3	6	27	32	99	111	4	5	6 hours 57 min
Averages:	29.4	34.4	86.4	99.5	2.9	4.4	24.0	28.2	86.5	95.2	2.6	3.5	17 hours 0 min

they waited for their tutoring sessions as tutors finished up with other students. While this method exaggerates the amount of tutoring received, it is the only record available at this time, therefore the figures given below are derived from this record.

Results

As of February 2005, pre- and post-test reading and spelling scores were available for twenty fourth grade students who received an average of 17 hours of one-on-one tutoring.

- Eighteen of the 20 students were now reading at or above grade level.
- Seven of the 20 were now reading above grade level.
- The average grade level increase in reading was 1.6 grades.
- The average grade level increase in spelling was 1.0 grades.
- Standard scores had increased by 15.1% on the average.

Pre-and post test details are shown in the data table.

Conclusions

A very substantial amount of change was achieved in a very minimum amount of time, using the remedial tools of Study Technology. It is exciting to imagine what result could be achieved with more time and resources. Certainly the achievement gap could be eliminated.

Note that the outstanding results were achieved in the face of suboptimum learning environments and resources. The power of Study Technology can overcome such barriers, even when service is delivered by non-professionals. This opens the door to using community volunteers for individual instruction in schools that lack resources—or even those that do not.