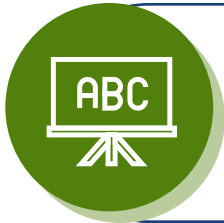




institute for
multi-sensory
education



CASE STUDY



Wyandotte Public Schools

Wyandotte, Michigan

Wyandotte Public Schools (WPS) in Southeastern Michigan comprises 10 schools serving around 4,500 students in grades PreK-12. 60% of the district's students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, its special education population is 18%, and its student-to-teacher ratio is 15:1. Since its founding in 1856, WPS has strived not only to provide excellent education to Wyandotte's students but also to involve the local community in school activities and to celebrate the historical heritage of the town.

Wyandotte District Info



10 Schools

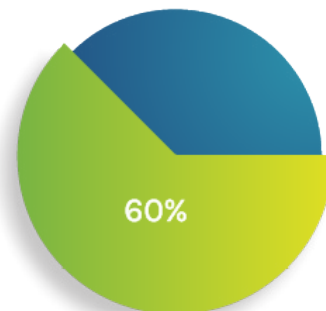


4,500 Students



Grades Pre-K - 12

Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Price Meals





CHALLENGE

In 2017, as required under a "Read by Grade 3" law previously passed by the Michigan legislature, WPS adopted a new tiered literacy curriculum. The new approach emphasized research-backed elements of the science of reading and Structured Literacy, such as phonics and phonemic awareness.

However, WPS administrators soon realized that many WPS faculty members did not have sufficient training in these concepts either to teach them or to understand how their individual roles fit into students' overall literacy development. In addition, the district's four elementary schools all used different literacy programs, but the reading law required consistency between them.

"I see the program we created as part of a sea change in education—more schools and districts are moving toward the science of reading, and it's very inspiring to feel like you're coming together with other educators to solve this entrenched problem."

Krissy Kobiljak
Literacy Coach
Wyandotte Public Schools

Rather than viewing Michigan's reading law as an obstacle, WPS treated it as the perfect opportunity to find proven training for its teachers and propel its reading instruction forward.



SOLUTION

The WPS story illustrates the wisdom of a top-down adjustment in literacy instruction, i.e., one that starts with district administrators who have the resources, influence, and relationships to drive systemic change. This allows for long-term, sustainable plans and reliable gains for students.

Using funding made available through the Michigan Department of Education's [35j grant](#) and [35d grant](#), WPS administrators decided on a two-pronged approach to supercharging their literacy curriculum. First, the district hired and embedded literacy coaches who followed Michigan's official coaching model. At the same time, using state funds made available for literacy programs, WPS began to train its teachers in IMSE's Orton-Gillingham approach.

IMSE has now helped more than 100 of the district's K-6 teachers implement Structured Literacy, and the district hopes to have 100% of its teachers trained in the not-too-distant future. By providing a double level of support, WPS allows its teachers to apply evidence-based teaching practices within the district's core curriculum and respond effectively to student needs.

The result? Striking gains in reading ability, boosts in self-belief, and equitable improvement throughout the district's schools.

"This is an equity journey for Wyandotte. We normally end with about 50% of our students, give or take, performing at the 50th percentile or higher. Last year, with our kindergarten students, 68% of them ended above the 50th percentile. That is completely on target with more affluent districts in metro Detroit."

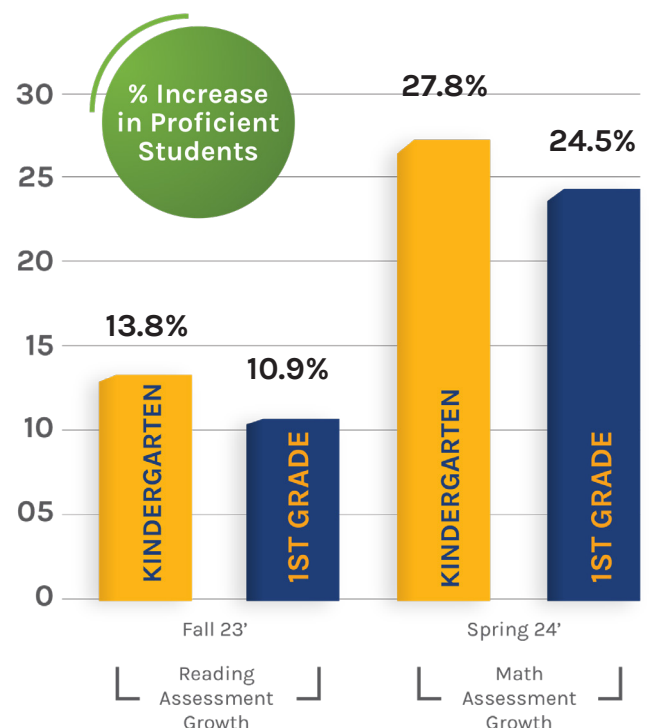
Jessica Shipman
Director of Curriculum Instruction and Assessment
Wyandotte Public Schools



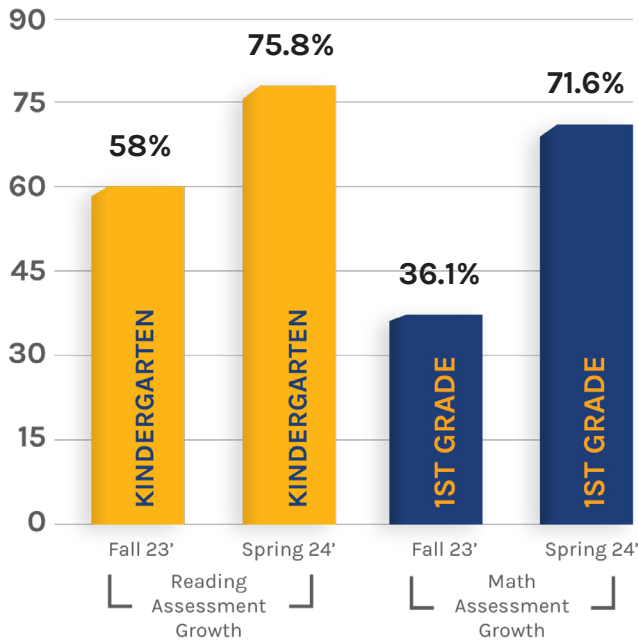
RESULTS

The results from WPS show the power of literacy instruction based on the science of reading. Students show significant reading growth from year to year in the classroom and on assessments, but the benefits don't end there. The district's NWEA MAP math scores have also improved greatly, a change that may be linked to students' increased confidence in reading. What is perhaps most exciting is that even in schools with a high percentage of at-risk students, the IMSE approach has produced the same level of progress seen elsewhere in the district.

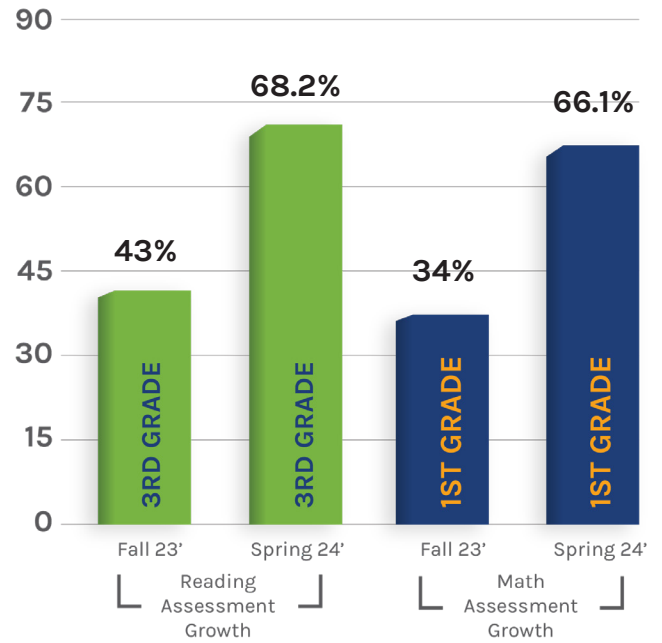
District-Wide ES 2023-2024 NWEA MAP



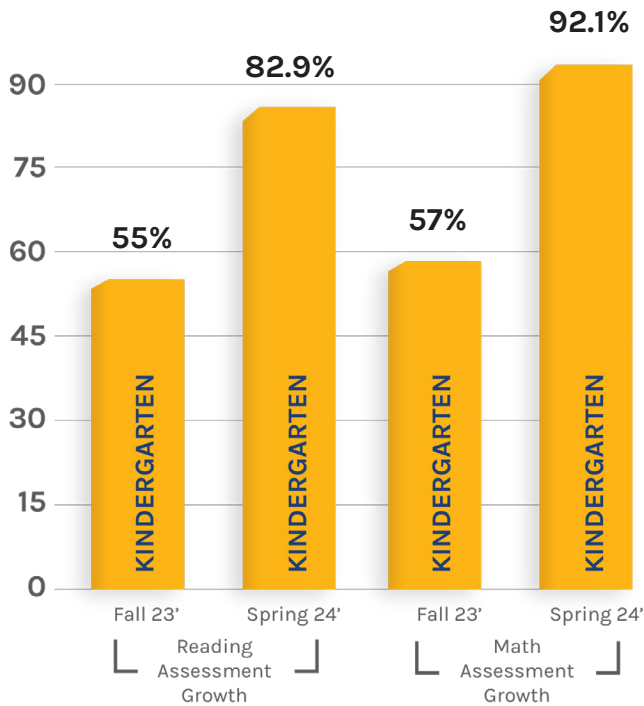
Garfield ES 2023-2024 NWEA MAP



Monroe ES 2023-2024 NWEA MAP



Jefferson ES 2023-2024 NWEA MAP



"You cannot be proficient on any standardized assessment for math without being able to read. You have to be able to read, write, spell, and think critically in order to even start tackling those skills and concepts for math. So we are seeing the literacy skills translate into other content areas."

Jessica Shipman

As WPS continues to strengthen its literacy curriculum alongside IMSE, the district is well-positioned to achieve further success and provide a brighter future for the thousands of children it serves.



ABOUT IMSE

IMSE is an education pioneer and the leading provider of Structured Literacy solutions based on the science of reading. IMSE solutions incorporate the Orton-Gillingham methodology and all five pillars of literacy to empower teachers from day one.

Institute for Multi-Sensory Education
2000 Town Center, Suite 2000
Southfield, MI 48075

Contact info@imse.com to learn more about our work with school districts around the country.