

Graduation Rates Climb Rapidly—Unique Reading Program Solves the Most Difficult Reading Problems



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TETON TIMES

A New Voice On The Northern Plains

Volume 6 Issue 46

October 8 - 15, 2008

NEW READING PROGRAM PUTS KIDS ON TRACK TO GRADUATE

Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation, North Dakota

By Todd Fredson and Clyde Naasz

“When we first brought Read Right® in, a little over 1300 books were checked out from the High School library. Last year, a little over 2300 books were checked out. This year 4,660 books have been checked out!” reports Clyde Naasz, Assistant Superintendent of Standing Rock Community Schools in Ft. Yates, North Dakota.

Naasz has also seen a dramatic increase in high school graduation rates. He believes there is a direct connection between the increase in the number of students graduating and Read Right, the innovative reading intervention program implemented three years ago. In 2004-05, **32 students graduated** from the high school, and in 2005-06, **44 students graduated**. In the 2006-07 year, Standing Rock High School **graduated 59 students**. Naasz says that while many reading programs say they’ll advance kids a grade level or two, he’s seen students in Read Right advance as much as 4, 5, or even 6 grade levels in a single school year.

Cari Kramer, a former math teacher, is a certified Read Right tutor at the middle school. She reports that rapid reading gains have pushed the program into the heart of the curriculum. “A few years ago,” Kramer explains, “when we [the teachers] put our schedules together, it was kind of like Read Right was at the bottom and if it fit in we did it. Last year it was one of the top priorities. This year it’s the main priority, even with the other teachers. They want to get their reading scheduled first because they all love Read Right. Our history and science teachers can’t say enough about the program.”

One 6th and 8th grade science teacher expounds, “I have several students who have been involved in the Read Right program. I’ve seen a wonderful improvement in their confidence. When I used to ask them to read, they’d look down and shake their head no. Now I have many of these same students volunteering to read out loud.”

Data from all Read Right school projects demonstrates that rapid gains in reading are typical for students tutored with the methodology: high school students average a grade level gain every 14 hours of tutoring; middle school students advance one grade level per 18 hours of tutoring. Currently, there are Read Right projects in 217 schools around the country, with 21 more projects slated to initiate during the 2008-09 school year.

Native projects include those on the Sioux, Navajo, Seminole, Mandan, Kalispel, Spokane, Hopi, Yakama, and Skokomish Reservations as well as with the Yup'ik and Tlingit in Alaska and with Native Islanders in Hawaii. Because Read Right's methodology is focused on meaning and comprehension rather than on the elements of word identification, Read Right's program also is very effective for language acquisition. A project at the Rocky Ridge Boarding School on the Navajo Reservation specifically features a language retrieval program. There is a similar project with the Yup'ik in Bethel, Alaska.

Speaking about its effect on the Standing Rock community, Naasz exclaims, "We've had parents and grandparents come into the superintendent, we've had guardians come into the superintendent, 'my granddaughter, my grandson, my son and daughter, after this program they're going from D or F students to A and B students!' After a month of these students being in that program, there's no way you're going to take it away from them. It's that simple. We'd have a revolt if we took this program away right now."

Jon Gartner, Assistant Principal at Standing Rock High School, sees the program's effect on his students' lives from another perspective: "As assistant principal I deal with discipline all the time. I can tell you that the kids coming out of Read Right are letting go of a lot of that stuff. Now that they're able to read, they can do the work."

Cari Kramer adds that behavior referrals at the middle school have gone way down. "The number of referrals we had for this entire school year, was equal to the number we had last year only through February." Attendance has improved from 87% to 92%. "The impact is really going over into all the other areas."

Naasz expects great gains in the number of students who demonstrate proficiency on State Assessment Tests. The Standing Rock schools have been in School Improvement Status and Naasz points to Read Right as one of the most productive interventions in place to move the schools toward Adequate Yearly Progress.

Naasz projects that "if we continue seeing what we see happening, and I expect to see even bigger things next year, within two to three years or sooner, the whole Standing Rock Reservation is going to adopt Read Right—every school on the Standing Rock Reservation."

Perhaps this is a program worth considering to help your struggling students? If you or some of your staff would like to gather more information about Read Right, please forward this e-mail to them. Some ideas follow...

Visit www.readright.com to read articles about educators across the country and their experiences with this new intervention program.

Contact the Read Right office by phone or Email. We will be happy to answer your questions and forward to you a school information packet that explains in detail the theory, methodology, implementation and cost. Ask for Maureen at 360-427-9440 or Email Maureenm@readright.com

Contact administrators, special education teachers, reading specialists, and ELL teachers across the country who have first hand experience implementing Read Right. A listing of referrals with phone numbers and email addresses is included in the information packet.

Obtain a copy of Dr. Tadlock's book, *Read Right! Coaching Your Child to Excellence in Reading* (McGraw-Hill 2005) available through www.amazon.com. Chapters in this book explain the theoretical constructs underlying Read Right methodology in concise, understandable terms.

Principals, superintendents, teachers and tutors from many schools across America will be attending **Read Right's Sixth Annual Conference** to be held at the Doubletree Hotel at the Seattle Airport on May 14, 15 and 16, 2009. This conference will provide an excellent opportunity to learn about Read Right's theoretical constructs and the implementation and success of Read Right in schools and colleges across the country. There will be opportunity for school visitations to observe Read Right in action and talk to students, tutors, and administrators. Come join us for the 2½ day conference (or for one day only) and learn more about how this innovative program can empower your students by quickly and permanently eliminating their reading problems. More information will be posted at www.readright.com by January, 2009.

Finally, for those that might enjoy reading about the theory, research and science underlying the Read Right methodology, Dr. Tadlock's academic paper, "Interactive Constructivism and Reading: The Nature of Neural Networks Challenges the Phonological Processing Hypothesis" may be downloaded from www.readright.com.