

SECONDARY LITERACY PLAN EVALUATION

2003-04 (SECOND YEAR) REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The district's Secondary Literacy Plan (SLP) was approved by the Board of Education in January 2002. SLP's main goals are three-fold. One component of the plan is to deliver standards-aligned instruction in a consistent manner across content areas to middle and high school students by providing professional development to language arts, social studies, math, and science teachers that builds their knowledge in content and pedagogy. This requires that a system of "Literacy Cadres" (cadres) at every middle and high school in the district contribute to school-based professional development efforts. The cadres include, at a minimum, one teacher from each of the four content areas as well as a literacy coach, the principal, and an assistant principal. There may also be a representative from special education. A second component of SLP is to improve the reading skills of students in grades 6 to 9 who have been diagnostically assessed to be reading below third grade level. These students are taught during a double period instructional block called the Developing Reader and Writer Course (DRWC). A third component of SLP is to adopt and support the use of a series of state-approved textbooks. In this report, the first component of SLP cited above will be referred to as Content Area Literacy (CAL), and the second component cited will be referred to as the Developing Reader and Writer program (DRW). The third, textbook adoption, has been documented in previous reports specifically and will be discussed indirectly in this report through the Instructional Guide to English/language arts textbooks, which was developed to reinforce and support the use of the adopted standards-aligned textbooks.

This report is part of a longitudinal evaluation of SLP and contains findings regarding the second year of the plan's implementation. This report presents information about our data collection, findings with respect to the program's implementation, and classroom and student outcomes.

The study focused on observations, interviews, surveys, and archival data to answer the following key research questions:

1. How do the CAL and DRW components operate at various levels of district organization? Specifically, what organizational structures and processes exist

to support implementation at the central office, the local district, and the school?

2. What impact do various SLP implementation factors have on the quality of teaching practice in the targeted content areas, specifically English/language arts, social studies, science, math, and DRWC?
3. What is the impact of teachers' membership in a cadre on their students' achievement?

Findings

Program Implementation. Most secondary literacy professional development meetings we observed were specifically content-related professional development opportunities. Meetings that were primarily informational and not intended to present training to participants (such as meetings to plan and organize) were not analyzed for their quality. Overall, the content-related meetings we observed throughout the district were of lower quality. While two local districts typically provided opportunities for in-depth discourse, critical thinking, and reflection on instructional practice, these characteristics were not present consistently in the professional development we observed across the entire district. Participants at meetings across the district typically were not challenged to think in critical ways, to analyze, to question, or to reflect on their practice. Nor did participants engage in discussions that allowed them to examine their practice or think deeply about instructional strategies. They also had limited opportunities to engage in research, use student work, or collaborate.

The school based professional development that we observed through cadre meetings and through interaction among experts, coaches, and teachers was similarly of lower quality. First, cadres met far less frequently than would be expected considering that teachers are provided with a stipend to work an average of 5 hours per week as part of their cadre commitment. When they did meet, cadre members rarely engaged in reflective dialogue about pedagogy. They more commonly focused on issues pertaining to management of the cadre and instructional strategies but in a broad or generic way. The interactions among teachers, coaches, cadres, and experts, as they described them to

us in their interviews, can also be characterized as primarily focused on instructional strategies, but only at a surface level.

Implementation of the DRW overall can be characterized as labor intensive, particularly for the DRW experts, who had many of the responsibilities involved in coordinating the program. Most teachers indicated they felt adequately prepared to teach the program. On the other hand, the high rate of teacher turnover and the resistance on the part of teachers, administrators, parents, and students reported by experts contributed to the operational challenges (e.g., distribution of materials, testing of students using the DRP) districts faced in successfully implementing the program. Teacher turnover was a particularly problematic because it was so large – 51%. The fact that so many DRWC classes were taught by teachers who were new to *LANGUAGE!* presented considerable barriers to the successful implementation of the course and to students' progress.

Another possible impediment to students' success could be that they are being moved too slowly out of basic skills instruction. *LANGUAGE!* may be more effective as a shorter intervention than it is currently designed to be. Students spend two years in DRWC building primarily decoding and encoding skills with limited exposure to literature and writing. In order to support students' metacognitive, knowledge-building, social, and personal needs as readers, they must be quickly moved out of the basic skills instruction that DRWC is designed to deliver. The balance of time students spend on building basic reading skills versus applying these in more authentic reading contexts (e.g., as the DRW-E/LA course intends) could be shifted so students receive more comprehensive reading instruction.

Classroom Outcomes. The quality of most of the CAL classrooms we observed was good in terms of most of the dimensions we rated, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and classroom management. Cadre classrooms tended to receive slightly higher ratings of quality compared to classrooms with teachers who were not part of their cadres, but we cannot be sure whether these differences can be attributed to professional development that took place in the cadres. Instruction of higher quality took place in the classrooms of cadre teachers and of teachers who were not part of their cadre, as

illustrated by our case studies.¹ There were some inconsistencies even in the instruction of these higher-quality teachers. For example, they rarely gave feedback to students or gave low-quality feedback. On the whole, however, these teachers presented their students with cognitively demanding tasks, engaged them in discussions that valued them as learning partners, and managed the class efficiently.

The quality of instruction in DRWC classes was average to poor. Teachers' fidelity to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum was not very high. Over the course of three days per teacher, we observed classes mostly engage in one or two of the four Daily Activities specified by the program. The program requires that at least seven Steps be followed daily. On any given day, teachers followed between one and eight Steps, with the most frequent being six Steps. Most teachers did not present the Steps in sequence on any of the days we observed them. In general, teachers did not spend the required amount of time on each of three sets of Steps. Except for classroom management and proportion of students on-task, which received high ratings, most dimensions of quality, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and feedback, received ratings of 2 or 1. In a few classrooms, we did observe good quality instruction, and when we examined two of these classrooms closely, we found that this was mainly due to teachers using *LANGUAGE!* with fidelity and engaging students in discussions around grade-level texts (read aloud to students by the teacher) that asked them to make high-level inferences about the texts.

Student Outcomes. Similar to the classroom quality outcomes, student test outcomes showed that the students of cadre teachers in our study performed better than those of teachers who were not members of their cadre. This pattern was observed in the California Standards Test (CST) Language scaled scores as well as the California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition (CAT/6) Reading and Language scaled scores.² Further, students whose English teacher was a cadre member in 2003-04 made greater gains on every subtest than students whose English teacher was not a cadre member in 2003-04. However, when we statistically tested the assumption that students with cadre teachers

¹ Case teachers were selected in spring 2003 for closer study because they demonstrated the highest quality instruction among the teachers in our sample last year. Only one of those teachers happened to be part of his cadre in 2003-04.

² The CST is a standards-aligned test that is used to determine a school's Academic Performance Index (API) rating. The CAT/6 is a norm-referenced test that is also used to determine the API, but to a lesser extent. These were the available test scores for these students, and we examined both.

outperformed those with “non-cadre” teachers, cadre membership predicted only the CST Language scaled score, and accounted for very little of the variance in scores.

DRWC students in our sample fell short of their expected scores³ on all the tests we considered – the CST Language, the CAT/6 Reading, the CAT/6 Language, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtests. These tests may not be as sensitive to changes in student performance at the lower end of the scale. Data collection for 2004-05 will involve testing DRWC students using a more sensitive test of students’ reading – the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised. Results of that testing will appear in the 2004-05 report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Since its adoption in January 2002, SLP has evolved, deepening its focus on its initially proposed areas and reflecting changes in the district’s policies, and the plan will continue to change in coming years to meet the demands of a changing context.

Overall, the content-related meetings we observed throughout the district as well as the school-based professional development were of lower quality. While two local districts typically provided opportunities for in-depth discourse, critical thinking, and reflection on instructional practice, these characteristics were not present consistently in the professional development we observed across the entire district. The school based professional development that we observed through cadre meetings and through interaction among experts, coaches, and teachers was similarly of lower quality. First, cadres met far less frequently than would be expected considering that teachers are provided with a stipend to work an average of 5 hours per week as part of their cadre commitment. When they did meet, cadre members rarely engaged in reflective dialogue about pedagogy.

Implementation of the DRW overall can be characterized as labor intensive, particularly for the DRW experts, who had many of the responsibilities involved in coordinating the program. Teacher turnover was a particularly problematic because it was so large – 51%. The fact that so many DRWC classes were taught by teachers who were new to *LANGUAGE!* presented considerable barriers to the successful implementation of the course and to students’ progress. Another possible impediment to students’ success

³ We used regression analysis to predict students’ scores on spring 2004 tests given their performance on the 2003 tests.

could be that they are being moved too slowly out of basic skills instruction. *LANGUAGE!* may be more effective as a shorter intervention than it is currently designed to be. Students spend two years in DRWC building primarily decoding and encoding skills with limited exposure to literature. In order to support students' metacognitive, knowledge-building, social, and personal needs as readers, they must be quickly moved out of the basic skills instruction that DRWC is designed to deliver. The balance of time students spend on building basic reading skills versus applying these in more authentic reading contexts (e.g., as the DRW-E/LA course intends) could be shifted so students receive more comprehensive reading instruction.

The quality of most of the CAL instruction we observed was acceptable in terms of most of the dimensions we rated, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and classroom management. Cadre classrooms tended to receive slightly higher ratings of quality compared to classrooms with teachers who were not part of their cadres. Given the low quality in general of the professional development we observed, we could reasonably infer that we cannot attribute these differences to the training teachers received at these trainings.

The quality of instruction in DRWC classes was average to poor. Teachers' fidelity to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum was not very high. Furthermore, except for classroom management and proportion of students on-task, which received high ratings, most dimensions of quality, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and feedback, received low ratings.

CAL student test outcomes showed that the students of cadre teachers in our study performed better than those of teachers who were not members of their cadre. However, when we statistically tested the assumption that students with cadre teachers outperformed those with “non-cadre” teachers, cadre membership predicted only the CST Language scaled score, and accounted for very little of the variance in scores. DRWC students in our sample fell short of their expected scores on all the tests we considered – the CST Language, the CAT/6 Reading, the CAT/6 Language, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtests.

Recommendations. Given the conclusions just outlined, we make the following suggestions and recommendations for improving the main components of the SLP.

1. Facilitators of professional development meetings should ensure that the goals of the meetings and expectations for participants' learning are clearly communicated, that there are opportunities for participants to engage in meaningful discussions that help improve their practice, and that participants are challenged cognitively by the material and activities in which they engage.
2. Cadre leaders, including principals, should clearly communicate roles and expectations to their schools' cadre members.
3. Facilitators of meetings of school site cadres should ensure that cadre members are contributing to discussions that make meaning of their practice through not only presentation and superficial treatment of instructional strategies but also through critical analysis of how such strategies promote learning.
4. The role of the content expert should be clearly defined, supported, and coordinated with the role of the coach.
5. Careful coordination among plan implementers at all levels of the district is essential given the many operational details involved in the implementation of both the IG/PA and the DRW.
6. Teachers' adherence to *LANGUAGE!* must be increased.
7. DRWC teacher turnover must be reduced.
8. Finally, the DRWC must meet the multiple needs of emergent readers in a more comprehensive way than simply through building their decoding, encoding, and other basic skills. Researchers describe the cognitive, metacognitive, knowledge-building, social, and personal dimensions that contribute to a reader's development. DRWC's narrower focus on basic reading skills for such an extended period of time may disadvantage students.

Next Steps. In 2004-05, we are observing cadres throughout the year, as opposed to only in the spring, developing a case study to learn about connections across the local district and school levels in more detail, and conducting a careful study of DRWC students' reading improvement using an individually-administered reading test at the beginning and at the end of the school year.

LAUSD Secondary Literacy Plan Evaluation 2003-04 Report

1. Introduction

The district's Secondary Literacy Plan (SLP) was approved by the Board of Education in January 2002. SLP's main goals are three-fold. One component of the plan is to deliver standards-aligned instruction in a consistent manner across content areas to middle and high school students by providing professional development to language arts, social studies, math, and science teachers that builds their knowledge in content and pedagogy. As part of this component, SLP requires that a system of "Literacy Cadres" (cadres) at every middle and high school in the district contribute to school-based professional development efforts. The cadres include, at a minimum, one teacher from each of the four content areas as well as a literacy coach, the principal, and an assistant principal. There may also be a representative from special education. These cadre members serve as the content literacy leadership team at their schools. In this report, this component of SLP will be referred to as Content Area Literacy (CAL).

A second component of SLP is to improve the reading skills of students in grades 6 to 9 who have been diagnostically assessed to be reading below third grade level. SLP addresses the needs of adolescent emerging readers through the adoption of a structured curriculum, taught during a double period instructional block called the Developing Reader and Writer Course (DRWC). This component will be referred to as the Developing Reader and Writer program (DRW) in this report.

A third component of SLP is to adopt and support the use of a series of state-approved textbooks. In this report, the first component of SLP cited above will be referred to as Content Area Literacy (CAL), and the second component cited will be referred to as the Developing Reader and Writer program (DRW). Textbook adoption has been documented in previous reports specifically and will be discussed in this report through the Instructional Guide to English/language arts textbooks.

The focus of CAL in the second year of SLP, for the first time, was on the implementation and on-going development of an Instructional Guide/Periodic Assessment (IG/PA). Secondary Literacy Branch staff and Secondary Literacy Coordinators (coordinators) began to work on the English/language arts IG/PA for

middle schools first. Throughout 2002-03 they organized the state standards for the subsequent development of the guide and assessments. In 2003-04, Secondary Literacy Branch, coordinators, and representative groups of teachers collaboratively developed the guide, assessments, and related professional development. The English/language arts middle school IG/PA was rolled out and also continued to be developed as it was being rolled out in 2003-04. The process and format by which the English/language arts IG/PA was developed was then replicated for the remaining schooling levels and content areas. The Secondary Literacy Branch and the Secondary Literacy Coordinators collaborated in developing the middle school English/language arts IG/PA and related professional development. Social studies experts engaged in studies of history and social science in order to expand their content knowledge and expertise in preparation for development of the social studies IG/PA in the future.⁴

With respect to the DRW for 2003-04, teachers were trained and students were tested for placement into the course. DRW experts at the local district level continued to be hired and trained to coach teachers and otherwise support the implementation of the course. Also, in response to both the district's Standards-Based Promotion policy as well as to teachers' concerns that their students were not exposed to grade-level literature, a supplemental intervention was developed. This intervention, called the Developing Readers and Writers–English/language arts (DRW–E/LA) course was implemented as part of the DRW. The six-week course, focusing on the writing process, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development, was offered to students who completed a year of DRWC. The course was mandatory for 8th grade students not meeting criteria for standards-based promotion. Students took the class during their summer or intersession break.

A major shift in SLP's focus occurred from 2002-03 to 2003-04. In 2002-03, the plan was to have cadres receive training through the Institute for Learning (IFL), including Principles of Learning and lesson study. In 2003-04, this focus changed to the development and implementation of the IG/PA and its associated training. Despite the shift in the focus of the training, SLP did not abandon IFL principles but continued to try

⁴ Math had previously developed its own guide and assessments.

to integrate them into its efforts. Also in 2003-04 the plan intensified and made more explicit its focus on the Culturally Relevant and Responsive Teaching initiative.

This report is part of a longitudinal evaluation of SLP, which began in January 2002, and contains findings about the second year of the plan's implementation, 2003-04. The report presents information about our data collection, findings with respect to the program's implementation at the central office, local district, and school levels, and classroom and student outcomes.

2. Method

This section summarizes the sampling, data collection strategies, and analysis methods we used. The study focused on observations, interviews, surveys, and archival data to answer the following key research questions:

4. How do the CAL and DRW components operate at various levels of district organization? And specifically, what organizational structures exist to support implementation?
5. What impact do various SLP implementation factors have on the quality of teaching practice in the targeted content areas, specifically English/language arts, social studies, science, math, and DRWC?
6. What is the impact of teachers' membership in a cadre on their students' achievement?

The study has retained the sample of 30 schools chosen in the first year of the study. Using a stratified random sampling method, 20 middle schools and 10 high schools were selected then. We have attempted to maintain our original sample of classrooms but have made modifications based on teacher turnover. In this year of the study, participants at various levels from central offices to classrooms were interviewed and/or observed during spring 2004. Table 1 shows the data collection strategies, administrative levels, and participants targeted for the study. We sought to include teachers who were part of their school's cadre as well as comparable teachers at the same schools who were not part of the cadre. We chose non-cadre teachers in order to compare their interview responses and instructional quality to those of the cadre teachers. Cadre teachers were those targeted for professional development by SLP and who lead training of teachers at their respective schools. Both of these types of teachers will be referred to as CAL teachers. We also sought to include DRWC teachers from across our sample schools.

Table 1
Evaluation Sampling Plan

Data Collection Strategy	District Administrative Level	Targeted Participants
Interview	Local district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Literacy Coordinators • Content Experts
	School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal at each of our 30 sample schools • Coaches at each of our 30 schools • CAL Teachers • DRWC Teachers
Observation	Central office, Local district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning meetings • Professional development meetings
	School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cadre meetings at schools
	Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAL Teachers • DRWC Teachers

The following are descriptions of the procedures we followed to sample our study's participants and to collect and analyze our data.

2.1 Observations of Professional Development

Observations at professional development meetings were carried out by a team of observers, each of whom was responsible for collecting data at one of the 11 local districts, as well as the central district. Observers maintained contact with their local district representatives throughout the year to schedule professional development meeting observations. Observers attended as many meetings related to secondary literacy as possible. In doing so, however, they faced multiple problems such as not receiving accurate information about scheduling of events from event coordinators (e.g., observers would arrive at meetings that had been cancelled without notification to the observer) and confusion about the role of the observer.

Data collectors were trained in qualitative observation. The training was designed to allow these observers the opportunity to present as detailed an account as possible of any professional development meeting attended. All observers adhered to the verbatim principle of qualitative note taking. This means they attempted to take continuous notes throughout a meeting while trying to capture dialogue as close to verbatim as possible in

order to accurately represent the content and processes occurring at that meeting (Spradley, 1980). Observers wrote their notes by hand or on a laptop computer, and after each meeting, they reviewed their notes for accuracy, clarity, and completeness. Every completed observation included a form that described variables observed at all professional development meetings, such as date, title of the meetings, titles of presenters and participants, numbers of attendees, and duration of the meeting. Observers attached materials from the meeting, such as the agenda and other handouts, to the notes. Finally, observers wrote a page-long reflection for each observed meeting.

The data collectors who conducted the observations participated in the analysis of these observations. They met as a group to review, discuss, code, and assign ratings to the data using a 4-point rubric and codebook created for the study.

A second team of data collectors attended school site cadre meetings at the study's sample schools. They followed the same format as the district level observers and also met as a team to analyze the school site meetings.

2.2 Classroom Observations

We conducted observations in classrooms of CAL and DRWC teachers. Observations consisted of a set of narrative notes that focused on the following aspects of classroom instruction: the teacher's instructional goals, the teacher's activity during the lesson, the students' activity during the lesson, the resources in use (e.g., titles of texts, use of computers), the social organization of the class (e.g., whole class, individual seatwork), and the instructional content (e.g., teacher's presentation of material as close to verbatim as possible, dialogue between teacher and students). We also attempted to obtain copies of handouts and materials that classes used.

Each CAL observation lasted 1 class period. DRWC classes were on a 2-period block schedule and were observed for the full 2 periods on 3 separate days. We chose to sample widely across CAL classrooms because we had to include teachers from English/language arts, social studies, science, and math as well as cadre and non-cadre teachers. Also, we were interested in describing the general quality of instruction in CAL classrooms as opposed to looking for evidence of implementation of a particular curriculum, and fewer days per

teacher sufficed for this purpose.⁵ For DRWC, on the other hand, we needed to give a classroom a wider window of opportunity than one day in which to demonstrate use of its curriculum. Observations were conducted in 90 classrooms of CAL and DRWC teachers. Table 2 presents the numbers of classrooms we observed by content area and cadre membership.

Table 2
Numbers of Classrooms Observed (N=90)

Type of Classroom	n
Language Arts Cadre Teacher	16
Language Arts Comparison Teacher	18
Social Studies Cadre Teacher	6
Social Studies Comparison Teacher	6
Science Cadre Teacher	5
Science Comparison Teacher	3
Math Cadre Teacher	2
Math Comparison Teacher	8
DRWC	26

Additionally, we selected four teachers, who were part of our study last year and whose instruction received high ratings, to be case study teachers this year. These teachers were the only teachers in our 2002-03 sample with sufficiently high ratings to identify them as case study teachers. We attempted to visit the classrooms of these teachers for five days in order to study their teaching practice more extensively.

To analyze the field notes, we used a rubric based on one developed by UCLA's National Center for Research on Evaluation Standards and Student Testing for judging the quality of the important dimensions of classroom instruction. These dimensions are: (1) clarity of instructional goals, (2) alignment of goals and lesson observed, (3) cognitive challenge, (4) discussion, (5) instructional feedback, (6) classroom management, and (7)

⁵ English/language arts textbooks were adopted in 2002, and these along with the instructional guide introduced in 2003 do constitute a curriculum. The 2004-05 will focus on the quality of use of textbooks and guides.

proportion of students on-task. The *goals* scale focuses on the clarity with which teachers state the goals for what students are to learn during the observed lesson. *Alignment* focuses on how well the lesson promotes or aligns with the stated goals. *Cognitive challenge* rates the complexity of and cognitive demand posed to students by the tasks. *Discussion* refers to the quality of the “instructional conversations” in which teacher and students engage, that is, the level of exchange of ideas between teacher and students and the uptake of students’ contributions. *Feedback* focuses on the quality and amount of information students receive on their progress toward the instructional goals. Each scale consists of 4 points in which 1 represents poor quality and 4 represents very high quality (see Matsumura, Garnier, Pascal, and Valdés, 2002).

2.3 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the following SLP participants: (a) the coordinator of each of the 11 local districts, (b) 22 coaches at 17 of our sample schools, (c) 25 content experts, including 13 DRW, 2 English/language arts, 6 social studies, 2 science, and 2 math, (d) 25 of the CAL teachers who were observed, and (e) 14 of the DRWC teachers we observed. We attempted to conduct interviews with at least one literacy coach at each of our schools, all content experts, and all CAL and DRWC teachers in our sample. However, some interviews could not be scheduled within our data collection window and thus are fewer in number than we had targeted. We are confident in the representativeness of these interviews because, with the exception of the CAL teacher interviews, we completed between 54% and 100% of our targeted interviews. Findings based on the CAL teacher interviews should be interpreted with caution, since our completion rate of those was 39%.

Questions posed to the coordinators included items on their goals, their experience with the CAL and DRWC components, accomplishments and roadblocks experienced during the year, how they felt about their role, and what they hoped to accomplish next year. Each coordinator was interviewed once in late spring/summer 2004 for approximately 1 hour.

Coaches were asked about their roles and responsibilities as well as their work with teachers, the cadre, and DRWC. Content experts’ interviews also addressed their roles and responsibilities in addition to professional development received and provided. CAL and DRWC teachers were asked about their instruction, the needs of their students, and

professional development and support they received. Additionally, CAL teachers were asked about their perception of CAL goals and their involvement with the cadre. All these interviews lasted about 30 minutes.

To analyze interview data, we searched for themes in interviewees' responses and calculated frequencies of types of responses. Where possible, we compared the answers of different types of respondents such as coordinators and teachers.

2.4 Student Outcomes

We used the California Standards Test (CST) as well as the California Achievement Test, 6th edition (CAT/6) scaled scores of students in our sample as outcome measures. To describe the scores, we present scaled score means and standard deviations. We calculated the standardized residuals from spring 2003 scores and spring 2004 scores in order to compare the scores of students in cadre teachers' classes (CAL) and those in non-cadre led classes. We conducted multiple regression analyses in order to test whether cadre membership and/or the quality of instruction we observed in classrooms predicted student outcomes.

3. Findings

This section presents findings from the data we collected in 2003-04, the third year of the study.⁶ The findings are divided into three general sections: (1) program implementation, (2) classroom outcomes, and (3) student outcomes. The first section describes how SLP was implemented at the central and local-district levels primarily through the professional development that was carried out with teachers, principals, and other administrators. That section also describes SLP's implementation at the school level by portraying the interaction among cadre members, teachers, coaches, and principals (using observations of cadre meetings and interviews). The second section focuses on the instruction we observed in classrooms in 2003-04. Finally, the third section presents information on student outcomes.

3.1 Program Implementation

Findings presented here focus on the content and quality of professional development meetings at the central and local district level, followed by findings about the content and quality of professional development at the school level. Some comparisons across the two levels – district and school – are made, in the context of looking for evidence of nested learning communities. The IG/PA was a major focus of the plan in 2003-04, and one subsection that follows summarizes how it was used by a small group of teachers in our sample. Another subsection focuses on the implementation of the DRW by DRW experts and teachers.

Content of Professional Development Meetings at Central and Local Districts

Between July 2003 and June 2004, the data collection team conducted observations at 267 secondary literacy-related meetings. The meetings ranged from 1.5 hours to 8.5 hours, averaging about 5 hours. Attendance at these meetings ranged from 4 to approximately 1,300 participants (at a local district conference), averaging about 42 participants at any given meeting. Most of these meetings (214 of 267) were content-related, meaning that the majority of the meeting pertained to substantive topics such as pedagogical issues, literacy development, coaching techniques, etc. Some of the meetings were not primarily content-related but focused on logistics or operations, such as updates

⁶ The first year of the study was the baseline year of the SLP.

on activities, coordinating schedules, or communicating facts about duties and expectations for the majority of the meeting. The latter will be referred to as informational meetings.

Table 3 below tabulates the number of meetings we observed by the type of meeting (content-related or informational). The most numerous among these meetings (46 of 267) were content-related coach meetings. An example of a meeting of this type was one that was attended by the coordinator and a dozen coaches and lasted about six hours. The day included presentations by trainers from two different organizations on reading comprehension and writing strategies and another presentation and hands-on activities led by a coach having to do with diagnostic evaluation and literacy strategies. Also in our sample were informational coach meetings (24 of 267). An example of this type was a coach meeting where 21 participants, including the coordinator, coaches, school and local district administrators, and content experts met for two hours to receive updates from the coordinator and the experts on the progress of DRW operations and the science IG/PA, to review the English/language arts periodic assessment training module #3, and to review feedback from the cadres.

As shown in Table 3, we also attended local district-wide principal meetings, meetings of the English/language arts team (this group typically included the coordinator, English/language arts teachers, English/language arts experts, coaches, and local district administrators), meetings of local district administrators from various content areas beyond the cadres, specific curriculum trainings such as *LANGUAGE!* or Studio or Buy-Back Day trainings, as well as other meetings.

Table 3
Numbers of Meetings by Type Observed (n=267)

	Content-related	Informational	TOTAL
Coach	46	24	70
Cadre	54	5	59
Principal	16	9	25
E/LA team (e.g., coordinator, E/LA teacher, E/LA expert, coach, local district administrator)	30	10	40
Local district (e.g., participants from multiple disciplines, beyond cadre)	13	2	15
Buy-Back Day/curriculum training	30	3	33
Science (e.g., science expert, coordinator)	12	0	12
Social studies (e.g., coordinator, coach, social studies expert)	13	0	13
TOTAL	214	53	267

Table 4 summarizes the topics covered at the meetings. The most common topics at the content-related meetings were disciplinary literacy and standards-based instruction. An example of a meeting where disciplinary literacy was discussed was a 2-hour cadre meeting, with 25 participants, during which a presentation was made on The Five Principles of Disciplinary Literacy, which provided a framework for designing standards-based instruction. Participants were shown how students become literate in a content area by: (1) learning core concepts and habits of mind such as reading and writing within disciplines as defined by standards; (2) learning by “doing” the discipline as apprentices; (3) receiving instruction through a variety of approaches such as direct instruction, modeling, and differentiated coaching; (4) “socializing their intelligence,” such that students learn from one another by taking risks, solving problems and reflecting on their own learning, and; (5) their teachers using the results of formal and informal assessment and data to guide instruction. An example of a meeting dealing with standards-based instruction was a 3-hour cadre meeting of 70 cadre members in which cadre members were led by a facilitator in “unwrapping standards” (e.g., generating ideas for presenting a particular set of standards to students and for characterizing “Big Ideas” inherent in

those standards).

The most common topics at the informational meetings were professional development planning/strategies and the IG/PA. At a meeting that included about eight coaches and lasted 4.5 hours, for example, participants helped plan professional development activities for their cadres, received copies of materials to use with their teachers, and scheduled future meeting dates. At a typical informational meeting at a local district, approximately a dozen coaches received updates on a number of topics including the progress of the development of the high school English/language arts guide and the testing for placing students into DRWC.

Table 4
Number of Meetings at Which Particular Topics Were Covered

	Content-related	Informational
Disciplinary literacy	69	3
Standards-based instruction	39	4
Professional development planning/strategies	14	16
Instructional Guide/Periodic Assessment	49	18
DRWC/ <i>LANGUAGE!</i>	24	8
Cognitive coaching	19	3
Coaching techniques	13	8
Culturally relevant pedagogy/Closing the achievement gap	17	3
Assessment	18	0
Institute for Learning	14	2
Small learning communities	5	3
Leadership	5	4
Classroom observation	6	0

The SLP targets literacy in English/language arts, social studies, science, and math. Additionally, the DRWC is a major part of the plan separate from these core instructional targets. The professional development delivered at the central and local districts that focused on these areas is described next.

English/language arts. Professional development at the central district regarding English/language arts focused almost entirely on the development and implementation of

the middle school IG/PA and the development of the high school IG/PA. IG/PA design and development was a collaboration among coordinators, representative groups of teachers, and the Secondary Literacy Branch. Training on the use of the English/language arts middle school IG/PA began at the end of June 2003. At a day-long meeting of central and local district administrators and representatives from middle schools across the district, an overview of the IG/PA was presented. Similar trainings took place thereafter at each of the local districts and directly at middle schools. Coordinators and/or English/language arts experts met at least twice per month with central office staff to determine the method for implementing and developing the IG/PA or to work directly on the development of the IG/PA. At the coordinator and English/language arts meetings, participants typically spent a considerable amount of time discussing operational challenges to implementing the IG/PA (e.g., the role of coaches in scoring the assessments) and other issues of concern (e.g., DRWC, Special Education, ESL, the rollout of the IG/PA in other content areas). Coordinators and experts also participated in work sessions, where they reviewed and proofread documents, organized standard sets and planned professional development. Also, coordinators and English/language arts experts, along with all other content areas, participated in a two-day training in “Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning.”

The central district also provided professional development for coaches, primarily training them on components of the IG/PA, such as reviewing the Extended Constructed Response items or facilitating conversations about using the assessment results to reflect on student learning. The central district also held several focus group meetings with National Board Certified teachers and English/language arts department chairs from across the district. The purpose of these meetings was to update and elicit feedback from the groups to aid the development and implementation of the high school IG/PA.

Professional development in the local districts consisted mainly of coach and cadre meetings. Training for administrators that focused on content was also observed, but to a lesser extent. Meetings tended to focus on content literacy strategies, reading and writing, standards-based instruction, culturally relevant pedagogy and the IFL Principles of Learning. Coach meetings also focused on the implementation of the IG/PA, cognitive coaching, and lesson design.

Social Studies. Central district professional development of social studies experts involved their meeting regularly with their coordinator and central office staff. These meetings focused mainly on building the experts' content knowledge in preparation for eventual development of the social studies IG/PA. At the meetings, the experts reviewed research about social studies instruction and discussed concepts presented in the literature. Also, a few experts took turns at every meeting sharing what professional development they implemented in their local districts. In addition, time was spent at meetings discussing social studies standards and their organization, as well considering materials that could be used to support the IG/PA (e.g., primary source documents). At several meetings, publishing companies or educational organizations presented to the group. Social studies experts, along with all other content areas, also participated in a two-day training in "Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning."

The majority of professional development at the local districts in social studies was observed at large cadre meetings, where social studies teachers were present. Social studies experts presented to social studies cadres and/or administrators, during their break out sessions or in separate social studies meetings, information on reading and writing strategies in social studies, critical thinking strategies such as Socratic Seminar or documents-based inquiry, standards-based instruction and the organization of standards. Educational organizations presented at a handful of these meetings. Also, social studies cadre members presented social studies content literacy strategies and lessons to the larger cadre and/or administrators.

Science. Science experts and coordinators met regularly at the central district. At these meetings the experts focused on the development of the science IG/PA. They used the feedback they received from their local districts and were led by central district staff or a consultant in determining the content and organization of the IG/PA. Every meeting we observed with the science experts involved their working on the development of the IG/PA. The central district was also observed training a panel of science teachers on identifying and organizing the science standards for the IG/PA. Additionally, science experts, along with all other content areas, participated in a two-day training in "Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning."

Professional development related to science at the local districts was observed mostly at cadre meetings, where science teachers were present. Science experts provided administrative updates at coach and cadre meetings on the development of the science IG/PA. They also provided training to science cadres and/or administrators, during their break out sessions or separate science meetings, on science standards and the IG/PA, IFL Principles of Learning, culturally relevant instruction and reading and writing strategies in science. In addition, science cadre teachers presented science lessons and content literacy strategies to the larger cadre and/or administrators. Several local districts also trained science teachers on an inquiry model of science instruction designed to promote standards-based instruction through hands-on science experiments and activities. For two of these districts, this training focused on curriculum training.

Math. We did not observe math professional development meetings that were stand-alone at the central district level.⁷ At the local district level, secondary literacy-related professional development in math was observed during cadre meetings where math teachers were often present. Cadres had break out sessions for the four content areas or held separate cadre meetings for math and science. Math cadres spent time reviewing content literacy strategies for their classrooms such as “Cornell Notes,” a strategic approach to note-taking for students. They also discussed culturally relevant instruction, shared best practices, reviewed standards-based instruction, and discussed the math periodic assessments.

DRW. Central office staff assumed primary responsibility for providing professional development for DRW, with all training originating with the central office and expected to be disseminated at the local district level. *LANGUAGE!* and *READ 180*⁸ professional development was delivered to DRWC teachers, experts, and to those administrators and coaches who chose to attend these trainings. The primary training given to teachers was the *LANGUAGE!* 5-day, new teacher training and follow-up trainings. Some teachers were also trained on the DRW-E/LA inter-session program,

⁷ The District Math Plan has its own evaluation which targeted professional development meetings separately from this evaluation.

⁸ Because very few schools elected to work with *READ 180*, this curriculum did not receive as much attention as *LANGUAGE!* which was used districtwide. Correspondingly, our evaluation focused exclusively on *LANGUAGE!*.

including Bridges curriculum and classroom management. Central office staff, DRW experts, textbook representatives, and consultants presented at these meetings.

Local district DRW experts met regularly with their coordinator at the central district. During these meetings they talked about administrative updates such as student placement in the course and the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) assessment, which was used as the main indicator of student reading ability. They also discussed issues and challenges schools and teachers faced in implementing the program, the IFL Principles of Learning and culturally relevant instruction. In addition, experts and their coordinator planned professional development on DRWC and classroom management, they reviewed research articles and assisted Sopris West to complete a study on *LANGUAGE!* at “strong implementing schools.” Finally, DRW experts, along with all other content areas, participated in a two-day training in “Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning.”

Local district professional development on DRWC and *LANGUAGE!* consisted mostly of administrative or informational updates at coach and cadre meetings. During these meetings, coordinators or DRW experts gave participants information about upcoming training dates or events hosted by the central district. For example, they updated cadres and coaches on the DRP and provided technical information to coaches, testing coordinators, or other school site staff responsible for testing students at their school on how to administer the test. In other districts, experts gave coaches *LANGUAGE!* supporting materials to distribute to their school’s DRWC teachers or they talked with coaches about operational challenges their schools faced in implementing the program.

In addition to these informational meetings, DRWC teachers and others were also provided with content training during their cadre or coach meetings. Cadre teachers and coaches received training on such techniques as phonemic awareness activities, and “Masterpiece Sentences,” a *LANGUAGE!* strategy for building students’ grammatical skills. A few local districts trained DRWC teachers specifically. These meetings focused on classroom management or were follow-up trainings to the *LANGUAGE!* 5-day, new teacher training. DRWC teachers’ primary source of support for teaching the course was through on-going development at their school sites provided by the DRW expert. Absent

from DRWC training in general was the more holistic approach to improving adolescents' literacy recommended by experts in this area (e.g., Greenleaf et al., 2001).

Quality of Professional Development at Central and Local Districts

Having examined the frequency and types of meetings in order to describe the general content of the meetings, we then used key learning principles to examine the quality of the meetings that we considered to be content-related (as opposed to informational or planning meetings). With the idea in mind of the *nested learning community*, which proposes that adults and children learn in similar ways, we focused our analysis of the quality of professional development on dimensions parallel to those we used at the classroom level. We focused on the quality of these meetings, on the clarity of the learning goals or expectations presented to participants, the cognitive challenge elicited by the material presented, and the extent to which the discussion among the participants represented an instructional conversation. We also examined the meeting notes for the presence of important variables cited as essential by teacher professional development research and standards (Darling-Hammond, 1997, Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; National Staff Development Council, 2003). Specifically, we concentrated on how the meetings included educational research and student work, and the ways in which participants worked collaboratively.

We used 4-point scales to rate the quality of the goals, challenge, and discussion for each meeting. A rating of 1 represented the poorest quality, a rating of 4, the highest. For example, a meeting that received a rating of 1 for goals meant either no goals were presented to participants or the goals were presented as agenda items with no indication of what participants were expected to learn. To receive a 4 for goals, the goals presented had to focus on participant learning in a clear, explicit way and be presented throughout the training. A rating of 1 for challenge meant that the tasks in which the participants were engaged did not require any degree of complex thinking, for example participants mostly listened to administrative updates with no opportunity to interact. A meeting that was rated a 4 presented tasks requiring very complex thinking as an extensive, major focus of the meeting. A rating of 1 for discussion indicated that there was no dialogue

among participants and the meeting was mostly focused on the presenter. For a meeting to receive a rating of 4 for discussion, facilitators needed to ask open-ended questions and hold participants accountable for their responses. A true dialogue with participants initiating topics and making unsolicited contributions needed to take place.

Table 5 summarizes the ratings assigned to the meetings we observed. The table shows that the majority of meetings received a 1 for goals, a 2 for cognitive demand, and a 2 for discussion. At over half the trainings we observed (53%), no goals for what the participants were expected to learn were presented. Typically, participants were simply told the activities in which they would engage, such as in reviewing the day’s agenda, as opposed to being informed about what learning would occur, why such learning was necessary, how such learning would occur, or what was expected of participants.

Table 5
Ratings of Quality of Content-Related Meetings Observed (n=197)

	Number of meetings receiving a rating of:			
	1	2	3	4
Goals	104	81	9	0
Challenge	32	112	51	2
Discussion	32	106	48	9

The cognitive demand of the activities and material typical at these trainings was at level 2. Table 5 shows that this was true at 60% of the trainings. A rating of 2 for cognitive demand meant that the material and thinking activities were moderately challenging such as reading and summarizing an article or viewing a Power Point presentation on an instructional strategy and completing a graphic organizer that detailed how the strategy would be used in the classroom. An example of a meeting rated a 2 was a cadre meeting that lasted 7 hours and included teachers, coaches, principals, and local district staff. The meeting was facilitated by content experts and dealt with scaffolding strategies for improving content area knowledge. The meeting consisted of lecturing by presenters, participants engaging in short hands-on activities including discussing their responses to a prompt provided by the presenters. A typical activity during this meeting was one that asked participants to read an article then select a category that fit their

response to the article (e.g., “Pie in the Sky,” “Totally Applicable,” “Yeah, I agree with it, but. . .”). Participants were asked to write a “one-minute quickwrite” explaining their response, and then share their responses in their groups. During the sharing of responses, participants were confused about the instructions, and this confusion interfered with this activity. This type of activity did involve some moderately complex thinking in that participants read a fairly substantive article, but the way in which they were expected to engage with the article was not as cognitively demanding. They selected a predetermined response category and justified their response then were expected to present their response in a fairly straightforward way. To make the activity more challenging, participants could have engaged in an in-depth discussion about how the article applied to their own practice.

At 56% of the trainings that we observed, the quality of the discussion was rated a 2. A rating of 2 indicated that there was some attempt made by participants to engage in a conversation by asking open-ended questions or posing different points of view, but the conversation was not sustained because there was no follow-up to answers, no requirement for participants to defend their perspectives and no uptake of previously posed ideas in the on-going discourse. The following is an example of such an attempted discussion. At this meeting the presenter led an activity in unwrapping the standards. Participants were asked to review several standards and use a handout on Bloom’s Taxonomy to understand what the standards meant. The presenter told participants to discuss their thoughts with a partner and “look for meaning.” However, as the activity unfolded, the presenter left little time for participants to discuss in pairs or to engage in genuine discussion as a large group. The following excerpt was typical of the interaction at this meeting:

Presenter: I’m just interested in how you think about all of this. Can people just go through and give your thoughts and talk about what you make of this? When you’re leading teachers, where do you rule out these questions, what students should know and what students should be able to do?

[Participants now go through the process of unpacking the standards for one of the standards on a handout. Presenter tells coaches to use Bloom’s Taxonomy to analyze the page and see if it correlates with the standard.]

Presenter: Analyze is the most misunderstood word in the standards. [Reads a standard.] I really don't know what that means yet.

Coach: On the general one, you have students differentiate and you make a grid, matrix, structure.

Presenter: How are you leading teachers to this process?

Coach: We didn't use the word differentiate. We used the word attribute.

...

Presenter: It's important for teachers to get the exact action. The verb by itself doesn't tell you squat. You need to look at the nouns in relation to verb tense. People will not get the verbs unless we help them. When they do that "distinguishing" and "attributing," what knowledge will they need, have? I know this sounds stilted, but it's where students have the most difficulty. Kids don't know what analyze means in this case.

Coach: A lot of teachers get frustrated because it takes a lot of time. Once the analysis part is digested, they get it.

Coach: Yes, it's experiential.

Coach: I have noticed over time, that if you use a certain type of language with children, it just becomes second nature.

Coach: For additional standards [reads them], you're just doing the same thing, but you're adding into the grid.

Presenter: They need to develop cognitive processes where they're taking in new information.

In the above example, the presenter gave participants an opportunity to share their thoughts as opposed to simply presenting information without such an opportunity, which would have received a 1. This type of discussion was not rated a 3, however, because absent from the conversation was any pressing for further "unpacking" of participants' statements. Rarely did the facilitator or anyone ask, "Why do you believe that?" "Why are you using those practices, what makes them useful, what would make your coaching even more successful than using them the way you are?"

In addition to rating the quality of the goals, challenge, and discussion present at the meetings, we also coded for the presence of factors thought to be important for high-quality professional development in education: (1) research-based content, (2) reference to student work, and (3) collaborative work among participants.

Professional development strategies that improve teaching include grounding this work in education research (Darling-Hammond, 1997). We did in fact observe research-based content presented at the meetings. Table 6 shows that the most commonly observed types of research-based content at the meetings were: references made by presenters to some research (62 of 214 meetings), information on research-based programs/approaches presented by consultants (49 of 214 meetings), and research-based teaching strategies (41 of 214 meetings). However, treatment of these topics, as evidenced by the “2-level” discussion just outlined, was most often superficial. That is, participants perhaps read an article and had a discussion around it, but neither modeled the concept nor expected to enact the concept about which they read, such as “culturally relevant teaching views knowledge critically.”

Table 6
Research-Based Content of Meetings (n=214)

	Number of meetings
Reference made to research by presenters	62
Information presented by expert/consultant	49
Research-based teaching strategies	41
Engagement with research (e.g., reading articles)	31
Standards-based instruction	25
Periodic assessment	15
Cognitive coaching	13
Culturally relevant pedagogy	12

Connecting professional development to teachers’ work with students is also considered an important factor in improving teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Teachers were given opportunities to make concepts presented at the meetings relevant to their work by linking it to their own work with students but in a superficial way. Table 7 summarizes the ways in which student work was treated at the meetings. At about a

quarter of the meetings (49 of 214), participants gave examples of their working with students in their classrooms, generally to illustrate a particular strategy or approach. Other ways that student work came in to conversations was through reference to students in general in discussing pedagogical issues, looking directly at student work or test outcomes, curriculum training, and engaging in lesson planning. Again, however, connections to student work were primarily testimonials or neutral examples of working in the classroom, as opposed to unpacking of the meaning or purpose of teachers' use of a strategy or approach with students.

Table 7
Ways in Which Student Work Was Treated at Meetings (n=214)

	Number of meetings
Participants giving examples of working with students in classrooms	49
General pedagogical issues	38
Looking at student work/outcomes	31
Curriculum training	15
Engaging in backward planning/lesson planning	9

Finally, researchers on the quality of teaching recommend that professional development be collaborative, involving educators sharing their knowledge (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 1997, Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999). As Table 8 shows, at about a third of the meetings (69 of 214), we observed participants engaging in small group discussions and completing activities together. However, considering that most of the meetings were not rated as including high-quality discussions, we know that the interaction during these “collaborative” activities did not necessarily involve participants sharing their questions, inquiry, or expertise.

Table 8
Types of Collaboration Observed at Meetings (n=214)

	Number of meetings
Discussion in small groups	69
Completing activities together	69
Sharing out to whole group	68
Planning together	15

The overall quality of the professional development we observed across the districts can be characterized as lacking clear goals presented to participants, engaging participants in moderately complex thinking tasks, and providing them with some opportunity to engage in discussions but with rare opportunity for participants to challenge what is presented to them, to present problems, or to make unsolicited contributions. Some meetings included research-based content and treatment of classroom work to make concepts more relevant but in a superficial way that may not have led to integration of concepts into participants' practice. Similarly, we observed collaboration among participants but not in the form of deep discussion.

Content of Professional Development at School Site Cadre Meetings

In addition to central and local district professional development meetings, we observed a total of 24 meetings of cadres at schools in spring 2004. These meetings were at 12 of our 30 study sample schools. Observers attempted to observe at least 1 cadre meeting at each school, but at 18 schools, this was not possible because cadres at those schools did not meet regularly. At the 12 schools where cadres did meet regularly, we observed between 1 and 6 meetings per school with an average of two meetings per school. The meetings ranged between 20 minutes and 3.5 hours, averaging about 1 hour per meeting. Table 9 shows the numbers of meetings at which various topics were covered.

Table 9
Topics of School Cadre Meetings (n=24)

Topic	Number of Meetings Topic was Observed
Content literacy	10
School logistics	7
Instructional strategies	7
Logistics of planning professional development	6
Reflecting (on instructional practice, purpose of cadre, etc.)	6
Staffing of cadre	3
Rehearsing a local district presentation	3
Classroom observation	2
Standards-based instruction	1

The most common topic at the school cadre meetings was content literacy: The cadres dealt with this topic at a third of the meetings. Dealing with content literacy typically meant that teachers from different subject areas shared the strategies they used in their individual subjects and tried to integrate them, as shown in the following example in which cadre members reflected on the strategies they had recently used.

Science T: The science standards are very straightforward, just knowledge, so I'm never really sure how to bring in English. There's not really a structured way to bring in English. It was good for me to see how an English teacher does it. I used it for my own instruction.

Principal: Could you comment [English teacher] on that? Not everyone heard what [the science teacher] is talking about.

English T: [Students] had to write an essay, the standard was really complicated. [The content area teachers and I] had to analyze and compare two things. What I showed them was, explained to them how I started out. I gave them an essay where they'd be comparing themes of two things. I showed them graphic organizers to help students structure essays and different student

work samples. They read the final essay that students produced, looked at the rubric, saw how everything related to the standards.

Science T: The Venn diagrams were very useful.

Principal: Is this the first time you've seen this?

Science T: Yeah, it was nice to see the writing process get done in a structured way, better than to have them rewrite it for me. It used to be that it was me doing the work, not them.

Quality of Professional Development at School Site Cadre Meetings

Besides looking at the specific topics cadres discussed, we analyzed the meetings for their content and determined whether it was primarily *logistical*, *instructional strategy*, or *reflective* dialogue. These three types of content can be organized hierarchically from requiring little to requiring substantial critical thinking. Logistical content involved simply presenting administrative details and/or organizing around these details. As shown in Table 10, at 75% of the observed meetings, cadres discussed logistical details such as how the following year's cadre would be staffed or organizing an upcoming professional development presentation.

Instructional strategy content involved cadre members presenting, learning about, reviewing strategies for teaching such as Cornell notes or a particular history lesson. The treatment of the strategy, however, was fairly superficial in that it was assumed that teachers would use the strategy without any discussion about why or precisely how. Cadres dealt with content such as instructional strategies at 71% of the meetings. Discussions among cadre members that allowed them to be reflective about their practice were less common than we would expect. We observed such discussions at only 21% of the meetings.

Table 10

Numbers and Percentages of School Cadre Meetings in Which Various Content Was Observed (n=24)

Logistics	Strategy	Reflection
18 (75%)	17 (71%)	5 (21%)

An example of a meeting in which we observed reflection was a 1-hour meeting in which cadre members spent about half the time generating a needs assessment in order to create an agenda for the following year's cadre. Rather than have a schedule of "one-shot" trainings imposed on them, the cadre argued to give teachers at their school opportunities to struggle with ideas for themselves. The following excerpt is from a conversation in which teachers negotiated a response to the question, "What do you want teachers to do?"

Soc St T: Teaching standards doesn't get engagement. It's the techniques you use.

Presenter: Is there opposition to standards?

Sp Ed T: Let's define standards. We've had a lot of instruction on that, and it's good, but are you going to take up the whole professional development with that?

...

English T: To me professional development is looking at myself and making myself better. Don't give [teachers] strategies. It's not gonna make them better. How many people actually use it? Twenty percent?

Science T: Teachers always feel like they're being told what to do.

Soc St T: The most valuable experience is when we sit with other teachers, and talk about what works, and it's unstructured.

...

English T: Ownership develops accountability.

Throughout this cadre meeting, participants called for clarifying definitions, challenged notions that might have been readily accepted by another group of teachers,

and advocated for giving their colleagues at their school opportunities to engage in similar discussions through schoolwide professional development.

Having looked separately at the content and quality of the professional development at the central and local district levels as well as at the school level, we looked across the two levels for evidence of nested communities of learners. The next section provides information from our observations of meetings at the district and school levels as well as interviews of participants that helped us determine the extent to which nested learning communities were present among SLP participants.

Communities of Learners Among SLP Participants

Learning Research and Development Center director and author of the Principles of Learning used districtwide, Lauren Resnick and Megan Hall write:

To honor every child's educational right to expert instruction, it will be necessary to create enhanced instructional expertise throughout the teaching force, so there is enough expertise to go around. . . . To this end, it will be necessary to create learning organizations: organizations capable of improving their performance by creating new ways of working and developing the new capabilities needed for that work. . . . In nested learning communities, not only students but also educational professionals are learners. Teachers, principals, and central-office administrators form communities of adult learners who are focused on improving their practice and becoming increasingly expert as conductors of learning communities in the classroom, the school, and the district (Resnick & Hall, 1998).

To determine the extent to which communities of learners were present among the teachers and administrators we observed and interviewed, we looked at the quality of the central and local district professional development meetings, the quality of the school cadre meetings in terms of the critical thinking and discussion that took place, and the nature of the interaction among content experts, teachers, coaches, and cadres.

First, we categorized central and local districts into three “tiers” from best to poorest quality, based on the quality of cognitive challenge and discussion we typically observed at their meetings. Table 11 presents the number of districts we considered to be Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3, along with the percentage of meetings that received high ratings for challenge and discussion within those local districts. We considered there to be learning communities or the potential for these where we observed primarily good discussions around challenging issues/tasks

Table 11
Percentage of Content-Related Meetings Observed With High Ratings by District Tier

District ^a	Total # Meetings	Challenge=4, Discussion=4	Challenge=3, Discussion=4	Challenge=3, Discussion=3
Tier 1 (n=2)	46	4%	4%	35%
Tier 2 (n=7)	50	0%	6%	18%
Tier 3 (n=3)	87	0%	0%	5%

^aOur tabulation of this data included the central district and 11 local districts.

Tier 1 local districts were those in which we observed professional development of the highest quality. As shown in Table 11, at these districts close to half (43%) of the content-focused professional development meetings we observed were rated 3 or 4 on both challenge and discussion. One of these two districts never received a rating lower than 2 for either challenge or discussion.

An example of a meeting that received a rating of 3 for both challenge and discussion was a 6-hour cadre meeting that was part of a 2-day training. Teachers and principals participated in a comprehensive training on evaluation for a school’s formative use. In his introduction, the trainer presented his goals to the audience as follows. “I want to talk about the evaluation process . . . we’re going to start looking at your data. Often times, evaluations don’t get used. A lot of times we do evaluation because we’re told to do it or we have to use it. I like [Michael Quinn Patton’s] definition because it’s about the end user . . . We’re trying to help you guys along the way, learn how to look at data along the way.” The training was densely packed with complex material (e.g., data-driven school reform, steps of the evaluation process, stages of data inquiry, data display,

using data for school change, logic and technical aspects of the Academic Performance Index, normal distributions, NCLB, etc.), with which participants were expected to engage by asking questions, having discussions, and immediately making applications to their own schools.

The trainer's presentation style was mostly lecture but also gave participants time to engage in discussion about how to use the information to solve their own problems. He posed open-ended questions such as, "What do the [API] data tell you are your school's strongest areas? What trend or pattern can you detect? What has been happening at your school that might explain what you see in the data? What else do you want to know?" In the following example of a discussion that took place at one of the tables (tables were arranged by school), the principal and teachers evaluated the goals and objectives in their school plan.

T: Does our goal of increasing by 9 and 11 points help us improve?

P: Your point is well taken.

T: This is baseline for CAT/6.

P: We need goals that touch us and the kids.

T: We're [supposed to be] doing [school improvement] goals that help us achieve these goals [of raising student scores]. What are we doing in the classroom?

P: They're supposed to have periodic assessments of English.

T: I'd like to see an alignment of curriculum to the standards. That's critical. We tried to do that last year. We need to do the same thing as other teachers at the same time.

...

T: How are we going to measure this – putting together lessons that are based on the standards?

P: That's a wonderful idea.

T: It's a resource, not a mandated lesson.

T: It needs to be measurable.

This was typical of the discussion at many of the two Tier 1 districts. Participants responded to open-ended prompts with contributions that were critical and self-reflective, thinking carefully about how a strategy or approach would work at their schools.

At another meeting that received a 3 for challenge and discussion, approximately 15 coaches and their coordinator met for 6 hours to discuss and plan their work. They engaged in the following activities in ways we considered to be cognitively demanding: Conduct a planning conversation, focusing on paraphrasing and rapport; Examine a chapter on assessment from a book on pedagogy, considering questions such as, “Is performance ability necessarily preceded by a mental model or picture? Or is understanding more like successful jazz improvisation – something that is inherently a performance ability and sensitivity in which prior mental perceptions play no determining role? (A long standing controversy among philosophers and psychologists); Develop a protocol for coaching, considering the Secondary Literacy Plan’s goals, the role of the coach, and logistical factors; and Begin to develop sample standards-based lessons. The discussion was not centered around any single person, but was a conversation among all the participants, with each making intellectual contributions. The following interactions between the coordinator (SLC) and the coaches (C) were typical of the discussion throughout the meeting:

SLC: This level of data analysis is going to lend itself to a whole different level of intervention. The strength of this – . . . And we need to use the language of the standards and not weaken it for students because then they don’t recognize it on the text.

C: When we look at the questions using words like ‘posing the question,’ this is the language we have been sheltering them from! We can’t do that because they are not going to recognize it on the test.

SLC: This is when scaffolding comes in.

C: I was looking at the Star Girl prompt, “How does Star Girl’s way of thinking challenge Leo?” Students had problems with that because they know challenge as a fight. A lot of them answered, “They didn’t fight. They loved each other.” Well, I just don’t see the higher level of analysis in these classes. I see plot, character, summary, themes, but I don’t see higher thinking. Teachers say that students can’t reason abstractly. They can. Even in 3rd and 4th grade, students are capable of this. In 5th and 6th grade, if you look at the text, it’s already very dense with lots of abstract reasoning, and they don’t have a lot of practice with this.

- C: If we look at the Bloom's Taxonomy words — The teachers are concerned about the access to the question.*
- C: Why can't they differentiate within the text of the question, for example, write underneath, "In other words, blah, blah, blah."*
- C: I think as teachers we've done too much scaffolding sometimes. Teachers summarize for students without giving them a chance to answer for themselves.*
- SLC: Right. We want to avoid those silences, but sometimes [the silence] is ok.*
- C: For our four writing prompts, we walked them through this monstrous binder, and we met before each assessment and gave them some examples of the prompt to work on. Then it became in their minds my job to score and analyze the tests. And I'm thinking your kids got a 2 on this what do you need to do? I just want to give you a heads up on this. Don't own [the assessment] in this way, let them know they have responsibilities also. [Goes on to describe Kate Kinsella's presentation on academic vocabulary.]*

The coordinator, who had built a trusting and collaborative learning environment with her coaches, was an equal participant in conversations with them as opposed to simply delivering information as the leader of the group. Coaches at this district, as illustrated by the above conversation, challenged the materials they worked with, their own practice, and that of the teachers they coached. The meeting where we saw the above exchange was rated 3 and not 4 because the levels of discussion and challenge were sustained for only a portion of the meeting. Nevertheless, conversations such as these are indicative of a learning community.

At trainings in Tier 2 districts, we observed high quality professional development, but not as consistently as at Tier 1 local districts. As table 11 shows, these local districts received challenge and discussion ratings of a 3 or 4 to a lesser extent (24%) than Tier 1 local districts. The extent to which participants were actively engaged in critical thinking and reflecting, sustained discussions with depth, and had opportunities for collaboration were more limited than in Tier 1 districts. This did not mean that instances of high quality discussion or challenge were not observed at these meetings at all, but the extent to which they occurred at meetings was more limited than in Tier 1 local districts.

At Tier 2 districts more meetings/meeting time was spent talking about operational issues (e.g., setting calendars, updates on district mandates, cadre operational issues, etc.) than at Tier 1 districts. For example, at a 6.5-hour coach meeting that was rated a 2 for challenge and discussion, 12 coaches and one coordinator spent half of their time on operational issues and updates.

Another example of a meeting rated 2 for challenge and discussion was an all-day science and math cadre meeting of 18 content area teachers. The day consisted of three topics and activities, each lasting about 2 hours. During the first activity, teachers participated in a gallery walk and wrote on post-it notes the ways in which they used a series of strategies for math and science instruction in their classrooms. Participants wrote their thoughts on post-it notes for about 20 minutes. The presenter then told them to work in groups of two or three and “talk about the material in there, then move to the left. That way not all 18 of you are up there looking at the same thing.” In small groups the teachers spent 45 minutes on their gallery walk. For the last hour of the activity, participants engaged in a large group discussion about their findings. The meeting received a rating of 2 for challenge and discussion because for the most part the discussions observed during the activity centered on teachers giving testimonials about what they did at their schools, without much critical thought. Often, the discussions focused on operational issues, or there was little feedback or questioning by participants to reflect on the effectiveness of their strategies.

At trainings in Tier 3 districts, we observed no challenging presentations with opportunities for critical thinking and no engagement in discussions with participants reflecting on their practice. Those meetings focused almost exclusively on updates and logistics or were lecture-style content-related presentations.

Next, we looked at the quality of the cadre meetings at the schools that were part of the Tier 1, 2, or 3 local districts. Table 12 shows the proportions of school-level cadre meetings that dealt with logistic, instructional strategy, and reflection content. Only schools in Tier 1 local districts were found to include reflection in their cadre meetings.

Table 12**Numbers of School Cadre Meetings by Tier in Which Various Content Was Observed**

Type of Local District	Total School Cadre Mtgs. Observed	Logistic	Strategy	Reflection
Tier 1	15	13 (87%)	9 (60%)	5 (33%)
Tier 2	5	3 (60%)	3 (60%)	0 (0%)
Tier 3	4	2 (50%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	24	18 (75%)	17 (71%)	5 (21%)

This finding is indicative of the cascading effect across the district and school levels and the potential of a learning community to be modeled from the district level to the school level. As further evidence of this effect, we similarly found a connection between these two levels when we compared the alignment between the topics covered at the local district meetings and those covered at the school cadre meetings. For example, if an instructional strategy was presented at a school and also at that school’s local district trainings, we considered there to be alignment. We found that at 67% of the 24 school meetings, there was coverage of a topic that was presented at that school’s local district meetings.

As a final indicator of the presence of learning communities, we examined the ways in which content experts, coaches, cadre members, and other teachers worked together based on what they reported to us in their interviews. We considered there to be learning communities or the potential for such learning communities where these SLP participants reflected on their practice – used interactions with one another as opportunities to receive or give feedback for continual improvement of their work. We present findings separately for content experts, coaches, and teachers.

We interviewed a sample of 12 local district content experts in the areas of English/language arts (n=2), social studies (n=6), science (n=2), and math (n=2).⁹ We asked them to describe their primary responsibilities in the local district and to talk about how they worked with their cadres and schools. We also asked them about the successes and challenges they experienced in their positions and their goals for the upcoming

⁹ Due to scheduling problems during our data collection window, we were unable to complete the number of interviews he had targeted.

school year. Nearly all experts (11 of 12) discussed their involvement in delivering professional development within their local districts. More than half (8 of 11) of the experts framed this involvement in terms of training teachers on instructional *strategies*. These experts said they observed teachers and provided instructional feedback, provided training on literacy strategies within their content areas, or worked with teachers to develop lessons that included content literacy strategies. One expert described the ways in which she worked with teachers in the local district.

The assistant principal there, [name], also asked me if I could observe some other teachers who had not volunteered, but again, I had a pre-conference with them. And the nature of my visit with them was that I scripted what I saw in the classroom, and I gave back to them a scripted form what it was I observed. And I asked them basically if what I observed was what they want, what these teachers wanted to be done in the classroom. In other words, had they planned on these things happening in their classroom, and were they satisfied with the lessons? And so with that conversation, I made a few suggestions and listened to their concerns. And many of them were basically concerned that their lesson was a good lesson, it was a clear lesson, and that students were on task.

Four of the above 8 experts described their role as moving towards a more *reflective* approach to working with teachers. They talked about listening to and advising teachers, building relationships with teachers and creating opportunities for teachers to be involved in the professional development of their colleagues. In response to the question, “What do you hope to accomplish by the end of the next school year in terms of content area literacy?” one expert said, “. . . I think first of all, getting teachers to realize that the be-all, end-all is not going to be the Periodic Assessments . . .” but focusing instead on working in small groups to learn from each other.

The remaining 4 experts described their responsibilities mostly as operational in nature. One expert said, “My primary responsibilities have been to keep the local superintendents and everyone in (local district) updated on what's probably going to be happening with the Periodic Assessments, with CST sections for social science and with also the CAT/6, which seem to be in flux as we speak.” Often these experts said they

served as liaisons between the central/local district and their schools and were responsible for coordinating training on new textbooks, providing instructional materials or managing the operations of content area cadres. They all described spending a lot of their time on the IG/PA and cited their most meaningful accomplishments as developing the IG/PA, helping schools implement the guides or providing professional development on how to use the guides.

Some experts reported spending much of their time on the operational aspects of the IG/PA, and they commented that they wanted to spend more time on instruction. One expert said, “I think the main challenge this year has been focus on assessments, and focus [away] from the larger part of what I saw as the secondary literacy plan, and the temporary focus, I’m calling it temporary, that’s my interpretation, the temporary focus on the periodic assessments.” Related to references to the IG/PA were descriptions made by these experts about standards-based instruction. They talked about training cadres and teachers on the organization of standards within the IG/PA, analyzing standards to understand what they meant and training teachers on the features of standards-based assessment. The following expert responded to the question, “What have been your most meaningful accomplishments this year?”

I have to think it's the development of the middle school instructional guide. Because I think that's a really important step that, you know, if we get the chance to implement it, if the central district allows that next year, it will in one . . . swoop give us the ability to be in every classroom with a sort of a map for teachers on how to have a standards-based curriculum, and a map for teachers on how to teach standards in ways that are recognizable as student objectives as opposed to looking at a series of facts, which is what they're used to.

To understand coaches’ approaches to working with teachers, we interviewed a sample of 22 coaches and asked them about their responsibilities, the ways they work with their teachers, and their involvement in their school cadres. Among the coaches we interviewed, almost all (20 of 22) said they worked with their teachers to improve their use of instructional *strategies* like scaffolding, SDAIE, or questioning and predicting. They talked about the value of the cadres in providing an opportunity for teachers to

share literacy strategies, their involvement in demonstrating literacy strategies in classrooms, their goals of getting more teachers to use literacy strategies and their teachers' reported success with using strategies. When asked, "What are the primary ways you work with teachers?" the following coach responded:

First, I'll do demonstration lessons in the classroom. Sometimes if the teacher feels comfortable enough, and they mostly do, I will observe a teacher. We'll talk about the lesson that they did. And I'll offer suggestions. I really look for teachers to develop their own styles of teaching, rather than necessarily imitating what I've been doing in the class. I mean, you could use the same strategy, but you have to make it your own.

Although almost all coaches reported working with their teachers on instructional practices, almost half of them (9 of 22) said they spent a lot of time on duties of an operational nature. Coaches reported ordering and distributing instructional materials, assisting with testing and placement for DRWC students, updating teachers and administrators on mandates and managing the implementation of the IG/PA. Nearly all of these coaches reported the IG/PA took up a large portion of their time. They talked about the training they provided to teachers, handling the distribution and scanning of testing materials, and helping teachers score the assessments. One coach said of her major responsibilities, "Implementing the instructional guide and then going through the assessments and scoring the assessments – that's, I'd probably say, the number one focus."

The coaches who said they spent most of their time on instructional *strategies* (11 of 22) reported conducting classroom observations, providing instructional feedback to teachers, working with teachers to develop model classrooms and providing professional development in cadre meetings about content literacy strategies. In talking about their successes in working with teachers, one coach said, "I would just say, you know, that working with them on reading comprehension strategies has helped their students understand what they're reading more. It's giving them ways to approach difficult text in different content areas and make it more understandable to them. I think it's been a

success.” Detailing their work on developing content literacy, about half of these coaches (5 of 11) reported wanting more time to work with teachers to reflect on their instruction.

Six coaches said they were able to move towards a more *reflective* approach with teachers. They talked about creating a “culture of leadership” within their schools, of collaboratively running professional development in small groups of teachers and of sustaining respect and trust, which improved the quality of professional development at the school. Many also cited cognitive coaching as one of the main tools they used with their teachers. The following coach described the ways in which the cadre at her/his school was successful.

We have had two or three different things. But one, of course, is the professional developments that we’ve had at the school. The cadre has been instrumental in taking the ideas, and all of the members of the cadre have led and planned the professional development that we have had at the school. They’ve gone out and found things. We’ve done studies in reading and they have been the ones that have put a lot of stuff together, from the results of our study. And they’ve brought people together. It’s become a real good atmosphere at the school and I think that’s one of the reasons, that it’s a lot of sharing going on. Everyone feels personally responsible and concerned for everybody else and I think that the cadre had a lot to do with that.

To consider CAL teachers’ approaches to interacting with coaches and their cadres, we examined the interview responses of 25 teachers who taught English/language arts (n=16), social studies (n=5), science (n=2), or math (n=2). Among these were 13 cadre members and 12 teachers who were not part of their cadre. We asked teachers about the type of support they received from their coach, how they collaborated with other teachers, and the extent to which cadre members had been influenced by their involvement in their cadre. We determined whether teachers focused primarily on *logistics* in their responses (e.g., received mainly logistical support from their coach), on classroom *strategies* or approaches (e.g., collaborated with other teachers mainly in planning lessons together), or on *reflection* (e.g., was open to and received critical

feedback from the coach and cadre). Table 13 summarizes the numbers of teachers who fell primarily into one of those three categories.

Table 13
Numbers of Teachers Whose Interview Responses Reflected a Particular Type of Approach (n=25)

	Logistic	Strategy	Reflection
Cadre member	2	8	2
Not cadre member	3	10	0

Teachers whose interactions, as they described them to us, were categorized as mainly logistical in nature, saw their peers and coach as sources of materials and information to be disseminated (e.g., dates of professional development meetings, deadlines, other logistical details). One of these teachers described the support she received from her coach as, “like a support staff type of thing.” The teachers who described their interactions as focusing on strategies shared lessons, instructional strategies and approaches and other content-related information, but not in a reflective way. Only two teachers (both cadre members) alluded to working with their coach and colleagues as sounding boards for improving their practice or as discussion partners. One social studies teacher made the following remarks about her work with her cadre:

[The cadre members] do influence my teaching because they make me think about what I'm doing, and how I can improve it, or kind of remind of “Oh yeah, I did that, I liked it, it worked, kids learned, let me do more of that.” So it definitely does impact my teaching I wish a lot more teachers could go . . . so they would feel what I feel and let us into their classroom.

Overall, we found little evidence of the existence of learning communities across the district. There were two local districts that were exceptions, where we found interactions at the local district level as well as the school level that were thoughtful discussions that allowed participants to critique and reflect and improve on their own practice as well as plan for how to best influence and work with those they support. In most of the district professional development, school cadre meetings, and interactions among experts, coaches, and teachers, we did not find this reflective practice. For the

most part, SLP participants we observed or interviewed dealt with the logistical aspects of their work as well as instructional strategies but in a passive way without much critical thought.

Summary of Professional Development. Most secondary literacy professional development meetings we observed were specifically content-related professional development opportunities. Meetings that were primarily informational and not intended to present training to participants (such as meetings to plan and organize) were not analyzed for their quality. Overall, the content-related meetings we observed throughout the district were of lower quality. While two local districts typically provided opportunities for in-depth discourse, critical thinking, and reflection on instructional practice, these characteristics were not present consistently in the professional development we observed across the entire district. Participants at meetings across the district typically were not challenged to think in critical ways, to analyze, to question, or to reflect on their practice. Nor did participants engage in discussions that allowed them to examine their practice or think deeply about instructional strategies. They also had limited opportunities to engage in research, use student work, or collaborate.

The school based professional development that we observed through cadre meetings and through interaction among experts, coaches, and teachers was similarly of lower quality. First, cadres met far less frequently than would be expected considering that teachers are provided with a stipend to work an average of 5 hours per week as part of their cadre commitment. When they did meet, cadre members rarely engaged in reflective dialogue about pedagogy. They more commonly focused on issues pertaining to management of the cadre and instructional strategies but in a broad or generic way. The interactions among teachers, coaches, cadres, and experts, as they described them to us in their interviews, can also be characterized as primarily focused on instructional strategies, but only at a surface level.

Implementation of the Developing Readers and Writers Program

The DRWC consisted of two year-long block courses. Most schools used *LANGUAGE!* to teach this course. The DRW-E/LA summer/intersession course was a

six-week supplemental intervention that exposed students to grade-level, core literature and standards-aligned curriculum. Students were enrolled in either Level 1 (first year) or Level 2 (second year) of the program and were not allowed to repeat these courses. DRW experts were individuals working with their local districts and schools to support the implementation of DRW.

We interviewed 13 DRW experts who described to us the nature of their work as a multitude of responsibilities, both operational and instructional. These experts told us they spent between 30% and 80% of their time working directly with teachers, demonstrating lessons in class, conducting classroom observations and providing feedback to teachers, and disseminating information to teachers. Additionally, each expert gave us lengthy lists of his or her duties. Some examples include testing students, monitoring teachers' materials and supplies, training administrators and coaches, acting as a liaison among teachers, parents, administrators and publishers, assisting the Sopris/West study, identifying teachers to teach the course, and coordinating teacher's signing up for training through the central district.

The primary challenge in carrying out their work these experts expressed was the resistance they faced from teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Most experts (7 of 13) told us that administrators and teachers did not value or understand the *LANGUAGE!* program, or that they could not identify enough available and willing teachers to teach the program. When they did, the experts said, some teachers were new to both the program and to teaching, and some teachers did not teach the program with fidelity.

Teachers told us they received between 5 and 10 days of training, and all but 2 of 14 said they felt adequately prepared to teach the course. Most teachers identified their peers (5 of 14) and their coach (5 of 14) as sources of on-going feedback and support for their teaching of the course.

We asked teachers to share a success story about their students. Most teachers (7 of 14) gave examples of how students increased their motivation in general such as the following:

Yeah. I mean, there's a lot of students who come in and then because they're able to master the program, it's, you know, the program is designed so that anybody can get a B in it. You're not supposed to not get a B, because you're supposed to be at 80% mastery. So, yeah, there are kids who – they'd be – are smart. They pass all these tests, and they get 80% and their whole self-esteem rises.

Four of the teachers gave examples of student's improved reading and/or writing skills. Three of the 14 teachers could not attribute success to the DRWC (e.g., "It's hard for me to say whether anybody has really improved that much.")

We asked teachers how well *LANGUAGE!* meets the needs of their students. About half of the teachers (8 of 14) told us that it gives their students practice in phonics and other basic skills. Additionally, one teacher mentioned the program increases student confidence. Three of these teachers who told us the program met their students' needs, however, qualified their responses by saying the program does not focus sufficiently on building reading comprehension. Over a third of the teachers (5 of 14) told us that the program does *not* meet the needs of their students. One of these teachers told us the following:

I'm not sure that this program . . . addresses our students' needs. Their abilities seem to be higher than what the first level offers. They can decode well. The majority of my students can decode well. They can encode fairly well. I would say that would be one of their weaknesses, encoding. Comprehension is probably more of a problem than decoding. I think that Level 1 is much too easy for our kids . . .

DRWC targets students who cannot read at a third grade level. *LANGUAGE!* Level 1 is designed to improve these students' reading ability by building their phonemic awareness and other reading skills. Because this teacher describes her students as not having these needs, her comment may be indicative of a problem in the identification and placement of students in her class.

We asked teachers what they would change about the program. Consistently, teachers (9 of 14) told us that they would like more challenging, interesting materials

such as grade level literature. Teachers (5 of 14) also would like more flexibility in the program, particularly in its pace and concept presentation.

Implementation of the DRW overall can be characterized as labor intensive, particularly for the DRW experts, who had many of the responsibilities involved in coordinating the program. Most teachers indicated they felt adequately prepared to teach the program. On the other hand, the high rate of teacher turnover and the resistance on the part of teachers, administrators, parents, and students reported by experts contributed to the operational challenges (e.g., distribution of materials, testing of students using the DRP) districts faced in successfully implementing the program. DRWC teachers were concerned about the lack of grade level, interesting text.

In 2003-04, the program experienced high turnover in the number of teachers trained to implement the DRWC. Table 14 shows that 51% of the teachers who taught the course in 2002-03 did not return in 2003-04.

Table 14
DRWC Teacher Turnover

Number of Teachers Who Taught DRWC in 2002-03	Number of Teachers Who Taught DRWC in 2002-04	Number of Teachers Who Taught DRWC Both Years
967	879	478

Teachers' commitment to teaching the course is critical its successful implementation. A large investment is made in training and providing on-going support to DRWC teachers with the expectation that they will continue to teach the course and develop expertise over a number of years. It is very problematic to continue to train such a large number of new teachers each year.

3.2 Classroom Outcomes

The next two sections describe the quality of instruction in CAL classrooms, including case studies of higher-quality teachers, and the quality of instruction in DRWC classrooms, including teachers' adherence to requirements of the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum.

To assess the reliability among the coders, pairs of raters were asked to independently rate the same observation. Inter-rater reliability was measured for 12

observations – approximately 10% of our overall sample of observations. The proportions of these 12 observations on which the pairs of raters gave the same rating are presented in Table 15. The most consistent agreement was on the proportion of students on-task rating, which was assigned the same rating by 92% of the raters. The lowest agreement was on the alignment between instructional goals and the observed lesson.

Table 15
Inter-rater Reliability for Rating Classroom Observations

Dimension	Percent Exact Agreement
Goals	72%
Alignment	68%
Challenge	84%
Discussion	84%
Feedback	76%
Implementation	72%
On-Task	92%
Overall	75%

Exact agreement, meaning that two raters independently assigned the exact rating to an observation, overall was relatively high. Given that our range of exact agreement was between 72% and 92% (not including alignment between goals and observed lesson), we have a fair amount of confidence in the consistency of ratings across different raters. The only dimension about which one should use caution in interpreting results is the alignment between a teacher’s stated goals and the observed lesson.

Content Area Literacy Classrooms

Table 16 presents the proportions of classrooms that were rated 1 through 4 on the analytic dimensions described in the method section. On every dimension except the quality of discussion, the most frequently assigned rating was higher for the cadre classrooms than for the comparison classrooms. As a whole, cadre teachers were given ratings of 3 or 2, whereas teachers who were not part of their cadres were assigned

mainly ratings of 2 or 1. Despite this pattern, the differences between cadre and comparison classrooms were not great. Also, we cannot make causal attributions to cadre membership since there was variability in the quality of the cadre meetings, in the frequency of meetings, and in the attendance/level of participation of cadre members at the meetings. Given that we saw a similar pattern last year with a slightly different group of teachers and before much of the cadre work had begun, it may be that these teachers, who typically elected to participate in the cadre, may have been more motivated and higher-quality teachers to begin with.

Table 16
Classroom Observation Ratings of Instructional Quality by Dimension (n=64)

	Cadre Classrooms (n=21)				Comparison Classrooms (n=43)			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Clarity of goals for student learning	20%	30%	35%	15%	24%	32%	32%	12%
Match b/w goals & observed activities	20%	30%	40%	10%	29%	39%	27%	5%
Cognitive challenge	29%	29%	33%	10%	21%	49%	30%	0%
Discussion	43%	29%	14%	14%	56%	26%	16%	2%
Feedback	24%	38%	24%	14%	74%	16%	9%	0%
Classroom management	0%	29%	52%	19%	12%	26%	42%	21%
Students on task	0%	19%	52%	29%	0%	21%	50%	29%
Overall	19%	29%	48%	5%	23%	42%	33%	2%

Notes: Observations were rated on a 4-point scale (1=*poor*, 2=*average*, 3=*good*, 4=*excellent*). The scale for students on task is 1=fewer than half of students, 2=approximately half of students, 3=approximately 85% of students, and 4=all students are engaged in activities.

We looked at the number of classrooms that were rated 1 through 4 on overall quality (holistic rating) depending on their involvement with the cadre at their school. Table 17 shows these results. Teachers who were in the cadre in both 2002-03 and 2003-04 received a rating of 3 in higher proportions than those involved for only one year or who were never part of their cadre. Cautions here are that the numbers of classrooms we compared are fairly small and again, cadre membership varied in quality from school to school and teachers' involvement may also have varied.

Table 17**Ratings of Overall Quality for Cadre and Comparison Classrooms (n=64)**

Teacher was a cadre member:	Number of Classrooms Rated as:			
	1	2	3	4
Never (n=35)	8	15	11	1
	23%	43%	31%	3%
In 2002-03 only (n=8)	2	3	3	0
	25%	38%	38%	0%
In 2003-04 only (n=13)	4	3	6	0
	31%	23%	46%	0%
Both years (n=8)	0	3	4	1
	0%	38%	50%	13%

Findings from the section on school cadres presented earlier suggest that there is little reason to believe teachers' practice was greatly influenced by the school site cadres: Cadres met with enough frequency for our observers to attend meetings at fewer than half the schools in our sample. Further, the content of the meetings was not likely to change instructional practice in significant ways, given that the teachers dealt primarily with logistics or content in a passive way during the meetings. Consequently, it was not surprising that the patterns of ratings of instructional quality did not change significantly from the previous year of the study, 2002-03.

Rather than provide examples of the most common ratings shown in the tables above (see Valdés et al., 2003 and Valdés et al., 2004), we focus in the next section on four higher-quality teachers, whose classrooms we visited 4 or 5 times during spring 2004. These cases will illustrate not only how higher-quality classrooms function, but also what resources these teachers access in order to achieve their success. We chose to observe these teachers over five days because these were the teachers with the highest ratings in our sample last year (2002-03). In 2003-04, we did observe higher quality instruction in their classrooms, but it was not of the highest quality. Their instruction is among the best in our sample but not the best possible.

Case Teacher 1. Ms. K is a middle school teacher who was not a member of the cadre at her school. Asked about who provides direction and feedback to her teaching, Ms. K referred to a former professor and also said her principal, “comes in occasionally.” Ms. K engaged in “real collaborations” with fellow teachers about once every other week. She said, on the other hand, that during scheduled meetings, “very little collaboration goes on. It’s usually like someone talking to us, instead of, you know, discussions.”

We observed Ms. K’s 6th grade Ancient Civilizations class, which had about 35 students in it. The teacher made the following comments in regard to her class, “There’s definitely students in my class that are behind literacy wise, and it really concerned me, but there’s very little I can do about it when there’s 39 in my classroom. What I’m concerned about in my history class is that they’re getting content, and it leaves very little room for me to focus on literacy issues.”

Table 18 shows the ratings assigned to her class on each of the days we observed. Overall, the teacher had clear goals for what she wanted her students to learn from her lessons. The tasks she gave her students consistently challenged them cognitively. She asked them open-ended questions providing students with opportunities to pose and defend ideas, though these questions did not always lead to a back and forth discussion between her and her students or among the class. Her feedback was clear though not always provided during the lesson. The classroom management was seamless, with students consistently attentive and on-task. On the whole, the teacher’s instruction was rated a 3 for every day we observed. Below are descriptions of the teacher’s lessons to illustrate the ratings.

Table 18**Ratings of Classroom Quality for Case Teacher 1: Sixth Grade Social Studies, Not Cadre Member**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Clarity of goals for student learning	3	2	3	3	2
Match b/w goals & observed activities	2	2	3	3	2
Cognitive challenge	3	3	3	2	3
Discussion	2	2	3	2	4
Feedback	2	2	2	2	3
Classroom management	3	3	4	3	3
Students on task	3	3	4	3	3
Overall	3	3	3	3	3

The teacher's goal on the first day was to have students generate their own unanswered questions about ancient Roman myths. During the observation, the teacher introduced the myth of Rhemus and Romulus and the birth of Rome, asking students to come up with questions they would like answered. She explained to students that her strategy was "a technique to build interest . . . build anticipation in students. Ultimately, your learning depends on your interests." She went on to present the following.

Ms. K: This is a myth about the birth of Rome. In [a basket] there are two baby boys, twins.

Tom: Like Moses?

Ms. K: Very similar to this story. These babies are abandoned. The basket is beached and a wolf takes care of the baby boys. Curious that it is a wolf, yes?. . . Soon a shepherd came upon the baby boys and took care of them. He named them Rhemus and Romulus. Years later, the boys decided to build a city for children like them who were homeless. [Pause.] That is not the end of the story, but do you have any questions?

Tom: Was Rome a homeless city?

Ms. K: [Writes this question on a poster.] What other questions do you have?. . .

Esteban: Why did they want to build a city for the homeless?. . .

Delia: Why were [the twins] abandoned?

Ms. K: [Writes these questions on poster.]

Tom: Where did they get the idea to build a city in the first place?

Maria: Where did they find the land to build the city?

Ms. K: [Writes these questions on poster.] Nice question.

Tom: Where did they get the things to build the city? . . .

Sergio: Why did a wolf take care of them? . . .

Ms. K: Hopefully I have built enough anticipation to get you interested. That is the point of this lesson. You will open your books to page 396 and read the rest of the story. It is not very long. Some of the questions will not be completely answered so you will need to infer the answers from what is missing.

[Students then read independently with the goal of answering the questions the class had posed.]

On the second day, the teacher led students in an inductive reasoning exercise in which they had to determine the concept of the day, based on clues hypothesized by the class. Once students arrived at the concept (the concept of *relationships*), the teacher asked them to think about how relationships change over time. Throughout the lesson, she prompted different students to make suggestions and then asked them to justify those suggestions. This lesson was an introduction to the class's study of how relationships changed over time in ancient Rome. "We will see the relationship between the government and the people, the priests and the kings," Ms. K told her class.

Similarly, on the third day, Ms. K led the class in an inductive reasoning exercise in which they had to categorize objects the teacher had brought to class. Students created categories and listed the objects in each category, justifying how they fell into the category. During this lesson, students did not get the point of developing "Big Ideas" or generalizations as the teacher had planned, but the teacher did hold them accountable for the categories they developed, keeping the students cognitively challenged.

On the fourth day, students generated "Big Ideas" based on their reading of "Rome Becomes a Republic," a section in their Prentice Hall textbooks, "The Ancient World." As shown in the following examples, the teacher holds students accountable for

their learning by asking them to “list as much evidence as you can to support the conclusions that you come up with.”

Ms. K: We are thinking inductively, going from the parts to the whole to form a generalization. . . . Jeremy, what big idea or generalization did you come up with after reading?

Jeremy: Relationships cause problems.

Ms. K: What is the evidence on those pages?

Jeremy: Because they chose their own leader, and that can cause problems with the group.

[Ms. K calls on another student whose big idea is that relationships end.]

Ms. K: Nice. What is your evidence?

Tom: The relationships between the plebeians and the patricians did not last. . .

Sergio: Relationships depend on power.

Ms. K: What is your evidence?

Sergio: Their relationships changed so they needed strength to make a new system.

The fifth day’s lesson was on the media’s power. Students read and summarized an article on the front page of the Los Angeles Times called, “Bush Offers Plan to End Chaos in Iraq.” Then the class engaged in a discussion around the following questions posed by the teacher:

1. How is the media an example of power?
2. How has the media changed America’s relationship with the world and other nations?

The following is an excerpt from a high-level discussion carried out by the class. This day was rated a 4 for quality of discussion. (Other days were not rated as highly as this day.)

Ms. K: How is the media an example of power? Who would like to begin?

Michael: I think it is power because what they put on TV or papers, most people think it’s true.

Maria: I have to agree with him because they put lots of stuff on TV and how this one guy said Bush was brought down by God to be our president. And how with the abuses, some people say it did not happen.

Sergio: I don't understand why our troops are still there. Like he says right here, Bush wants Iraqis to be free. If that is the case, then why don't we just leave and let them do their own kind of government?

Matt: The media is a form of power because like Michael and Maria said, most people believe it's true. It is non-power because sometimes they put anything, like 'pigs fly,' so that makes them less believable.

Ms. K: That's a good point because not too long ago, a reporter lied about a woman having problems. So how long ago would that incident affect people's view of the media? Who has the crayon? [The crayon identifies the speaker whose turn it is.]

Laura: Well, when they like lie, people think 'Ok, this must be another lie.'

Ms. K: So it will lead them to question what they read. So maybe it is a good thing. It makes people think on their own. Maybe Jason Blair, the reporter that was caught lying actually did some good. Now it empowers people to question the next thing that they read.

Case Teacher 2. Ms. C teaches middle school English and was not a part of her cadre this year (she was a cadre member last year). She was told by her school administration that she would “not gain very much from being involved in [the cadre], and they felt that other teachers could gain more.” This teacher found support for her teaching not from administrators (she said, “I was observed for all of 15 minutes by my evaluating administrator, when I literally left the room following her saying, ‘Please, could you give me some advice?!’), but from her coach and fellow teachers, in particular, those teachers from the social studies department. She met at least three times a week with the coach about such things as upcoming tests, lesson planning, and the coach even assisted her in class, which freed her to give some students “more interesting things.” She met weekly with history teachers. She said, “When the Japan unit is taking place, I do

Haiku. I teach the story of Barnsdale and the master. We link the literature to the history as much as we can.”

Ms. C’s high degree of respect for her students’ intelligence and ability is illustrated by the following comments she made to us:

They need to be exposed to real and challenging text that captures some sort of interest, and they need to be treated with a sort of respect about their ability to read. Many of the strategies utilized by [other teachers] are to be honest spoon-feeding. The students recognize this and . . . do not meet the teacher half way because they feel almost condescended to, and that's awful.

The class we observed taught by Ms. C was a 7th grade English class with about 26 students present. Table 19 summarizes the ratings assigned to various dimensions of the teacher’s instruction. Most of her goals were clear, and assigned tasks were specific. She offered the students sufficient direction and feedback to be able to meet and fulfill them. The students received cognitively challenging assignments and were engaged in instructional conversations. In general, students were comfortable generating their own questions, indicating they were accustomed to participating in dialogue with their teacher. Ms. C’s ability to engage her students is reflected in consistently high classroom management and on-task ratings. Because primarily, Ms. C approached a rating of 4 but fell slightly short, the quality of her instruction was a 3 overall.

Table 19
Ratings of Classroom Quality for Case Teacher 2: Seventh Grade English Former Cadre Member

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Clarity of goals for student learning	3	3	2	3	2
Match b/w goals & observed activities	2	3	2	2	2
Cognitive challenge	3	3	3	2	2
Discussion	2	2	3	1	3
Feedback	2	2	3	2	2
Classroom management	3	3	3	3	3
Students on task	3	3	3	3	3
Overall	3	3	3	3	3

The teacher's goals on the first day were to get the students to understand the importance of motive in literature, and to "deconstruct unapproachable text." During the observation, she began by explaining motive and how it drives a story's characters' actions. Then the class continued their analysis of "Highwayman," with her defining key terms and turns of phrase, with explanations to which they could relate. She then answered questions and gave useful feedback. The process is illustrated by the following excerpt from this day's observation:

Ms. C: When I was young I used to like to read Nancy Drew books because I liked mystery. But I used to wonder . . . [Ms. C continues to explain who Nancy Drew is, and why her motives were never clear to her.] Now, if I know Harry Potter like you know him . . . [Ms. C explains character and motive using Harry Potter characters as examples.]

[Students get their materials out. Ms. C checks a student's draft at her desk.]

Ms. C: Dude. This is one single continuous paragraph that summarizes one particular part of the story. You can (are supposed to) break it down and this only starts to address one part of the assignment. So you still got work to do.

Maria: Can there be three supporting characters?

Ms. C: Yeah there can be three supporting characters.

Dan: But can there be a main supporting character?

Ms. C: That's a good question. That's why we're doing this in class. So you can ask questions like that.

Having set the foundation of understanding the primary components (setting, character development, conflict,) of literature, the second day of observation was used to begin the process of producing a historical play framed by events in the Middle Ages. This was done by requiring the students to use historical information (such as the Black Plague's effect on individuals and impact on society) in their setting, character development and conflict. They freely asked for more detail, which the teacher provided, and were encouraged to offer possible solutions to the problems of the time, to which the teacher responded with constructive criticism. All of this fostered good-quality

discussion, followed by the class being divided into four teams, with each concentrating on producing the main character for their respective production.

On the third day, Ms. C presented the structure for five-act plays, as this was the format to be used by her students. This was challenging in that it required the students to synthesize their ideas into a compact form, which demanded a new form of writing discipline. One student incorporated archaic English into his dialogue, which she was quick to acknowledge, and gave good feedback on (“Okay. Something I want to point out. This student has done an excellent job of using language of the time. ‘Dog’ in Medieval Europe would be a grave insult . . . This is done very well.”)

On the fourth day of observation, when the plays were turned in, Ms. C made a point of acknowledging and praising students. She began the class by saying: “Look at this stack! They’re the plays (speaking loudly and dramatically)! This makes me happy! (Takes a stack of papers from her desk.) This wad of student work! (Lifting stack above her head and pumps it in the air twice) Yeah!” The rest of the period was spent introducing the students to the “Music is Poetry” project, which she began by having them read a description and definition of poetry, followed by an analysis of the author’s position.

On the fifth day, the teacher had to rearrange her schedule, and she allowed students to work on a project that was due in their history class in order to maintain a schedule that had been previously negotiated with the history teacher. The period was spent mostly on the teacher reading to students about the Renaissance and the Globe theater, asking students open-ended questions and inviting their comments, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Ms. C: Note they did not have math.

Julie: What about taxes?

Ms. C: Easy. They had someone that came to your house, and the king appointed that person to calculate and collect what they determined to be the proper amount for taxation.

Case Teacher 3. Mr. D is a middle school teacher who was not part of his school’s cadre, but found support for his teaching from his coach, his English department colleagues (“they have the best ideas”) and from teachers from other departments. Mr. D

sought the help of his coach “very frequently” on such things as the instructional guide and other teaching materials and strategies. Mr. D described the cross-disciplinary group with which he was involved, “We have what we call a core team. So I work with a, very closely with a math teacher, with a social studies teacher, and with a science teacher. And we meet . . . generally once a month, and of course informally as needed, on-going.” In their meetings, the core team planned lessons and discussed students they had in common.

His most important tool for teaching was, “promoting reading and encouraging my kids to become hopefully life-long readers . . . via choosing materials, books, that they can understand. Number one, they have to be able to understand it, and number two, they have to enjoy it.” Despite the fact that he assessed his students’ skills as far below grade level, (he described his students as “two, three, four years behind many students in California . . . It’s a rush to try to catch them up”), he chose to expose them to advanced literature in attempts to bring their literacy up to grade level. We observed Mr. D’s 8th grade English class, which had from 22 to 30 students on any given day.

Table 20 presents the ratings we assigned to the instruction we observed in this teacher’s classroom. The table shows that Mr. D was generally clear and explicit in his instructional goals, though he tended to be overly ambitious in these, and seemed to fall slightly short in reaching these goals. The cognitive challenge of the tasks he gave students was high, though not consistently so. For example, one day he asked students to summarize at- or above-grade level texts, making connections to their own lives, while also using public speaking skills, but another day he required them to practice proof-reading symbols, a task that was not highly cognitively demanding. He asked open-ended questions, but did not provide opportunities during our observations for students to engage in on-going discussions. His feedback was equally varying from day to day, with clear and explicit feedback provided on two of the four days we observed. His classroom management and students’ attentiveness, however, were both consistently highly rated. Highlights from the days we observed follow to illustrate the ratings.

Table 20**Ratings of Classroom Quality for Case Teacher 3: Eighth Grade English, Not Cadre Member**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Clarity of goals for student learning	2	3	3	3
Match b/w goals & observed activities	2	2	2	2
Cognitive challenge	3	2	2	3
Discussion	2	2	2	2
Feedback	2	3	1	1
Classroom management	3	3	3	4
Students on task	3	3	3	3
Overall	3	3	3	3

The teacher’s goal for the first day was to improve students’ speaking and listening skills through their oral responses to literature. During the period, nine students presented brief book reports that were mostly summary but also included some analysis and in some cases high-level inference. Students presented on books that were at grade-level or above, such as “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,” “To Kill a Mockingbird,” “The Great Gatsby,” “Make Mango Magic,” and “The Witches.” Below is an example of a student giving her book report.

Gloria: The book I read is “To Kill a Mockingbird.”

Mr. D: Can I see the cover?

Gloria: [Holding up book] I would rank, “To Kill a Mockingbird” first of the books that I have read. This book reminds me of my friend Angel, who blames himself for his dad’s departure, just like in the book. The lesson that I learned is that all decisions made not only affect yourself, but others as well. I would recommend this book to anyone. It makes you think about the actions you take.

Mr. D: Excellent, very good response and evaluation, shows you read the book carefully.

The teacher did not give individual feedback immediately, but instead made notes about students’ presentations to be given to students later. He did give some feedback to the class at the end of the lesson, “You’ve improved dramatically since August, when we

started. Remember most of you were fidgeting and had no eye contact when we first began this. Talking in public is one of the greatest fears, just ask any adult. Very good analysis and evaluation.”

The second day was spent on learning and practicing proof-reading symbols, deciding whether certain statements were facts or opinions, and checking their own essays for a clear statement of a thesis. Students worked independently as the teacher consulted with students individually for most of the period. Mr. D gave students feedback along the way and also gave some feedback to the class at the end of the period, “Most of you had really good ideas, but it’s better if you put them in the first paragraph. I like this because the first, second, and third points will be the basis for the next three paragraphs.. . . It does help with organizing your essay.” Though there was not extended discussion, the teacher encouraged them to listen to each other’s arguments, “We said we were going to accept other people’s opinions.”

The goals for the third day were, “Students will be sharing and evaluating persuasive essays. The audience will also be evaluating speakers as a means of making them aware of how to improve their own communication skills.” During the lesson, 11 students presented their persuasive essays. Again, the teacher reserved feedback to students for a later time, explaining to the class, “The reason we’re not saying anything is ‘cause we don’t have time. So just hold your thoughts, and we’ll try to get to it on Monday because we’ll be testing the rest of the week.” Students’ presentations continued in the same way on the fourth day of our observation.

Case Teacher 4. Mr. B teaches high school English. He is a cadre member and met with his cadre about twice per month. He described the support he’s received from the cadre mostly as opportunities to practice specific teaching strategies such as small learning groups. He told us:

I’ve gotten some very good techniques from them. I would say mostly it’s refresher type things rather than, I mean at my stage it’s my seventh year now, but mostly refreshing in technique. So it’s like kind of like, ‘Remember this one?’ And that is effective because some of them I couldn’t use at the time and are now effective. I’m probably using more groups because of the techniques that we’ve discussed in the cadre.

He named “fellow teachers” as the source of the most useful feedback and direction to improve his teaching, and also mentioned receiving support from his coach. He said, “I bounce ideas off the other faculty in here, and at our faculty meetings I get ideas from them, and I see what’s happening in other classrooms that way.” The support from his coach came in the form of listening to her suggestions during cadre meetings on instructional strategies, but not one-on-one meetings. Mr. B also collaborated with a history teacher on an inter-disciplinary project, in which students put together a magazine focusing on history, which Mr. B graded for presentation, grammar, and spelling.

We observed Mr. B’s 11th grade American Literature and Composition class, which was composed of about 20 students. He described his students’ needs as “Time,” and “Better organizational skills.” He said about the class we observed, “My students know how to write, they know how to read, they just have so much else going on in their lives, they are not giving themselves appropriate timeframes with their other activities to fit in the academics.”

Table 21 presents the ratings of instructional quality observed for this teacher. The cognitive challenge posed to students was inconsistent from day to day, and on the last day was low because the period was spent on administrative details. Discussion was not rated highly overall because while the students were given opportunities to discuss among themselves in small groups, during these small groups, students asked some open-ended questions, but did not sustain extended conversations.

Table 21
Ratings of Classroom Quality for Case Teacher 4: Eleventh Grade English Cadre Member

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Clarity of goals for student learning	3	3	2	3	2
Match b/w goals & observed activities	3	2	2	2	2
Cognitive challenge	3	2	3	2	1
Discussion	2	2	2	2	1
Feedback	3	1	2	2	2
Classroom management	3	2	3	3	3
Students on task	3	3	3	3	3
Overall	3	2	3	3	2

During Mr. B's first lesson, the students responded in writing to the prompt, "Take a point of view on the writing lab process that we have been using. Be sure to justify your position using rhetoric and examples," as a "Quick Write" exercise. Next, working in small groups, they revised the fictional narratives they had written previously. The teacher instructed them to, "Read your essay to your group and correct it as you go along. Read aloud, so that your group can say, 'Hey, that sounds funny' or 'Hey, I don't understand,' etc." This task was challenging in that students were asked to focus on the content of the writing as opposed to its technical aspects, and the teacher encouraged students to question one another's plot lines and other content and to justify their suggestions. In their groups, students gave each other feedback such as illustrated by the following excerpt.

Gil: I'm confused. First you're talking about stalking someone and then about a car. I don't know, you're all over the place.

Linda: No I'm not.

Gil: Yeah you are, and there's no – What's it called? Structure! Yeah, there's no structure.

Linda: Whatever. [Continues to read her story.]

On the second day, the teacher led the class in organizing their projects through the remaining few weeks in the school year. The teacher told the class that "time management is very important. You have to know what we're doing, and do it together." Though a bulk of the period is spent on this administrative task, the final 10 minutes are spent with the teacher reading from the first chapter of "Catcher in the Rye." Students also engage in a short discussion. During the discussion, students make unsolicited comments (indicating students may commonly be given opportunities to comment freely) such as, "It's funny how [the author] is like saying all this stuff about the guy's parents in the first chapter, but then if you look at the dedication of the book, it's to his mother."

The third day was spent on silent reading, a Quick Write, a discussion on students' responses to the writing prompt, and generating concept maps for their literary analyses. After reading silently for about 10 minutes, the students were asked to write about "The assembly we went to last week, about the phoniness. Remember when we

went to the assembly I said to pretend you were Holden in this assembly. Remember he saw phoniness in everything . . . write like Holden, copy his style.” Students wrote for about 15 minutes then engaged in a short discussion on their responses. The teacher then led the class in completing a compare/contrast concept map by comparing the character of Holden Caulfield with other characters about which the class had read. The lesson involved both open-ended and known-answer questions, but challenged students by asking them for justifications and further detail in defending their responses. Also students held discussions with one another, with the teacher facilitating these, as shown in the following example.

[A small group of students is comparing Holden to Huckleberry Finn.]

Omar: Wasn't Huck poor?

Maria: Oh, he was illiterate, right?

Mr. B: Well if you think about it, Huck wasn't illiterate, right?

Maria: Ok, well Holden gets in fights all the time. Remember he swung at that guy?

Omar: Oh yeah. Write that down.

. . .

Dan: Ok, one of them was a kid, and one was an adult.

Omar: Dude, he was 16. He was almost an adult.

Dan: When I was 16, people treated me like a kid.

Omar: Exactly, that's 'cause you are.

. . .

Maria: I wrote that one of them is mature, the other one is immature.

The class continued to analyze “Catcher in the Rye” on the fourth day, this time by identifying characteristics of the main characters that were phony, neutral, or real. On this day, the challenge of the tasks students engaged in was not as high, given that they were mainly expected to isolate characteristics and make lower-level inference as opposed to synthesizing or making complex evaluations. Students were also not engaged in discussions extensively, but there were some opportunities for students to respond to open ended-questions.

Though students were attentive and the teacher had very good control of the class, the fifth day received low ratings for cognitive challenge and discussion because it was spent on administrative organizing. The teacher made announcements, presented students with awards for their writing, organized for a field trip, and helped students organize the final stages of a writing project they had been working on.

Summary of CAL Classroom Outcomes. The quality of most of the CAL classrooms we observed was good in terms of most of the dimensions we rated, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and classroom management. Cadre classrooms tended to receive slightly higher ratings of quality compared to classrooms with teachers who were not part of their cadres, but we cannot be sure whether these differences can be attributed to professional development that took place in the cadres. Instruction of higher quality took place in the classrooms of cadre teachers and of teachers who were not part of their cadre, as illustrated by our case studies.¹⁰ There were some inconsistencies even in the instruction of these higher-quality teachers. For example, they rarely gave feedback to students or gave low-quality feedback. On the whole, however, these teachers presented their students with cognitively demanding tasks, engaged them in discussions that valued them as learning partners, and managed the class efficiently.

DRWC Classrooms

We observed the classrooms of 26 DRWC teachers for approximately 90 minutes each class. Most teachers (20 of 26) were observed for three days each. Six teachers were observed for two days only, and 1 teacher was observed for only one day due to scheduling problems. To determine the quality of the instruction in DRWC classrooms, we examined teachers' fidelity to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum and also used the same rating scale to judge the quality of instruction in these DRWC classrooms as we did for the CAL.

We examined the extent to which teachers adhered to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum in their instruction. Using the *LANGUAGE!* Professional Development

¹⁰ Case teachers were selected in spring 2003 for closer study because they demonstrated the highest quality instruction among the teachers in our sample last year. Only one of those teachers happened to be part of his cadre in 2003-04.

Course, Instructional Resource Guide for Teachers, and other materials, a team of researchers who had observed DRWC classrooms identified the core components and rules of the curriculum as the following: (1) Daily Activities, (2) Steps, (3) sequence of the Steps, and (4) appropriate time allocation to each Step or set of Steps. Table 22 outlines these Daily Activities, Steps, and rules. All four Daily Activities (phonemic awareness drills, independent reading, reading aloud to students, and journal writing) must take place each day. The Steps listed in Table 22 must also be presented daily, and they must be presented in the order shown, with the class spending approximately 30 minutes on each of the three sets of Steps (Steps 1-5, Step 6, and Steps 7/8) shown.

Table 22
Main Components and Rules of *LANGUAGE!*

Component/Rule	Details/Explanation
Daily Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phonemic Awareness Drills 2. Independent Reading 3. Read Aloud 4. Journal Writing
Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phonemic Concepts 2. Phonemic Awareness Drills 3. Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondence 4. Word Building/Spelling 5. Vocabulary 6. Text Reading and Comprehension 7. Writing or 8. E/LA
Sequence	Steps must be presented to students in order.
Time Allocation	Approximately 30 minutes should be spent on steps 1-5, step 6, and steps 7 and/or 8.

Tables 23 through 26 show the results of our coding of the observations of 20 teachers whom we observed three days each for a total of 60 days of observations. Table 26 shows the number of days we observed classrooms engaging in any of the four Daily Activities. Classes engaged in 1, 2, or 3 of these activities most commonly, not the four required. During a fifth of the days, we observed none of the Daily Activities.

Table 23**Numbers of Observation Days During Which DRWC Teachers Implemented the Required *LANGUAGE!* Daily Activities**

	Number of Daily Activities in Which Class Engaged				
	None	One	Two	Three	Four
Day 1 (n=20 observations)	4	5	5	5	1
Day 2 (n=20 observations)	4	4	6	6	0
Day 3 (n=20 observations)	4	7	5	4	0
TOTAL (n=60 observations)	12 (20%)	16 (27%)	16 (27%)	15 (25%)	1 (2%)

Table 24 shows that there was a range in the number of Steps we observed teachers implementing in their lessons. Teachers followed at least one Step and up to all Steps on the days we observed. During 22% of the days we observed, teachers followed six of the seven and/or eight Steps, and only 10% took the class through all seven and/or eight Steps.

Table 24**Numbers and Percentages of DRWC Teachers Observed Implementing the Required Steps**

	Number of Required Steps Observed							
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven/ Eight
Day 1 (n=20 observations)	0	2	0	5	4	2	5	2
Day 2 (n=20 observations)	0	1	1	3	4	4	5	2
Day 3 (n=20 observations)	0	2	3	4	3	3	3	2
TOTAL (n=60 observations)	0 (0%)	5 (8%)	4 (7%)	12 (20%)	11 (18%)	9 (15%)	13 (22%)	6 (10%)

Presenting the Steps in sequence was the most problematic aspect of the curriculum for teachers. Most of the teachers (16 of 20) in this analysis never presented

the Steps in sequence. A few teachers followed the sequence on 1 or 2 days. And no teacher presented the Steps in sequence on all 3 days. These numbers are summarized in Table 25.

Table 25
Percentages and Numbers of DRWC Teachers Who Presented Steps in Sequence on Days We Observed Them (N=20)

No Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days
76%	14%	10%	0%
(n=16 Teachers)	(n=3 Teachers)	(n=2 Teachers)	(n=0 Teachers)

Finally, we examined the proportions of time teachers spent on the three sets of Steps. Table 26 shows that, most commonly, teachers spent the appropriate amounts of time on the sets of Steps on 2 or on none of the 3 days we observed them.

Table 26
Numbers and Percentages of DRWC Teachers Who Spent the Required Time on Sets of Steps (N=20)

No Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days
35%	20%	35%	10%
(n=7 Teachers)	(n=4 Teachers)	(n=7 Teachers)	(n=2 Teachers)

In addition to focusing on teacher’s fidelity to the curriculum, we also assigned ratings of quality in general as with the CAL classrooms. We took the average of the ratings assigned over 3 days (or 2 days for 6 teachers included in this analysis and not in the analysis of curriculum fidelity). Table 27 shows that except for *classroom management* and *proportion of students on-task*, all dimensions were rated 1 or 2 in these classrooms. This pattern is similar to that found in 2002-03, with one notable improvement – the quality of instructional feedback given to students received ratings of 1 and 2 this year, where last year this dimension received mostly ratings of 1.

Table 27**Ratings of Instructional Quality by Dimension for DRWC Classrooms (n=26)**

	1	2	3	4
Clarity of goals for student learning	28%	48%	24%	0%
Match b/w goals & observed activities	40%	40%	20%	0%
Cognitive challenge	42%	50%	8%	0%
Discussion	54%	38%	8%	0%
Feedback	46%	35%	19%	0%
Classroom management	19%	23%	43%	15%
Students on task	0%	27%	42%	31%
Overall	23%	54%	23%	0%

Notes: Observations were rated on a 4-point scale (1=*poor*, 2=*average*, 3=*good*, 4=*excellent*). The scale for students on task is 1=fewer than half of students, 2=approximately half of students, 3=approximately 85% of students, and 4=all students are engaged in activities.

Table 28 shows that the number of teachers receiving average ratings for overall quality looked similar whether a teacher was new or had taught in both 2002-03 and 2003-04. Most teachers received an overall rating of 2 in either case. Notably, we saw less turnover in our study sample of DRWC teachers than we saw across the district.

Table 28**Ratings of Overall Quality for DRWC Classrooms (n=26)**

	Number of Classrooms Rated as:			
	1	2	3	4
Teacher taught DRWC in 2003-04 only (n=6)	2	3	1	0
	33%	50%	17%	0%
Teacher taught DRWC in 2002-03 and 2003-04 (n=20)	4	11	5	0
	20%	55%	25%	0%

To illustrate higher-quality instruction in a DRWC classroom, we focus on a classroom in which the teacher used the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum fairly closely and which received higher ratings on our rubric. The class received ratings of 3 for overall quality each of the 3 days we observed the class.

DRWC Case Teacher. Our case study class, taught by Ms. L, was a 6th grade class with 26 students. The teacher adhered relatively well to the requirements of the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum. On the 3 days we observed, students engaged in two or three of the four required “Daily Activities,” spent time, on average, on four of the eight Steps required by the curriculum, and spent roughly a third of the time each day on each set of Steps required by the curriculum. However, the teacher did not present the Steps in sequence as required.

The instructional quality ratings of this class are presented in Table 29. Ms. L’s goals were fairly clear and specific, particularly on the first day, when the teacher gave a more elaborate response (i.e., “Review grammar, capitalization and punctuation, complete Unit 11, recognize words that have multiple meanings, be able to convert a noun in to a verb and vice versa.”) than on the second and third days (i.e., “Fluency, reading comprehension”).

Table 29
Ratings of Classroom Quality for DRWC Class: Sixth Grade Close Implementation of *LANGUAGE!*

Dimension	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Clarity of goals for student learning	3	2	2
Match b/w goals & observed activities	3	2	2
Cognitive challenge	2	1	2
Discussion	2	2	2
Feedback	3	3	3
Classroom management	3	3	4
Students on task	3	4	3
Overall	3	3	3

The cognitive challenge to students by the materials and tasks they were presented with was rated a 2 or 1. A lesson rated a 2 asked students to understand a section that the teacher read to them from Roald Dahl’s “James and Giant Peach” at a literal level and summarize a story from their J & J readers in addition to performing vocabulary and grammar exercises.

The quality of the class's discussion was rated a 2 consistently because the teacher made some attempts to engage the students in an instructional conversation. The teacher did so, for example, by asking students to generate questions about a painting she showed them, providing students in the opportunity to bring in their perspective. During her reading of a story, the teacher attempted to engage students as thinking partners when she asked genuinely, "What's a steeplejack?" because she was unfamiliar with the term. Students looked through their books, reading for context clues, to try to figure out what this term meant so they could tell their teacher. Despite these attempts at genuine discussion, what characterized the teacher-student interaction was mostly teacher-focused lecturing.

Ms. L's feedback to students was clear, specific, and consistently provided during the lessons we observed. The class was well managed, with smooth transitions and attentive students. Overall, the teacher taught higher-quality lessons in terms of her fidelity to *LANGUAGE!* and other important dimensions of instruction.

Summary of DRWC Classroom Outcomes. The quality of instruction in DRWC classes was average to poor. Teachers' fidelity to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum was not very high. We observed classes mostly engage in one or two of the four Daily Activities specified by the program. The program requires that at least seven Steps be followed daily. On any given day, teachers followed between one and eight Steps, with the most frequent being six Steps. Most teachers did not present the Steps in sequence on any of the days we observed them. In general, teachers did not spend the required amount of time on each of three sets of Steps. Except for classroom management and proportion of students on-task, which received high ratings, most dimensions of quality, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and feedback, received ratings of 2 or 1. In a few classrooms, we did observe good quality instruction, and when we examined so these classrooms closely, we found that this was mainly due to teachers using *LANGUAGE!* as it was intended and/or engaging students in discussions around grade-level texts that asked them to make high-level inferences about the texts.

3.3 Student Outcomes

This section presents standardized test outcomes for students in the classrooms we observed. First, findings for students in the CAL classrooms are summarized, then those for the students in DRWC classrooms are presented.

Students in Content Area Literacy Classrooms

Table 30 shows the numbers of students enrolled in the classes we observed by content area, grade level, and whether their teachers were part of their school's cadres. Our sample included mostly students enrolled in English classrooms and mostly in the classrooms of teachers who were not members of their school's cadre. Students were relatively evenly distributed across grade levels from 6 to 11.

Table 30
Numbers of Students in the Study by Grade Level

Grade	English		Social Studies		Science		Math	
	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre
6	61	47	60	54	35	61	0	25
7	49	63	0	58	0	0	0	84
8	56	251	65	71	29	33	51	25
9	45	67	0	0	17	15	0	34
10	18	49	0	0	46	10	0	8
11	40	24	0	24	0	3	0	32
Missing Grade ^a	11	53	1	36	11	11	5	37
TOTAL	280	554	126	243	138	133	56	245

^aSome students were missing this information in their Student Information System database.

Tables 31 through 34 show students' mean scaled scores for spring 2004 on the California Standards Test (CST) language subtest, the California Achievement Test, 6th edition (CAT/6) reading subtest, the CAT/6 Language subtest, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtest. This pattern was observed in the California Standards Test (CST) Language scaled

scores as well as the California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition (CAT/6) Reading and Language scaled scores.¹¹ This data is presented in terms of students' teachers' involvement in their schools' cadres. That is, students' scores are shown separately for teachers who were never part of their cadre, were members in 2002-03 only, were members in 2003-04 only, or were members both years. For English teachers, the different test scores, except for CAT/6 Spelling, show similar patterns: Students in the classrooms of teachers who were cadre members in both 2002-03 and 2003-04 had higher mean scaled scores than students whose teachers were never cadre members or had belonged in the past but were no longer members. Students performed fairly similarly on the CAT/6 Spelling subtest regardless of group. The overall trend aligns with our finding the instruction of cadre teachers tended to be of higher quality than that of non-cadre teachers. Again, this may be attributed to a self-selection bias as opposed to an effect of the professional development gained through cadre participation.

Table 31
CST Language Spring 2004 Mean Scaled Scores for Students in Study Sample

Student's teacher was a cadre member:	Content Area of Classroom in the Study			
	English	Social Studies	Science	Math
Never	314 (40) (n=377)	335 (51) (n=163)	324 (40) (n=88)	329 (47) (n=205)
In 2002-03 only	312 (35) (n=118)	355 (35) (n=43)	291 (41) (n=31)	--
In 2003-04 only	319 (35) (n=131)	323 (34) (n=59)	310 (41) (n=123)	264 (26) (n=20)
Both years	356 (54) (n=134)	349 (57) (n=65)	--	285 (38) (n=31)

NOTE: The possible range of scaled scores is 150 to 600.

¹¹ The CST is a standards-aligned test that is used to determine a school's Academic Performance Index (API) rating. The CAT/6 is a norm-referenced test that is also used to determine the API, but to a lesser extent. These were the available test scores for these students, and we examined both.

Table 32**CAT/6 Reading Spring 2003 Mean Scaled Scores for Students in Study Sample**

Student's teacher was a cadre member:	Content Area of Classroom in the Study			
	Mean (SD)			
	English	Social Studies	Science	Math
Never	652 (41)	663 (57)	651 (42)	663 (46)
	(n=374)	(n=162)	(n=85)	(n=198)
In 2002-03 only	653 (39)	686 (35)	632 (51)	--
	(n=117)	(n=42)	(n=33)	
In 2003-04 only	658 (47)	652 (39)	648 (46)	587 (45)
	(n=128)	(n=60)	(n=124)	(n=20)
Both years	681 (48)	667 (60)	--	620 (43)
	(n=133)	(n=65)		(n=30)

NOTE: The possible range of scaled scores is 0 to 999.

Table 33**CAT/6 Language Spring 2004 Mean Scaled Scores for Students in Study Sample**

Student's teacher was a cadre member:	Content Area of Classroom in the Study			
	Mean (SD)			
	English	Social Studies	Science	Math
Never	653 (39)	665 (48)	647 (45)	662 (41)
	(n=374)	(n=162)	(n=85)	(n=198)
In 2002-03 only	649 (40)	679 (21)	623 (40)	--
	(n=117)	(n=42)	(n=33)	
In 2003-04 only	660 (38)	643 (41)	649 (40)	611 (36)
	(n=128)	(n=60)	(n=124)	(n=20)
Both years	680 (49)	658 (60)	--	628 (39)
	(n=133)	(n=65)		(n=30)

NOTE: The possible range of scaled scores is 0 to 999.

Table 34**CAT/6 Spelling Spring 2004 Scaled Scores for Students in Study Sample**

Student's teacher was a cadre member:	Content Area of Classroom in the Study			
	English	Social Studies	Science	Math
Never	672 (41)	667 (35)	663 (43)	673 (40)
	(n=260)	(n=140)	(n=61)	(n=132)
In 2002-03 only	673 (35)	694 (27)	633 (58)	--
	(n=94)	(n=40)	(n=32)	
In 2003-04 only	669 (35)	650 (44)	661 (42)	624 (43)
	(n=52)	(n=60)	(n=64)	(n=20)
Both years	671 (44)	691 (62)	--	642 (58)
	(n=114)	(n=65)		(n=30)

NOTE: The possible range of scaled scores is 0 to 999.

To compare students' performance in spring 2003 to their performance in spring 2004, we obtained the standardized residuals from a regression of 2004 scaled scores on 2003 scaled scores. This residual yielded, on a standard scale, the difference between what a students' score was expected to be in spring 2004 and what it actually was. Table 35 shows that students whose English teacher was a cadre member in 2003-04 made greater gains on every subtest than students whose English teacher was not a cadre member in 2003-04. The same pattern was not true for other subject area teachers.

Table 35**Gains on Standardized Tests for Students in the Study: Standardized Residuals of Spring 2003 and Spring 2004 Scaled Scores**

Test	Content Area of Classroom in the Study							
	English		Social Studies		Science		Math	
	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre	Cadre	Not Cadre
CST Language	.244	.003	.138	.352	.031	-.002	-1.72	.188
	n=260	n=483	n=123	n=206	n=120	n=117	n=48	n=202
CAT/6 Reading	.209	.007	.007	.219	.083	.006	-.100	.142
	n=258	n=473	n=123	n=204	n=123	n=115	n=48	n=195
CAT/6 Language	.215	.002	-.192	.177	-.045	-.288	-.003	.171
	n=258	n=473	n=123	n=204	n=123	n=115	n=48	n=195
CAT/6 Spelling	.204	.183	.251	.242	-.105	-.005	-.350	.258
	n=165	n=347	n=122	n=180	n=63	n=92	n=48	n=127

In order to test the assumptions that being in a classroom taught by a cadre teacher and that being in a classroom with higher instructional quality makes a difference in students' scores, we conducted a series of multiple regression analyses using the following predictor variables: (1) cadre membership, (2) clarity of teacher's goals for a lesson, (3) alignment between goals and the lesson, (4) level of challenge to students, (5) discussion quality, (6) feedback quality, (7) classroom management, (8) proportion of students on task, (9) overall instructional quality, and (10) scaled scores from spring 2003 as covariates. We conducted four separate regression analyses, each using the following different subtests as outcome variables: (1) CST Language, (2) CAT/6 Reading, (3) CAT/6 Language, and (4) CAT/6 Spelling. Table 36 lists these predictors and outcomes variables.

Table 36
Variables Used in Regression Analyses

Predictor Variables		Outcome Variables
Variable	Explanation	
Cadre membership	Teacher was in cadre never, first year only, second year only, first and second years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CST Language 2004 Scaled Score
Goals	Clarity of teacher's goals for observed lesson on a 4-point scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT/6 Language 2004 Scaled Score
Match	Alignment between goals and the observed lesson on a 4-point scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT/6 Reading 2004 Scaled Score
Challenge	Cognitive challenge posed to students by lesson on a 4-point scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT/6 Spelling 2004 Scaled Score
Discussion	Quality of dialogue in class on a 4-point scale.	
Feedback	Quality of teacher's feedback to students during lesson on a 4-point scale.	
Classroom Management	Quality of classroom management during observation on a 4-point scale.	
Students On-Task	Proportion of students on-task during lesson on a 4-point scale.	
Overall Instructional Quality	Holistic judgment on a 4-point scale of above dimensions.	
Previous Year's Scores	Spring 2003 CST Language, CAT/6 Reading, CAT/6 Language, CAT/6 Spelling Scaled Scores	

In all of the regressions, students' previous year scores accounted for a high proportion of the variance. That is, they explained most of the variability in students' 2004 scores. In the regression that used the CST Language scaled score as the outcome, in addition to the prior year score, the quality of a teacher's feedback, quality of classroom management, and whether a teacher belonged to the cadre were all significant predictors. Each of these, however, explained very little of the variance, as shown in Table 37, indicating that while these variables were statistically significant, they were relatively unimportant in educational terms.

Table 37**Summary of Multiple Regression Model: Variables Predicting CST Language Scaled Score 2004 (N=1471)**

	R ² Change	Significance Level
CST Language scaled score 2003	.670	.000
Feedback	.004	.000
Classroom management	.002	.001
Cadre membership length	.001	.014
Cognitive challenge	.001	.010

For the regression using the CAT/6 Reading scaled score as the outcome variable, significant predictors in addition to prior year score were overall instructional quality and the quality of feedback students received during our observations. Again, Table 38 shows that very little of the variance was explained by these last two predictors, making them statistically significant but not meaningful in terms of educational importance.

Table 38**Summary of Multiple Regression Model: Variables Predicting CAT/6 Reading Scaled Score 2004 (N=1450)**

	R ² Change	Significance Level
CAT/6 Reading scaled score 2003	.450	.000
Overall instructional quality	.002	.022
Feedback	.002	.039

The largest number of predictors were significant in the regression using the CAT/6 Language scaled score as the outcome variable. Overall instructional quality, proportion of students on-task, classroom management, and quality of feedback all significantly predicted this score, regardless of students' prior year scores. The variance predicted by these variables was very small, however, as shown in Table 39.

Table 39**Summary of Multiple Regression Model: Variables Predicting CAT/6 Language Scaled Score 2004 (N=1450)**

	R ² Change	Significance Level
CAT/6 Language scaled score 2003	.407	.000
Overall instructional quality	.008	.000
Students on-task	.002	.028
Classroom management	.002	.025
Feedback	.002	.036

Finally, overall instructional quality and feedback quality were both statistically significant predictors of the CAT/6 Spelling scaled score above and beyond a student's prior year score. Again, because the variance explained by these variables was small, they are not educationally meaningful. These findings are summarized in Table 40.

Table 40**Summary of Multiple Regression Model: Variables Predicting CAT/6 Spelling Scaled Score 2004 (N=1084)**

	R ² Change	Significance Level
CAT/6 Spelling scaled score 2003	.285	.000
Overall instructional quality	.010	.000
Feedback	.005	.005

Summary of CAL Student Outcomes. Similar to the classroom quality outcomes, student test outcomes showed that the students of cadre teachers in our study performed better than those of teachers who were not members of their cadre. This pattern was observed in the CST Language scaled scores as well as the CAT/6 Reading and Language scaled scores. Further, students whose English teacher was a cadre member in 2003-04 made greater gains on every subtest than students whose English teacher was not a cadre member in 2003-04. However, when we statistically tested the assumption that students with cadre teachers outperformed those with “non-cadre” teachers, cadre membership

predicted only the CST Language scaled score, and accounted for very little of the variance in scores.

Students in DRWC Classrooms

This section presents the standardized test scores for students in our sample of observed DRWC classrooms. Table 41 shows students' spring 2004 mean scaled scores on the CST Language subtest, the CAT/6 Reading subtest, the CAT/6 Language subtest, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtest. The table shows that students' scores were similar in spring 2004 regardless of how long their teachers had taught DRW – about 280 on a scale of 150 to 600 on the CST Language subtest, about 615 on a scale of 0 to 999 on the CAT/6 Reading and Language subtest, and about 635 on a scale of 0 to 999 on the CAT/6 Spelling subtest.

Table 41
Spring 2004 Mean Scaled Scores for DRWC Students in Study Sample

Test	Student's teacher taught DRWC:		
	Only in 2003-04	Both 2002-03 and 2003-04	Whole Sample
	Mean Scaled Score (SD)		
CST Language	277 (26) n=115	280 (26) n=331	279 (26) n=446
CAT/6 Reading	602 (49) n=117	615 (40) n=340	612 (43) n=457
CAT/6 Language	615 (38) n=117	615 (45) n=340	615 (44) n=457
CAT/6 Spelling	637 (41) n=89	635 (37) n=272	636 (38) n=361

NOTES: The possible range of CST scaled scores is 150 to 600. The possible range of CAT/6 scaled scores is 0 to 999.

To look for differences in students' scores from spring 2003 to spring 2004, we examined the residuals of regressions of spring 2004 scaled scores on spring 2003 scaled scores. Table 42 shows that on every test, students in the DRWC fell short of their expected score, regardless of whether their teacher was new to the course or had taught the course both years (2002-03 and 2003-04).

Table 42**Gains on Standardized Tests for Students in DRWC Classrooms in the Study:
Standardized Residuals of Spring 2003 and Spring 2004 Scaled Scores**

Test	Student's teacher taught DRWC:		
	Only in 2003-04	Both 2002-03 and 2003-04	Whole Sample
	Mean Standardized Residual		
CST Language	-.073 n=114	-.124 n=323	-.111 n=437
CAT/6 Reading	-.451 n=115	-.118 n=328	-.205 n=443
CAT/6 Language	-.363 n=115	-.247 n=328	-.277 n=443
CAT/6 Spelling	-.170 n=88	-.006 n=262	-.047 n=350

Summary of DRWC Student Outcomes. DRWC students in our sample fell short of their expected scores on all the tests we considered – the CST Language, the CAT/6 Reading, the CAT/6 Language, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtests. Given this lack of improvement on either of the standardized tests, we can conclude that students in our sample did not make significant improvements in their language or reading skills. It may be that these standardized tests are not sensitive enough to detect improvement in these remedial program students' reading given that their reading skills are so poor. Testing of DRWC students using the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised is currently under way, and the results of that testing will be included in the 2004-05 report.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Evolution of the Secondary Literacy Plan

Since its adoption in January 2002, SLP has evolved, deepening its focus on its initially proposed areas and reflecting changes in the district's policies. In the area of content literacy, Instructional Guides and Periodic Assessment and related training have been and continue to be developed to build standards-aligned content expertise. IFL Principles of Learning such as Academic Rigor, Accountable Talk, Apprenticeship, Organizing for Effort, Clear Expectations, as well as other IFL guiding principles such as the Disciplinary Literacy Framework and nested learning communities continue to guide the work of those involved with the guide and assessments.

As part of the content literacy component of SLP, the literacy cadres, including coaches, participate in training provided by central and local district, and they are expected to contribute to school-based leadership in professional development. Though the initially intended focus of their training, Lesson Study, has been replaced by training in the instructional guide and assessments as well as local district-determined trainings, other IFL guiding principles have been retained as part of the cadres' training. Secondary Literacy Coordinators at the local districts are now assisted by content experts in English/language arts, *LANGUAGE!*, social studies, science, and math in providing professional development and administrative support.

With respect to Developing Readers and Writers, training and on-going support to implement the program have continuously been provided, and components have been added to the program as a response to needs expressed by teachers. The DRW has been operationally complex from the beginning, and growth of its various structures and procedures has further complicated the program. DRWC levels 1 and 2 and the supplemental DRW-E/LA make the program overall very operationally intricate, requiring the coordination of many individuals at different levels of the district on issues such as testing and placing students correctly in the course, identifying and training teachers, training principals and coaches to support instruction of the course, and supporting DRW experts in their support of instruction of the course.

The plan has evolved and will continue to do so in coming years. In carrying out their work in 2003-04 in both content literacy and DRW, SLP implementers focused closely on the Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy initiative. Further, SLP's support structure and activities are presently being coordinated such that they align directly to the superintendent's theory of change, which focuses on key elements for improving leadership, learning, and instruction, such as a rigorous core curriculum, coaching, on-going professional development, etc.

4.2 Professional Development

Training at the central and local districts, with exceptions at some local districts, was focused primarily on information delivery and strategies as opposed to reflection. The cognitive challenge level was not high, and discussions were rare, though there were a few examples of high cognitive challenge and high-quality discussion.

4.3 Literacy Cadres

Cadres at more schools met in spring 2003 than in spring 2004, but not all schools' cadres met regularly. Fewer than half of the cadres in our sample schools (12 of 30) met weekly when we conducted observations in spring 2004. Given that cadre teachers are provided with a stipend requiring them to spend 5 hours weekly on cadre work, we expected to find many more cadres meeting regularly than we did. When they did meet, they dealt primarily with logistical details and instructional strategies but had minimal opportunities to reflect or apply critical thought.

4.4 CAL Classrooms

The quality of most of the CAL instruction we observed was acceptable in terms of most of the dimensions we rated, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and classroom management. Cadre classrooms tended to receive slightly higher ratings of quality compared to classrooms with teachers who were not part of their cadres. Given the low quality in general of the professional development we observed, we could reasonably infer that we cannot attribute these differences to the training teachers received at these trainings.

4.5 DRWC Classrooms

The quality of instruction in DRWC classes was average to poor. Teachers' fidelity to the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum was not very high. Also, except for classroom management and proportion of students on-task, which received high ratings, most dimensions of quality, including cognitive challenge, discussion, and feedback, received low ratings.

4.6 Student Outcomes

CAL student test outcomes showed that the students of cadre teachers in our study performed better than those of teachers who were not members of their cadre. However, when we statistically tested the assumption that students with cadre teachers outperformed those with "non-cadre" teachers, cadre membership predicted only the CST Language scaled score, and accounted for very little of the variance in scores.

DRWC students in our sample fell short of their expected scores on all the tests we considered – the CST Language, the CAT/6 Reading, the CAT/6 Language, and the CAT/6 Spelling subtests. It may be that these standardized tests are not sensitive enough to detect improvement in these remedial program students' reading given that their reading skills are so poor. Testing of DRWC students using the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised is currently under way, and the results of that testing will be included in the 2004-05 report.

4.7 Recommendations

Given the conclusions just outlined, we make the following suggestions and recommendations for improving the main components of the SLP.

1. Facilitators of professional development meetings should ensure that the goals of the meetings and expectations for participants' learning are clearly communicated, that there are opportunities for participants to engage in meaningful discussions that help improve their practice, and that participants are challenged cognitively by the material and activities in which they engage. Of course, some meetings are meant to be and should be primarily or purely opportunities to transmit information, to coordinate operations, to organize efforts, etc. However, the meetings that are intended to improve teachers' and instructional leaders' practice should ensure that participants

are allowed maximum opportunity to reflect on their practice and to challenge themselves and one another to improve it. Local districts where these aspects of professional development meetings were already of high quality should continue to work to improve.

2. Cadre leaders, including principals, should clearly communicate roles and expectations to their schools' cadre members. Cadres should above all, meet regularly, and leaders should help them work collaboratively and to build the trust necessary to sustain critical analysis of their practice. In particular the role of the coach, both as a member of the cadre and as a liaison between the school and local district should be clearly defined.
3. Facilitators of meetings of school site cadres should ensure that cadre members are contributing to discussions that make meaning of their practice through not only presentation and superficial treatment of instructional strategies but also through critical analysis of how such strategies promote learning. Such reflection may be uncomfortable in that it requires sharing answers to questions such as "What am I still doing wrong?" but it is indispensable for bringing about significant improvement.
4. The role of the content expert should be clearly defined, supported, and coordinated with the role of the coach. Some content experts we interviewed seemed to have more instructional leadership responsibilities than others. All content experts must be provided with direction and support as instructional leaders, capable of bringing about instructional improvement.
5. Careful coordination among plan implementers at all levels of the district is essential given the many operational details involved in the implementation of both the IG/PA and the DRW.
6. Teachers' adherence to *LANGUAGE!* must be increased. Curriculum fidelity in the classrooms we observed was very low possibly explaining the lack of improvement of DRWC students' performance on standardized tests. Improvements in teacher recruitment or training must be made to ensure teachers use the curriculum as it was intended.

7. DRWC teacher turnover must be reduced. Whether the solution lies in improving recruitment of these teachers, improving their training, requiring a long-term commitment of them, or some other improvement, retaining teachers is critical to building a corps of specialized reading teachers. *LANGUAGE!* is a difficult program to learn to teach, and much effort has been made to support on-going instruction in the DRWC. A consistent corps of teachers is essential to the long-term success of the course.
8. Finally, the DRWC must meet the multiple needs of emergent readers in a more comprehensive way than simply through building their decoding, encoding, and other basic skills. Researchers describe the cognitive, metacognitive, knowledge-building, social, and personal dimensions that contribute to a reader's development (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, and Mueller, 2001). Furthermore, a recent publication from the Carnegie Corporation on secondary literacy reports that,

Very few . . . older struggling readers need help to read the words on a page; their most common problem is that they are not able to comprehend what they read. . . Meeting the needs of struggling adolescent readers and writers is not simply an altruistic goal. The emotional, social, and public health costs of academic failure have been well documented, and the consequences of the national literary crisis are too serious and far-reaching for us to ignore (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004).

DRWC's narrower focus on basic reading skills for such an extended period of time may disadvantage students.

4.8 Next Steps

In the current year of the SLP study, 2004-05, we are observing cadres throughout the year, as opposed to only in the spring, developing a case study to learn about connections across the local district and school levels in more detail, and conducting a careful study of DRWC students' reading improvement using an individually-administered reading test, the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised, at the beginning and at the end of the school year.

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