

K-12 Case Study 7: Passaic, NJ

In the early 2000s, Passaic, NJ, was a large district serving mainly Hispanic and Black students. The School Development Program had worked with the district for two years prior to bringing in the Balanced Curriculum process to help improve student achievement on the 4th grade standardized test—without resorting to teaching to the test.

Their test subject was Reading/Language Arts. Teachers were trained in the Balanced Curriculum approach and revised the curriculum across grades K to 5. Implementation was monitored by the Reading Curriculum Director in conjunction with the principals.



Note: No data was available for 2001 for School #10.

The chart on the previous page indicates that:

- Only one school met state standards of 75% proficient in 2001. That was the baseline score.
- By 2002, four schools met the state standard, with two additional schools missing the standard by less than 2 percentage points.
- Except for the Learning Center scores, all increases in student test scores represent statistically significant improvements.

What About School Number 6?

School number 6 was also implementing *Success for All*, another school reform program. Like the School Development Program, *Success for All* emphasizes leadership and staff development strategies for school improvement, but not curriculum.

Can Balanced Curriculum Work with School Improvement Programs?

The Balanced Curriculum approach is a natural complement to any school improvement program. The web-based tool can easily integrate into any teaching and learning strategy to enhance overall curricular quality. It is uniquely suited to address gaps in programs that do not address curriculum alignment to educational standards.

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