

January 16, 2008

Subject: "Reading Scores are Wonderful"

"Our reading scores are wonderful, and our superintendent loves it!" exclaims elementary principal Joan Leach.

Leach and her team transformed Raymond Elementary School into a 2007 Washington State School of Distinction. This award is given to schools that have improved the most in reading and math on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test. Even though 68% of students in the school qualify for free and reduced lunch, an impressive **92% of 4th graders passed the reading portion of the WASL** in 2007. (The state average was 37% free and reduced and 77% passing.)

Principal Leach credits Read Right[®], a new constructivist reading intervention program, for the dramatic turnaround of students' reading abilities and the consequent transformation of her school. **"We absolutely adore this program. It works!!"** My teachers are feeling good because they see kids being successful. It's nice to see real growth."

Gayle Haerling, Raymond Elementary Title I teacher and Read Right trainer has overseen the expansion of Read Right to students in the Junior/Senior High School. These students, too, have been transformed. "Ricardo's family has lived in our community for many years - all of them, for generations, working in the oyster industry, which is cold, wet, minimum wage work. Ricardo entered the Read Right program as a 12th grader reading at a 1st grade level. He quickly improved, gaining 7 grade levels during the school year. He became the first person from the family to graduate from high school. The result of this accomplishment? Ricardo didn't follow the footsteps of his grandfather and uncles, his dad and brothers. He landed a job in the local sawmill - a job with full benefits, decent wages, and a chance for advancement. In fact, within the first year he was promoted to an inside job - out of the weather. Would Ricardo have been able to land this job without improving his reading through participation in Read Right? Absolutely not! He wouldn't have been able to fill out the application."

Results such as Ricardo's are seen again and again with student after student. "It is a humbling experience to see what these kids who have experienced so much failure are capable of achieving," stated Haerling.

"Yes it is," agreed Leach. "We want to let other educators know. There is a new way to teach reading. There is a better, new way."

The excitement generated in Raymond Elementary School by student success in the Read Right program is not unusual. **In Texas, 35 Elementary Schools and 48 Secondary Schools have implemented the Read Right intervention model and have also achieved great results.** For example, 1147 third, fourth and fifth graders classified as Tier 3 readers in Irving Independent School District, participated in the

program. Of these severely struggling readers, an impressive 69% passed the reading portion of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) as a result of Read Right small-group tutoring.