

Differentiating with Superkids closes gaps

Immediate progress

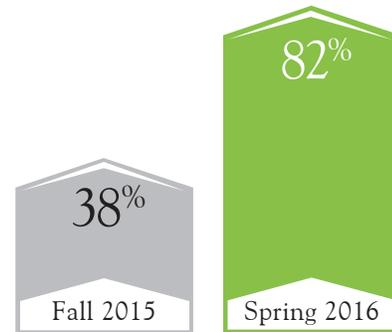
An opportunity provided by Colorado's Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act fast-tracked School District 27J staff's focus on their primary students' literacy skills. After piloting *The Superkids Reading Program™* in three elementary schools in Brighton, Colorado, teachers and administrators rolled out *Superkids®* to all 11 kindergarten classrooms in the 2015–2016 school year. Even the short-term results amazed them all: a 44-point jump in less than one school year.

“Within all three pilot schools, we saw increases in ALL students' growth.”

—Susan Herll, SD27J Literacy Coordinator

Kindergarten students reading at or above grade level using Superkids

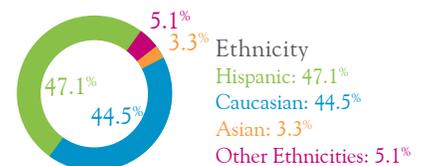
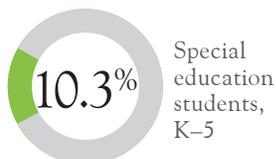
Percentage of School District 27J kindergarten students at or above benchmark in reading



At the beginning of the 2015–2016 school year, 38% of kindergartners were at or above the district's DIBELS® Next benchmark in reading; by the end of the year, 82% were at or above the benchmark.

District Profile: School District 27J

A large suburban school district with 11 public elementary schools



The first steps of success

Teachers and staff in 27J schools were methodical in their approach. They started by piloting *Superkids* in three elementary buildings in 2014. “We intentionally piloted it in a Title I school, a higher-achieving school, and a high-needs school,” Susan Herll, the district’s literacy coordinator, explains.

Primary Instructional Coach Sandie Yamamoto remembers, “By the middle of the pilot year, teachers were gasping because they had never seen data like they were seeing.” Yamamoto recalls that at that point, teachers and administrators voiced strong support for *Superkids*.

Closing gaps with Superkids

27J schools had reading interventions in place, explains Herll. “We knew that our need was good, high quality, Tier 1 instruction in our classroom. If we didn’t address that, we would continue needing more and more intervention.” Instructional coaches and teachers strategically focused on bringing all students up to grade-level reading.

“Our end-of-the-year data were much better than we have typically seen.”

—Sandie Yamamoto, SD27J District Primary Instructional Coach

The district team concluded that closing the skills gap in primary literacy was more important than expanding pull-out interventions. *Superkids* gave the district that base of high quality Tier 1 instruction, says Herll.

Part of their strategy was based on their Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS®) training, a professional development program that focuses on the scientific evidence behind literacy instruction. They learned what the research says about teaching foundational skills, then determined *Superkids* matched beautifully.

An unexpected development was that in one second-language classroom that piloted *Superkids*, not only were students’ English scores better on the DIBELS

“*Superkids* has the progression we need to explicitly teach kids to read.”

—Susan Herll, Literacy Coordinator

Next tests, but Spanish scores went up on the IDEL Spanish Assessment. Students were able to transfer the explicit instruction in reading in English to their Spanish texts, says Yamamoto.

Results with Superkids

“We’ve never had decodable pieces of nonfiction like we do now. There are so many resources within this program. And it’s all aligned,” says Herll. Teachers and administrators are impressed by the results they have seen with *Superkids*. In one school that piloted *Superkids* in grade 1, staff found that far fewer students needed an intervention program when they entered grade 2 the following year. Prior to *Superkids*, 25 students in grade 2 needed intervention. Following the district’s pilot year, only six students did, and half of those were new to the district.

Collecting data from the pilot to full implementation shows the district *Superkids*’ value to their approach. Herll says, “We can do this no matter what type of building or what type of community they’re in—we will be able to get growth out of kids.”

Grade 2 students needing intervention

Prior to *Superkids*, 25 students in grade 2 needed intervention. After having *Superkids* in grade 1, only six students did.

