



# TOUCHING BASE

APRIL/MAY 2008

PUTTING PROVEN METHODS OF READING RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM  
TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ACROSS THE NATION

## READING FIRST SCHOOLS IN THE NEWS!

### Third-graders reading CSAP scores improve

From The Daily Record-Canon City-Charlotte Burrous

Third grade reading scores in the Florence-Penrose School District jumped ahead of the state average by 9 percent, according to figures by the Colorado Student Assessment Program.

Compared to the state average of 70 percent, the distance between the two schools is 79 percent, said Superintendent John Merriam Monday after the Florence-Penrose School District meeting.

During the federal programs director's report, Rhonda Vendetti reported a jump in reading scores by 26 points at Fremont Elementary School.

"Fremont School went from roughly 49 percent back in 1998 to 86 per-

cent in 2008," Merriam said. "In the last two years, they have come from 60 percent to 86 percent. This is really great news."

However, Penrose actually went down this year.

"That was almost predictable because of some of the indicators we had with that group and for them to score 68 percent was a great accomplishment for them," Merriam said. "We anticipated that and made the right changes to accommodate their needs."

He credits the improvement in reading scores to the Colorado Reading First program and offering all-day kindergarten classes.

The remainder of the CSAP scores will be released in late July.

Congratulations Fremont Elementary!

### Cotopaxi students earn perfect score

From The Mountain Mail Salida, Colorado

Cotopaxi Elementary School third-graders earned a perfect score on the Colorado Student Assessment Program reading test.

"We are so proud of our students," said principal Kristy Wilson.

Every third grade student achieved a proficient or advanced score on the reading portion of the assessment. Students scored well above the state average of 70 percent.

A proficient or advanced score indicates reading at grade level or above. Eighty percent of the students were at proficient while 20 percent were advanced.

School officials credit the reading program they use for the success of their students. The school is one of 82 statewide participating in the Colorado Reading First program, used for kindergarten

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- *Reading First Schools in the News!*
- *Professional Development opportunity*
- *Reading First Impact Report*



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## IN THE NEWS (CONT)

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through third grade.

It was established through No Child Left Behind and is a federally funded program.

Teri Kraemer, reading coach, said the 2009 grant amount is less than previous years and is about making sure the money is spent on staff development and less on getting materials. Virtually all materials have been purchased, she said.

The program dedicates 90 minutes of the school day to concentrating on reading instruction. Teachers focus on five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency practice and comprehension skills.

Small groups and parents coming in for fluency prac-

tice are elements in the program to help students develop reading skills, Kraemer said.

The groups are established using data from biweekly tests, called progress monitoring, used to measure progress by students. Teachers and Kraemer analyze the data on a regular basis to ensure students are learning skills they need at specified levels, Kraemer explained.

Teachers, Kraemer and other administrators meet weekly to discuss results and to keep up to date with information about student progress.

Parents come in any time during the day for fluency practice. They can come any time except during the 90 minute block because

that time is set aside just for reading, Kraemer said. The program is designed to give students a reason for reading. They are given specific goals to reach.

"They know what their goals are and they are ready to participate and to learn," Kraemer said.

Program funding will end at the completion of the next school year, but Kraemer and Wilson aren't worried. Kraemer said everyone involved is dedicated to finding a way to keep the program running because they believe in it.

Congratulations Cotapaxi Elementary!

*"THE TEACHER IF HE IS INDEED WISE DOES NOT BID YOU TO ENTER THE HOUSE OF WISDOM BUT LEADS YOU TO THE THRESHOLD OF YOUR OWN MIND."*

*~KAHLIL GILBRAN*



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Rocky Mountain Summer Institute is scheduled for Sunday, June 22 through Wednesday, June 25 at Keystone Resort and Conference Center, Keystone, Colorado.

If you are interested in attending, we encourage you

to use your Reading First funds to cover the cost of registration, lodging and travel. Sopris West is also offering a discounted registration rate of \$399.00 for to all Reading First cohorts.

Please visit the Sopris West

website at <http://bettereducator.com/event.aspx?EventID=173> for additional information about the Reading Summit.

## READING FIRST IMPACT REPORT

From the desk of Debora L. Scheffel, Director, Colorado Reading First

The Reading First Impact Study: Interim Report, Institute of Education Sciences, was just released. The present report is the first of two; it examines the national impact of Reading First funding in 2004-05 and 2005-06 in 17 school districts across 12 states and one statewide program (18 sites). The report examines program impacts on students' reading comprehension and teachers' use of scientifically-based reading instruction.

Multiple responses to this report have been written and distributed across the nation. Colorado is developing a response to this interim report as well. We are attaching four national responses from the field along with the full-text report in the distribution email with this issue of Touching Base.

Colorado Reading First knows that the implementation of RF has helped thousands of children throughout Colorado become successful readers. We are proud of the work you are doing and commend you and your children on the progress you

have made during your participation in the Reading First initiative. If you wish to share your experience with Colorado Reading First on a national blog, please do so at [Ed-News.org](http://Ed-News.org).

Key preliminary findings stated in the report are that:

- On average, across the 18 participating sites, estimated impacts on student reading comprehension test scores were not statistically significant.
- On average, Reading First increased instructional time spent on the five essential components of reading instruction promoted by the program (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension).
- Average impacts on reading comprehension and classroom instruction did not change systematically over time as sites gained experience with Reading First.
- Study sites that received their Reading First grants later in the federal funding process (between January and August 2004) experienced posi-

tive and statistically significant impacts both on the time first and second grade teachers spent on the five essential components of reading instruction and on first and second grade reading comprehension. Time spent on the five essential components was not assessed for third grade, and impacts on third grade reading comprehension were not statistically significant. In contrast, there were no statistically significant impacts on either time spent on the five components of reading instruction or on reading comprehension scores at any grade level among study sites that received their Reading First grants earlier in the federal funding process (between April and December 2003).

The study's final report, which is due early 2009, will provide an additional year of follow-up data, and will examine whether the magnitude of impacts on the use of scientifically-based reading instruction is associated with improvements in reading comprehension.



"THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY OF THEIR DREAMS."

~ELEANOR ROOSEVELT





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PUT **READING FIRST!**

## THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR IN READING FIRST

A BIG thank you to all of you at Reading First schools throughout the state of Colorado.

We know that you have worked tremendously hard this year, completed many professional development trainings, attended CRF conferences and worked long hours to bring the goals of Reading First to fruition: that all children will reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade.

We applaud your efforts and congratulate each one of you, along with your children, for making gains in reading in your classroom by placing reading first!

Have a fantastic summer!

### IMPORTANT DATES

Just a reminder that all of the online courses are due on **May 31, 2008**.

**June 4, 2008** Professional development provider selection documentation due to CRF

**June 13, 2008** Alternative professional development provider selection documentation due to CRF

### Rocky Mountain Summer Institute

June 22-25

Keystone Conference Center and Resort

### National Reading First—

Conference

July 28-30

Nashville, TN

## CRF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR

# May 2008



MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	S/SU
19	20	21	22	23	24/25
26 	27	28	29	30	31



**Holiday Office  
Closures**

May 26, 2008  
Memorial Day