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EVALUATION OF SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AT HODGE ROAD ELEMENTARY 2005-06

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ABSTRACT

In 2005-06, four private agencies provided 252 Hodge Road students with supplemental educational services as one component of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Only students receiving free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) were eligible. More than half of those served scored at or above grade level before service, while some students who scored below grade level were not eligible. The curricular materials used were remedial and not designed to extend the learning of students scoring at grade level. At grades 1-2, the percentage of students reaching grade level in literacy increased for those served; this was not the case for not-served students. Both served and not served students improved End-of-Grade (EOG) reading performance at grades 3-5. Students who had multiple risk factors (limited English proficient [LEP] or students with disabilities [SWD] in addition to FRL) showed the greatest increases in the percentage of students at grade level. A major caution when interpreting the results is that analyses could not control for other intervention efforts that may have contributed to results found.

In 2004-05, Hodge Road Elementary School failed to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), for the third consecutive year. In 2004-05, Hodge Road met 17 out of 18 reading and math targets, but did not reach the target of 76.7% of Hispanic/Latino students scoring at grade level in reading. Thus, Hodge Road Elementary entered into its second year of school improvement and was required to offer supplemental educational services (SES) to all students who received free or reduced-priced lunch (FRL). Four private firms (Huntington, Mastermind, Sylvan, and University) provided tutoring services to 252 students at a cost of approximately \$303,000, which was funded by Title I. In 2005-06, Hodge Road Elementary made AYP with 12 out of 12 reading targets met¹. The school will remain in school improvement in 2006-07, since NCLB requires a school to make AYP two consecutive years to exit school improvement status.

Key Topics

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¹ 2005-06 math End of Grade (EOG) scores were not available from the Department of Public Instruction at the time of this report's publication.

This report on the implementation and impact of the SES program blends information from two sources: 1) Evaluation and Research staff analyses of demographic and achievement data from system measures, and 2) data collected by EDSTAR for E&R through interviews and focus groups of providers, Hodge Road staff, parents, and Title I staff.² Due to small sample sizes, the evaluation was limited to examining the percentage of students meeting grade-level standards. Results reflect correlations rather than causation.

Question 1: What strategies were used at Hodge Road during 2005-06 to improve student achievement?

Supplemental educational services represented one of many strategies to improve student achievement employed at Hodge Road Elementary during the 2005-06 school year. Table 1 displays the other initiatives employed at Hodge Road. The impact of these strategies was not evaluated and therefore the degree to which each influenced student achievement is unknown.

Table 1
Strategies to Improve Student Achievement
2005-06

Strategy	Explanation
Assessment	1. Use of additional assessment tools for reading (K-5) to identify more specifically the areas in which students were struggling. 2. Monthly review of all student assessment data to identify students not making progress and to design quick interventions to address specific areas of need.
Professional Development	3. Professional development model that provided job-embedded, ongoing professional development (twice a month/three hours per session) to ensure teachers had strong knowledge of best practices in literacy and were implementing those best practices consistently across the school.
Staff	4. Two full-time literacy coaches to design professional development and support classroom teachers by providing ongoing modeling/coaching in the classrooms. 5. An inclusive model of co-teaching with literacy teachers (one at each grade level) and English as a second language (ESL) teachers to reduce fragmentation of instruction.
Funds	6. Funds dedicated to provide additional books for the school's leveled book room as well as building classroom libraries in each classroom so students could choose books and read independently (at their level) for sustained periods of time every day.
Schedule	7. Alignment of classroom teachers' schedules to ensure all elements of balanced literacy were included and to protect from pullout instruction.

Data Source: Principal Jamee Lynch, August 4, 2006

² EDSTAR documents summarized here are available through the Evaluation and Research Department.

Question 2: Was the program implemented well? Did issues arise regarding the implementation of supplemental educational services at Hodge Road? Were school staff and parents satisfied with the services provided?

Hodge Road staff did not consider the SES program to be well implemented. Several issues arose related to recruiting participants, the adequacy of the instructional materials, communication, logistics, and school staff and parent satisfaction with the services.

Recruiting Participants

The recruitment process was handled well by Hodge Road staff, which met and exceeded the Title I requirements. Parents of all Hodge Road Elementary students were sent letters notifying them that SES would be available, and parents of eligible students were later invited to attend the Provider Fair. Parents of eligible children who did not attend or who did not enroll their children at the fair were contacted to ensure they understood the provisions of the program.

Issues that arose were that some parents of students who were Level III and IV believed that their children would be provided with enrichment activities; they were disappointed to learn it was only a tutoring program to remediate skills. While one agency had a Spanish-speaking staff member at the provider fair, no tutoring was provided in Spanish. Some parents enrolled their children expecting math tutoring, and were disappointed later to learn that math was not offered, or was not offered to all who requested it. (Only two agencies provided tutoring in math.)

By the time the tutoring program began, 286 students were enrolled. Most of the students enrolled were served by the SES providers. Thirty-four of those enrolled did not attend.

Instructional Materials

Across the four private agencies, lessons were not customized to student needs, and materials were not aligned with what was taught in school. When school staff raised questions, providers told them that this was the curriculum approved for use by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Nearly all instruction provided was remedial and thus inappropriate for many participants who scored at or above grade level. More advanced materials were only provided occasionally to students, by using materials from higher grade levels, which was not always appropriate to the NC curriculum for that grade. Instruction was primarily delivered through drill and practice worksheets, which is not aligned with Hodge Road practices.

Communication

With the exception of one provider (Sylvan), communication with classroom teachers and parents was infrequent and unclear. For example, only two firms (Mastermind and University) provided math tutoring, which was not always clear to parents before they signed up. Several parents reported that they had signed their children up with Sylvan with the expectation that their student would receive tutoring in math. According to Sylvan's director, only reading was taught due to a Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) mandate (although she could not recall who mandated this). While Mastermind provided math tutoring, some parents reported being unaware until the program was well underway that their child was placed only in a reading

group. Given that NCLB relates to both reading and math scores, the lack of math instruction is an area of concern.

Logistics

During the provision of supplemental educational services on Hodge Road's campus, the logistical issues that arose included:

- Confusion about who should provide WCPSS assessment results to the tutors.
- Providers were not able to consistently meet all the requirements set by DPI (i.e. involving parents and school staff in setting achievement goals for the student).
- Tutors were often late or absent and some left before buses arrived to take students home; this put an extra burden on school staff for student supervision.
- While planned group sizes ranged from two to eight students, tutors were often late or absent, causing re-grouping and group sizes that were not optimal.

School Staff and Parent Satisfaction with the Services

While nearly all parents (90%) were satisfied with the after-school program, it should be noted that parents did not pay the fees. Thus, many parents were grateful recipients of what they viewed as a free service. Some parents did express dissatisfaction in open-ended responses about the lack of progress reports (except from Sylvan), math instruction, homework support, and Spanish instruction in the after-school program.

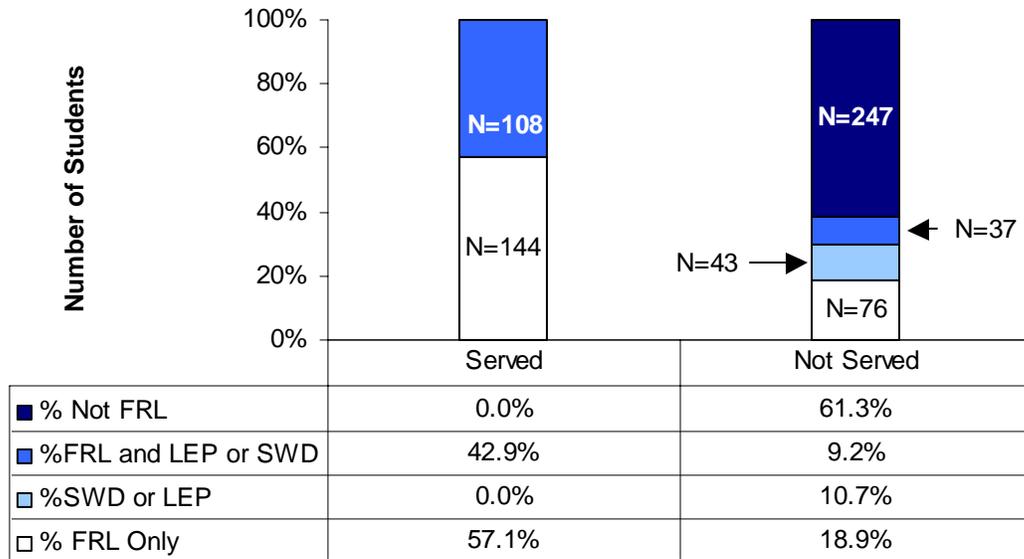
School staff had less positive views because of the eligibility, curricular, and logistical issues that arose. Staff believed Sylvan appeared to be better organized and more communicative with them and with parents than the other providers.

Question 3: Which students were served by supplemental educational services at Hodge Road?

Students Served

Hodge Road fully met federal NCLB eligibility guidelines, since 100% of served students received FRL as required by NCLB (see Figure 1). Federal guidelines consider all FRL students eligible for Supplemental Services regardless of achievement status. In 2005-06, Hodge Road Elementary served 655 students, 382 (58%) of whom were FRL and thus eligible for supplemental educational services (SES). Overall, 55% of Hodge Road students scored at grade level on reading EOG (grades 3-5) or book level (grades 1 and 2). Most of the stakeholders (providers, program staff, teachers, and parents) assumed served students were academically below grade level. The attached appendix displays the 655 Hodge Road students by served status and 2004-05 and 2005-06 performance.

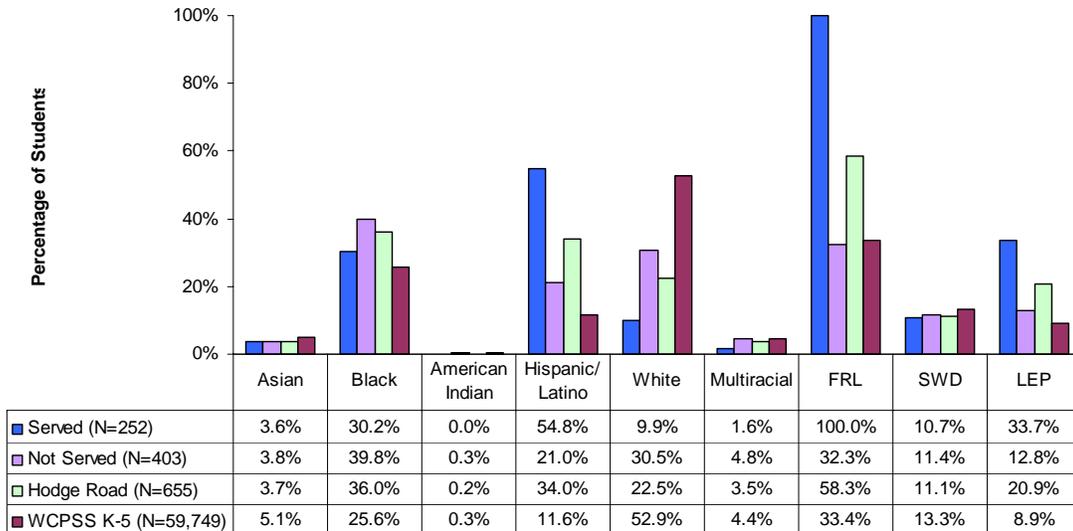
Figure 1
Hodge Road Supplemental Services Served Status
By Selected Subgroups
2005-06



Demographics

In 2005-06, a third of WCPSS K-5 students received FRL benefits. Of the 58% Hodge Road K-5 students who received FRL benefits, 68% were served in the SES program. Figure 2 shows there was a higher percentage of LEP students among served students (34%) than among not served students (13%), Hodge Road students (21%), and WCPSS K-5 students (9%). Of the 48 LEP students below grade level in grades 1-5, 39 (81%) participated in SES. Additionally, 13% of WCPSS K-5 students held SWD status compared to 11% of Hodge Road K-5 students and 11% of served students.

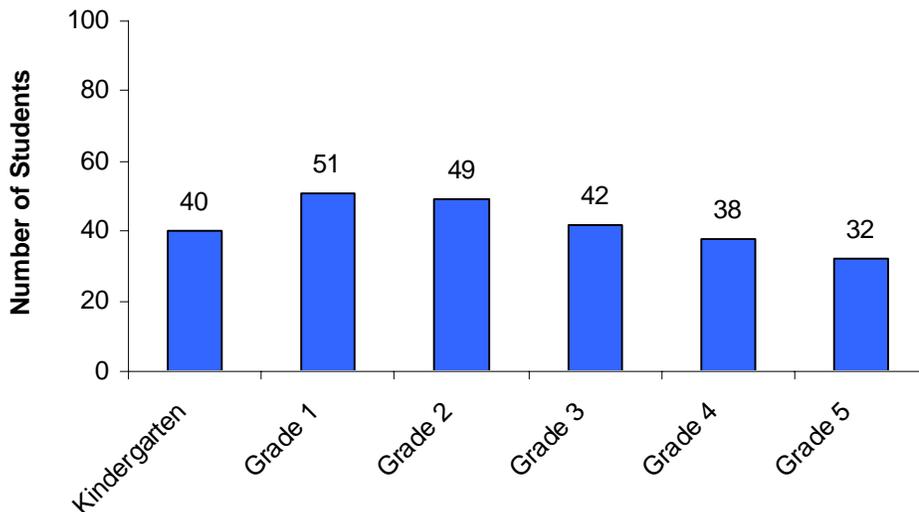
Figure 2
Demographics of Grade K-5 Students
2005-06



Note: Three Hodge Road students were missing race and LEP data and are not included in race and LEP calculations.

Figure 3 displays the number of students served by grade level. Students were distributed across K-5 with the largest number of participating students in grades 1 and 2. While 40 kindergarten students were served, their achievement is not analyzed since there is not a 2004-05 book level score for these students.

Figure 3
Students Served by Supplemental Education Services by Grade
2005-06



Question 4: How did served students' performance before and after service compare to FRL students not served? Hodge Road students overall? WCPSS overall?

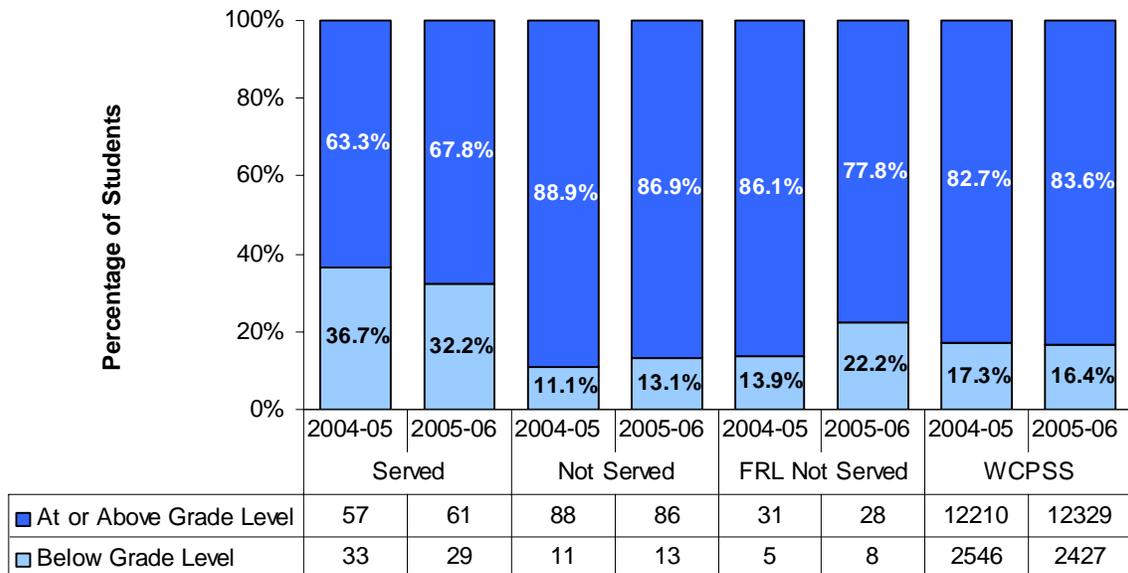
Our analyses provide useful information about program impact on student performance levels. However, several caveats must be kept in mind.

- The analyses are focused only on movement to grade level because of the limited sample sizes by grade (the level at which scores would more appropriately be analyzed to assess growth). Thus, this analysis does not fully address the program's impact on the growth of students who scored at grade level before service.
- The analyses also could not control for students' possible benefit from participation in other improvement efforts at Hodge (among those served and not).
- K-5 assessment results could be somewhat less reliable than EOG, because they involve performance measures that introduce less reliability to ratings assigned.
- Students who were FRL but not served represent our best comparison. However, the group was fairly small and not randomly assigned. Thus, these students could have different types or levels of need.

Book Level

Served students outperformed not-served students in grades 1 and 2. The percentage of served students at or above grade level based on book level increased slightly from 63% to 68%. The percentage of FRL students not served decreased from 86% to 78% at or above grade level (see Figure 4), while the percentage of students not served who scored at or above grade level decreased slightly from 89% to 87%.

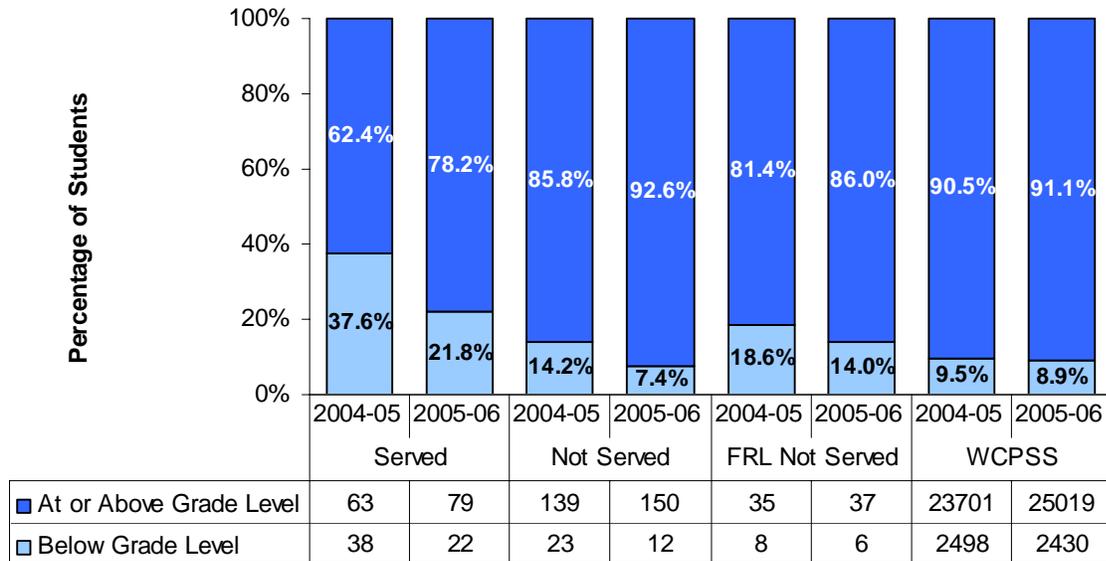
Figure 4
Book Level 2004-05 and 2005-06
Grades 1 & 2



Reading EOG

Both served and not-served student groups made gains in the percentage of students at or above grade level. As shown in Figure 5, the FRL students not served had a smaller increase in the percentage of students reaching grade level than those served. The reduction in those scoring below grade level was actually greatest for Hodge Road students not served (23 to 12 students, or a reduction of 48%) compared to FRL students served (38 to 22 for FRL students served or 42%), and FRL students not served (8 to 6 students or 25%).

Figure 5
EOG 2004-05 and 2005-06
Grades 3-5

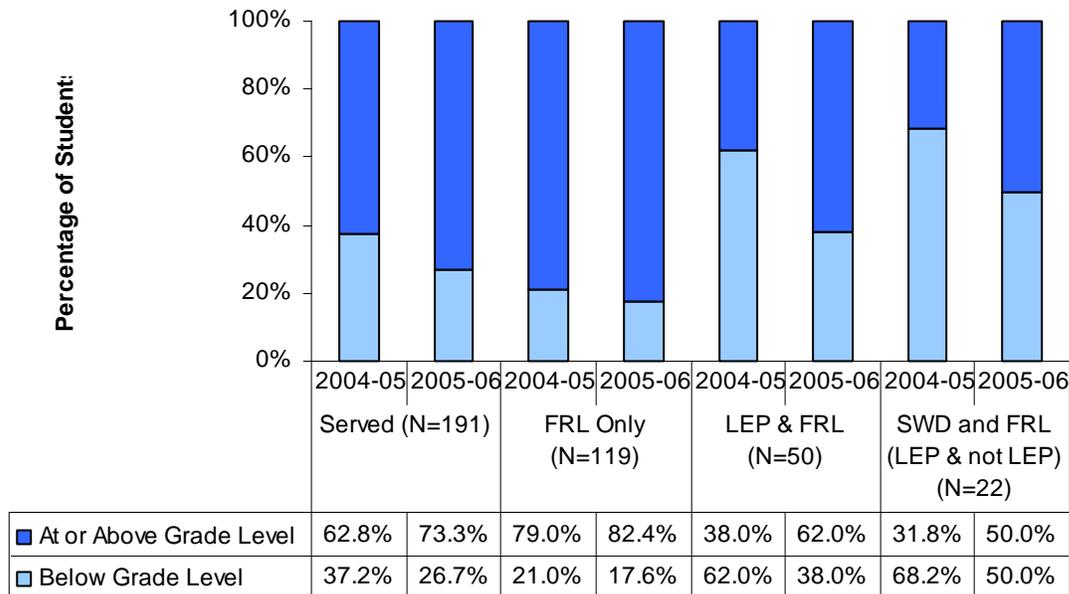


Question 5: Did performance (based on book level for grades 1 and 2 and reading EOG for grades 3-5) of served students increase from 2004-05 to 2005-06? By select subgroups?

At-Risk Status

As shown in Figure 6, students who had multiple risks (e.g., being LEP, SWD, or both in addition to being FRL) showed the lowest initial performance (32-38% at grade level) and the greatest improvement from service in SES.

**Figure 6
Served Students By Selected Subgroups
2004-05 and 2005-06
Grades 1-5**



Note 1: Grade-level performance based on book level for grades 1&2 and Reading EOG for grades 3-5.

Note 2: SWD and FRL and SWD, FRL, and LEP sub-groups are combined into SWD and FRL (LEP & not LEP) due to low numbers of students in these groups.

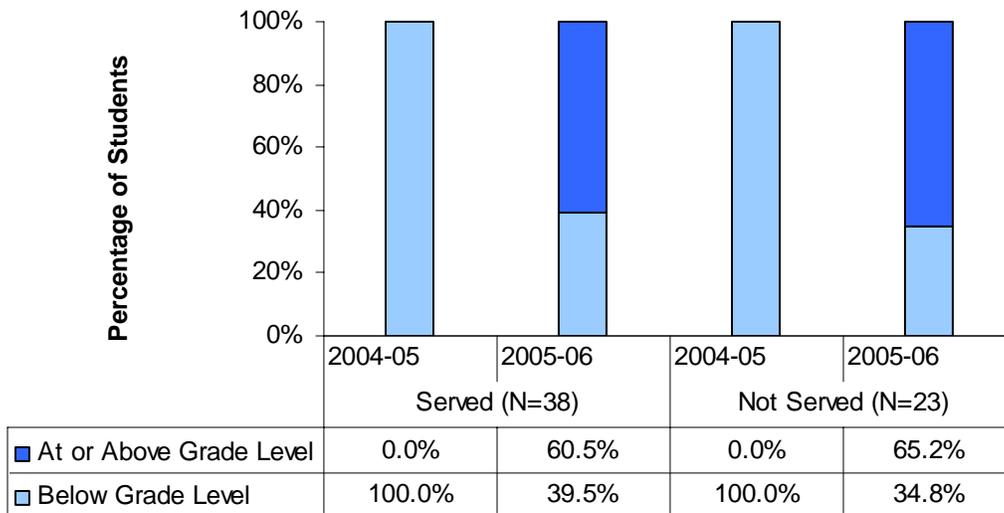
LEP Students Below Grade Level in 2004-05

Eighteen LEP students scored below grade level based on their reading EOG score in 2004-05. While not shown in Figure 6 (due to the small number of students), 16 of these 18 LEP students were served and more than half were at or above grade level in 2005-06.

Students Below Grade Level Before SES

Performance results suggest students who initially scored below grade level in grades 3-5 improved at similar rates whether they received SES or not. Of students who were below grade level in 2004-05, a greater percentage of not-served students were at or above grade level in 2005-06 than served students, but the difference was not significant. Of the 38 served students who began supplemental education services scoring below grade level, 61% reached grade level, compared to 65% of the 23 not-served students (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7
Students Scoring Below Grade Level
Based On 2004-05 Reading EOG
Grades 3-5**

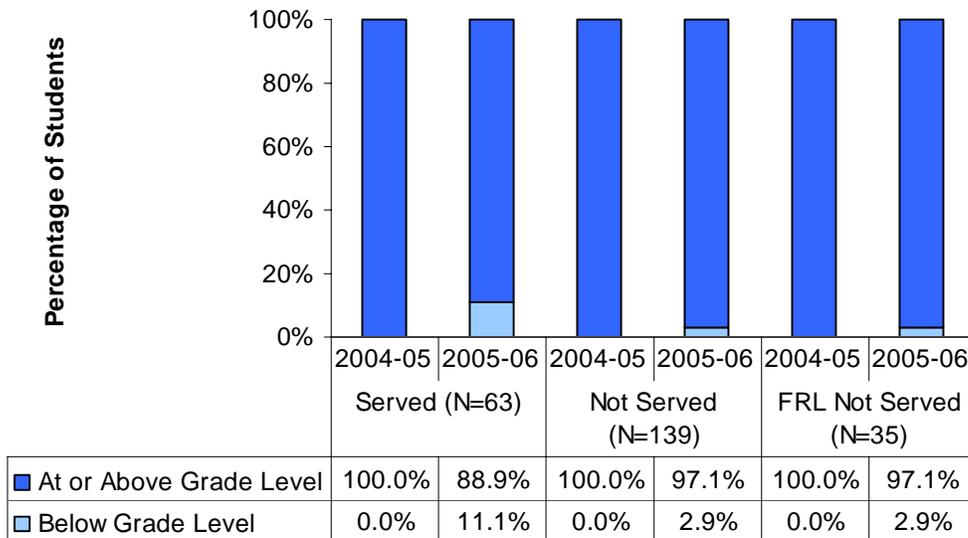


Note: FRL Not Served is not shown due to a small group size (N<15).

Students At or Above Grade Level Before SES

Evidence suggests the program may have had a negative impact on some students who entered the program scoring at grade level. *A higher percentage of served students entering at or above grade level (11%) dropped below grade level as compared to 3% of not-served students and FRL not-served students.* Figure 8 displays the students who were at or above grade level prior to receiving supplemental educational services.

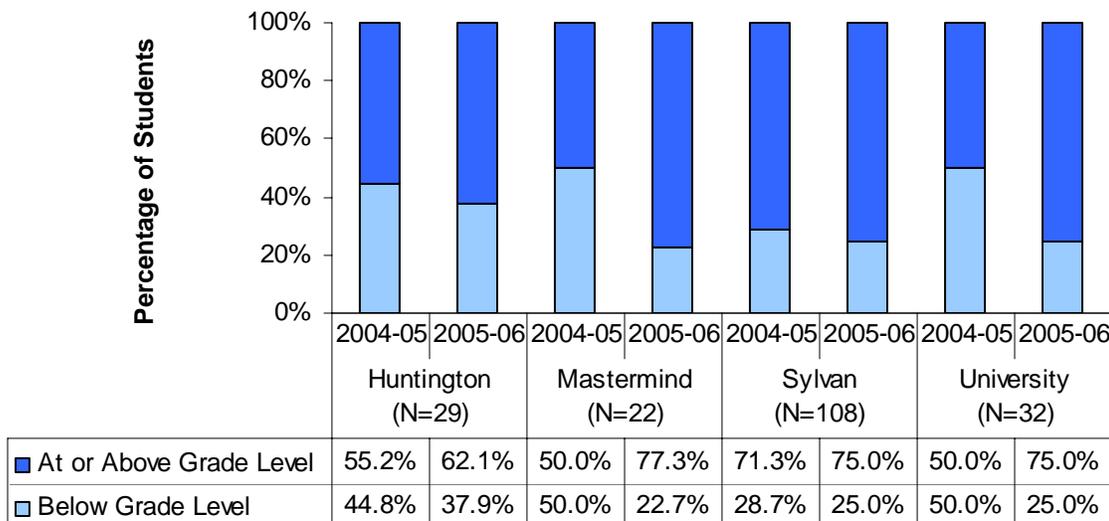
**Figure 8
Students Scoring At or Above Grade Level
Based On 2004-05 Reading EOG
Grades 3-5**



Question 6: How did the service providers compare in terms of student outcomes?

University and Mastermind had the largest increases in the percentage of students at or above grade level between 2004-05 and 2005-06 in grades 1-5. This may relate to the fact that these providers started with higher percentages of students who scored below grade level than did Sylvan. It does not address the smaller increases seen for Huntington, which served a similar population in terms of initial performance (see Figure 9).

Figure 9
Served Students By Provider
2004-05 and 2005-06
Grades 1-5



Note: Grade-level performance based on book level for grades 1&2 and Reading EOG for grades 3-5.

SUMMARY

All four provider agencies experienced implementation and logistics issues. Of the 252 students provided supplemental education services, 100% received FRL as required by NCLB. Since federal guidelines consider all FRL students eligible regardless of achievement status, many students entered the program on grade level. Lessons were not customized to student needs, and materials were not aligned with what was taught in school. Above grade-level students received remediation work for the next grade level, rather than differentiated work within their grade level’s standard course of study. With the exception of one provider, communication with teachers and parents was infrequent and unclear. Several logistical issues also emerged as a result of service providers using Hodge Road’s campus.

- There was confusion about who should provide WCPSS assessment results to the tutors.
- Tutors were often late or absent which increased group size when students were regrouped and some tutors left before buses arrived to take students home which put an extra burden on school staff for student supervision.
- All four providers were not able to consistently meet all the requirements set by DPI.

While most parents expressed satisfaction with the after-school program, it should be noted that parents did not pay the fees and were therefore grateful recipients of what they considered free services. School staff had less positive views because of the eligibility, curricular, and logistical issues that arose.

The student outcome results were mixed with served students outperforming not-served students in grades 1 and 2, but not in grade 3-5. While both served and not-served students in grades 3-5 made gains in the percentage of students at or above grade level based on reading EOG scores, the percentage of not-served students below grade-level was reduced more than among served students. Eighteen LEP students scored below grade level on EOG in 2004-05. Of the 18 students, 16 were served and more than half were at or above grade level in 2005-06.

A higher percentage of served students entering at or above grade level (11%) dropped below grade level as compared to 3% of not-served students and FRL not-served students. Among the four providers, University and Mastermind had the largest increases in the percentage of students at or above grade level between 2004-05 and 2005-06 in grades 1-5.

DISCUSSION

Hodge Road staff met the requirements of NCLB in terms of recruiting students for the SES program, with 252 of the 382 FRL students electing to participate (66%). All of the students participating were FRL, thus meeting this requirement of NCLB. However, the eligibility requirements for this program need review, some students who did score below grade level were not FRL and thus not eligible. Since the ultimate goal of NCLB is to have all students reach grade-level performance, the question of why all below grade-level students are not eligible for this service should be raised with state and federal officials.

The curriculum materials approved by DPI were all remedial, and were therefore not appropriate for the FRL students who came into the program scoring at grade level. This could suggest a lack of understanding of SES requirements by DPI. While some provider staff tried to use above grade-level remedial materials, this was not in line with their grade level's standard course of study. In any case, materials were largely worksheets, which are generally not considered the best instructional practice and, indeed, are discouraged at Hodge Road. Again, these issues need to be addressed by the state and federal officials involved in program guidelines.

Communication and logistics issues were common. School staff felt they had limited control over curriculum and other problems, yet needed to take responsibility for student safety when tutors left early. Some of these issues could be addressed with greater clarity and enforcement of guidelines. The issues of who is in charge of students and curriculum are critical and need to be resolved. Hodge Road is addressing some of the logistical and safety issues by moving the program off campus in 2006-07.

While positive results were seen for served students in grades 1 and 2, the reverse was true for served students in grades 3-5. This finding could relate to the curriculum or the nature of the assessments. The positive results in grades 1 and 2 may relate to the concrete reading skills taught at the early grade levels, which are more easily remediated, while comprehension, the main focus in grades 3-5, requires a more complex set of skills. Furthermore, grades 1 and 2 students were assessed with book level; grades 3-5 with reading EOG. The book level instrument is not a normed assessment and has lower reliability than the EOG.

Evidence suggests students in grades 1 and 2 and multiple-risk students at grades 1-5 were most likely to improve their grade-level status after SES. Of course, other school efforts may have contributed as well, but this was not controlled in this post-hoc analyses. Students scoring at grade level before service showed little benefit based on the limited analyses done for this study. Thus, this study provides some support for early intervention and tutoring in the basics for multiple-risk students and for appropriate enrichment for students at or above grade level. Results also suggest that materials for FRL students who enter the program with grade-level skills must be adjusted to better meet their needs.

Appendix Hodge Road Supplemental Services Academic Performance from 2004-05 to 2005-06 by Served Status

