


FINAL COPY


Project MORE 2007-2008 Independent Evaluation


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I. Project MORE has EARS

Over the past decade of data collection with Project MORE, results indicate that Project MORE has found to be:

 **Effective:** Project MORE is one of the few reading programs in the country that has evaluated whether their program works exclusively for students with disabilities and Title 1 students. For almost a decade, the evaluation results indicate the Project MORE students make significantly more reading gains than similar students that do not receive this intensive one-on-one reading mentoring intervention. These results have been found across grade-level (2-4), disability status, and Title 1 status.


 **Affordable:** Through cost analysis, it has been found that Project MORE costs approximately \$1.00 per volunteer mentoring hours.

 **Replicable:** Started in 15 schools in 1999. Now in almost 150 schools across Ohio.

 **Sustainable:** Due to the low cost of the project and the consistent results for students with disabilities, schools are able to sustain their projects with little or no grant funding.

II. Research-Based Mentoring Components

The following components of Project MORE have been validated by empirical research:

 **Comprehensive design focusing on oral language skills, phonemic sound-symbol relationship, structural analysis, morphemic awareness, vocabulary building, and reading fluency**

 **Development of knowledge and skills to build on previous knowledge**

 **Diagnostic assessment to determine the needs of individual students**

 **Prescriptive remediation to provide appropriate instruction and instructional materials**

 **Strong professional management and oversight of one-to-one instruction by a trained certified teacher**

 **Time on task**

 **Structured academic mentoring**

III. Project MORE Implementation Models

Several different types of Project MORE program models were implemented. These models included:

✎ Instructor and aide to serve both children with special needs and children who are at risk for reading failure

✎ Special education teachers implementing Project MORE for children with special needs in addition to their regular teaching duties

✎ Aides hired to implement Project MORE for special needs students in conjunction with special education teachers

✎ Coordinator utilized to serve at risk students, Title 1 students, as well as students with special needs

✎ Title 1 coordinator implementing Project MORE for students with special needs as well as Title 1 identified students

IV. Regression Discontinuity Design

The basic “RD” design is a pretest-posttest two-group design (Trochim, 2004). However, the two groups (intervention group: Project MORE students and control group: non-Project MORE students) are all at the same school. For the Project MORE Evaluation, the Oral Reading Fluency section of DIBELS was given to all 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders at grade level for the 11 Project MORE schools (not all schools used Project MORE at all three grade levels). The control group students were all students at Project MORE schools who had higher words-per-minute scores on the Fall Benchmark, but did not receive the Project MORE intervention. Thus, the Project MORE group (intervention) were students with disabilities or at-risk for reading failure. The control group was general education students. **Regression Discontinuity is considered to be a “Scientifically-Based” design even though there is not random sampling or assignment into groups. The intervention group (Project MORE students), which has the lower reading pretest scores, must have significantly higher reading gains (in this case, words-per-minute) than their fellow students with higher pretest scores (control group). It is very difficult for an intervention to produce this type of result at a statistically significant level.**

V. Overall Project MORE Conclusions

✓ Project MORE provided structured one-to-one reading mentoring services to diverse range of Ohio students who were in acute need of special and remedial education services in reading.

✓ During the 2007-2008 school year, Project MORE branched out to approximately 35 new schools (100 total schools) and 124 new students (1598 total students) than last year.

✓ Over 2100 mentors were recruited and trained. The mentors worked over 57,000 volunteer hours providing structured one-on-one reading tutoring.

✓ Students with the more severe reading difficulties received a higher frequency of mentoring sessions in the project.

✓ **The overall reading gains for Project MORE students on both informal and standardized reading assessments were noteworthy because frequently they represented value-added month-for-month reading gains. In addition, the Regression Discontinuity analyses indicated that the DIBELS posttest scores increased at a statistically significantly higher rate for Project MORE students (with disabilities and at-risk) than for their classmates without disabilities.**

✓ Only 2nd grade Title 1 students averaged over 30 words-per-minute reading gains on the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency at grade level. However, the majority of students reading levels were not at grade level, which could limit reading gains.

✓ When comparing Project MORE (Reading-tutors) students' reading gains to those of students with the same disability and grade level at similar schools not receiving reading mentoring, **Project MORE students consistently had significantly higher reading gains.**

✓ These findings occurred between the pretest and posttest over only six months of intervention. In addition, because students with disabilities typically have below average rates of reading gains, it is difficult to detect group differences that can be attributed to the intervention.

✓ **Historically, the 2007-2008 Project MORE findings have been one of the most successful year's results since the inception of the program.**

VI. Project MORE Over the Past Decade

✓ Project MORE started with 15 schools and now almost 150 schools have been trained.

✓ Project MORE started with 200 students and now over 1500 students are served.

✓ Over the past decade, statistically significant reading gains (with informal reading measures) have been with the following disability categories as well as Title 1: SLD, CD, SLI, MD, ED, and Autism

✓ Project MORE Evaluation started to include a Causal Comparative design five years ago. Over that time period, Project MORE students with SLD, CD, and Title 1 in grades 2-4 have significantly outperformed students in the same grade and disability category at similar schools that did not receive volunteer reading mentoring in both informal and standardized reading assessments. *

2007-2008 Regression Discontinuity Results:

Fall-to-spring reading gains on DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency for Project MORE students (with disabilities and at-risk) were compared to their classmates (without disabilities) to measure reading growth rate due to the Project MORE intervention at 11 schools in three grade levels (2nd, 3rd, 4th). The results indicated that the DIBELS posttest scores increased at a statistically significantly higher rate for Project MORE students (with disabilities and at-risk) than for their classmates (without disabilities) in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades during the 2007-2008 school year. These findings are *compelling* and validate Project MORE's status as a Scientifically Based and Value-Added Intervention for students with disabilities.

**Only students with SLD, CD, and Title 1 could be included in this design because of the number of students needed to conduct the analyses (over 30 per group) by grade and disability or Title 1 status.*