

Iowa Learning Technology Commission
External Evaluation Report for Ames and Jefferson-Scranton Projects

2008-2009 Grant Year

Submitted: December 29, 2009

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Executive Summary

The Ames project was coordinated by Dr. Susan Pecinovsky, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Lance Wilhelm, Director of Technology Services, managed its implementation. This project researched using the *Achieve3000* computer-based reading program to improve sixth grade students' reading proficiency. Sixty laptop computers and the *Achieve3000* online package were purchased to provide these additional literacy opportunities for 365 students. The primary goals involved improving reading proficiency (measured by *ITBS* or Level Set/Lexile Reading Assessments) and establishing implementation data points through lesson plans used across the curriculum.

The project was implemented over a full school year. The students were challenged to complete at least 40 activities, which would equal one activity per week, each month over a ten-month period. The results were mixed. The difference between the sixth graders' *ITBS* reading scores for each of the two years was negligible. Comparing the *ITBS* scores for the same group of students over their fifth and sixth grade years revealed that the students dropped an average of 3 – 5 *ITBS* percentiles in the sixth grade. Students who completed over 40 activities dropped less than those who did not. The district has determined that *Achieve3000* has some positive effect but they need to reexamine their existing sixth grade reading program to improve its overall effect on students' reading proficiency.

When comparing the baseline year with the implementation year results included a reduction in the number of students disciplined, an increase in the number of teachers incorporating *Achieve3000* lesson plans, and an increase in the number of students who logged into the program during non-school hours.

The project implementation was well measured. This will provide sufficient data for improving its continuing operation and documenting future results. It would be useful to specifically detail this project's implementation so that it can be replicated

The Jefferson-Scranton project was coordinated by Launi Dane, Assistant Principal of Jefferson-Scranton High School. The Family and Consumer Sciences teacher, Donna Carhill, implemented the project in her classroom. This project involved acquiring 20 laptops to support an already-existing Family and Consumer Science curriculum. The first curriculum experience involved running a school-based restaurant business. These skills included preparing food, overseeing the kitchen and managing the business. The computers empowered students to manage the finances of the business, access recipes and "how to" labs available online and in the classroom. Access to the laptops in the

classroom brought about immediacy in access that was not available when the students previously had to go to the computer lab down the hall to do this work. The second curriculum experience included an interior design class (using CADD) where students designed the interiors for actual homes. Again, the students, in the past, had to go to the school computer lab to work with CADD.

Replicating this project in another school would require much more than just acquiring the 20 computers that were purchased through this grant. The 20 computers provided more immediate access to a Consumer and Family Sciences curriculum that had been using the school's computer lab. Managing a school-based restaurant requires facilities, curriculum and a knowledgebase to institute this program in another school. The computer-based CADD program is commercially available and a similar program could be replicated.

Data was submitted for this project but it was not sufficient for full project evaluation and replication.

Project Descriptions

The Ames project was conducted at Ames Community Middle School. This project involved sixth grade students using the *Achieve3000* program, which is a web-based, individualized learning program designed to accelerate comprehension, vocabulary and writing proficiency. This project involved purchasing 60 laptop computers to allow access to the *Achieve3000* program. These computers were shared between sixth grade language arts classes so that the students could be involved in the program for one hour (one period) per week.

The project involved 365 sixth grade students during their language arts class. Stated project outcomes were to: 1) Increase reading proficiency scores for all sixth grades students as measured by the *ITBS*; 2) Establish baseline data and show growth in reading comprehension abilities as measured by the *Achieve3000* Level Set/Lexile Pre/Mid-Year/Post Reading Assessments; and 3) Establish implementation data points through lesson plans, Downey Three-Minute Walk-Throughs, and examination of student work that will demonstrate a contribution of the supplemental literacy instruction to improved student learning.

The Jefferson-Scranton project was conducted at the Jefferson-Scranton High School. This project involved high school students learning through the school's unique Family and consumer sciences curriculum. Beyond the typical classroom book-based learning format, these students were involved in real-world experiential learning experiences

including running a fully functional restaurant (named *The Ram*) and using CADD software to create interior designs for homes in the community. This project involved purchasing 20 laptop computers to make the program more self-sufficient and facilitate a greater level of technology integration.

This project involved 25 students in running *The Ram* restaurant and 12 students who were working with the interior design. The five goals of the project were to: 1) Increase student engagement; 2) Decrease disciplinary problems; 3) increase use of computers for writing, analysis, research and technology projects; 4) Move towards a student-centered classroom; and 5) Increase student achievement.

Outcomes on Specific Indicators

Impact on Student Engagement

The Ames project students were engaged in the *Achieve3000* project. During the 2007-2008 school year, 60% of the sixth grade students met the 40-activity goal. This is a benchmark identified by *Achieve3000*. It translates to one activity per week in a 10-month period. During the 2008-2009 school year, 55% of the students met or exceeded the 40 activities goal. (It should be noted that this number was not adjusted to exclude the students who were not in the district for the full period of implementation.)

The Jefferson-Scranton project students were engaged in the classroom activities. While no statistical analysis was provided, the project coordinator reported that the time on task was assessed through periodic walk-throughs. These observations indicated that the students were highly-engaged in using their laptops and doing lab work throughout the class periods.

The coordinator reported that it was difficult to show how the project affected students' attendance over the two year. Her review of the attendance figures indicated that those students who had a high rate of absences, still tried to attend these classes everyday. Doctor appointments were not scheduled against this time period.

The grant proposal indicated that an engagement assessment would be given to students and teachers three times throughout the project but no data was provided.

Impact on Student Achievement

The Ames Community School District has an annual average of 19% of their sixth grade students identified as "not proficient" in reading as identified on the *ITBS*. They implemented this research project in an attempt to increase the number of sixth grade

proficient readers. Besides the *ITBS*, the Ames project has used the *On-line Level Set/Lexile Assessment Tool* to assess the students' reading proficiency.

The difference in *ITBS* scores between sixth graders during the past two years was negligible. This analysis compares the scores of two different groups of students. For the 2007-2008 school year, 79% of the sixth grade students were proficient as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. During the 2008-2009 school year, 80% of sixth grade students were identified as proficient.

Comparing the *ITBS* scores of the same group of students over a 2-year period yielded different results. This group of students was ranked using the *ITBS* in the fifth grade during the 2007-2008 school year. They were tested again using the *ITBS* again in the sixth grade. As a whole, the sixth graders showed a significant decline from their fifth grade levels of reading proficiency on this measure. Their scores dropped from an average percentile rank of 71.82 to an average of 68.35 for students for whom data was available from both years (a drop of 3.47). Of the 240 students in that group, 131 (55%) saw declines in their *ITBS* reading scores, 80 of which were double-digit declines. Clearly there are issues in the sixth grade reading program that confound any effects of the *Achieve3000* program, which was used in a supplemental role. It would appear that *Achieve3000* program might have a small positive correlation with *ITBS* reading scores. The students who used the program 40 or more times (a key measure in terms of effectiveness, according to data provided by the *Achieve3000* company) saw their scores decline less than the group that used the program fewer than 40 times (-2.55 percentiles versus -5.08 percentiles.)

In terms of using the On-Line Level Set/Lexile Assessment to measure reading, the baseline data showed an increase in the Lexile Reading Levels. The average increase for these sixth grade students was 74 Lexile points, which exceeded the expected average Lexile Gains by 46 points. The data indicate a positive relationship between increased student Lexile gains and the number of activities completed. Per *Achieve3000*, the recommended number of activities implemented over the course of a school year is 40 activities, which would equal one activity per week, per month over a ten-month period. The sixth grade students averaged 51 activities and exceeded the expected Lexile gains by 46 points. Further manipulation of the data into quartiles revealed a similar correlation. The top quartile in terms of *Achieve3000* lessons completed saw their scores decline an average of only 1.82 points from fifth to sixth grade, compared to the average decline of 3.47. Those in the bottom quartile of use saw their scores decline by an average of 4.92 points.

The Jefferson-Scranton project used the ITED scores to evaluate student achievement. The baseline tests were given in May 2008 and then retested in May 2009. ITED results were provided with the final report but no analysis was given. Some improvement in scores was apparent but no conclusions could be drawn.

Successful District-to-Vender Relationships

The Ames project worked closely with the *Access3000* vendors. The vendors provided faculty training and have been in close contact with the school's administration throughout the school year. The support team even worked with the school to evaluate the students' reading scores.

The Jefferson-Scranton project has not experienced any changes in relations with vendors or software providers.

Integration of Technology and Teacher Training

The Ames project integrated teacher training concerning effective implementation of the *Access3000* software. Eighteen teachers attended these workshops and 10 out of 11 teacher responses rated the training as very/moderately effective. (It should be noted that there are a total of 18 teachers and they did not all respond to this survey.)

In the Jefferson-Scranton project, Mrs. Carhill has been a leader in the district in showing how the Iowa Core Curriculum and 21st Century skills can be infused into the curriculum. Mrs. Carhill worked with Mrs. Van Sickle, the other half of the FCS department, in developing the Iowa Core Curriculum in the summer of 2008.

Mrs. Carhill's classes have been a showcase for other districts in Iowa. Educators from two schools have come to Jefferson-Scranton to review her courses for implementation in their districts. The Iowa Teacher of the Year from Norwalk, a FCS instructor himself, visited to review the project's coursework.

Other Outcomes for Schools

Use of Technology for Writing, Analysis, Research and Communication

In the Ames project, there was an increase in students' *Achieve3000* program use outside of school hours. While there was a slight decrease in the number of students who met the 40-activity goal (60% to 55%) over the two-year research period, there was an increase in the number of students who logged onto the *Achieve3000* program outside of school hours. Through May 2008, 81% of the students used the system during non-school hours compared to the 87% of the May 2009 sixth graders.

The Jefferson-Scranton project involved the students in communicating through multiple media. The restaurant students used the technology to research recipes and cooking videos as well as find suggestions for restaurant management procedures. They created daily menus and marketing materials. The students also used their computers to communicate with each other as well as their teacher. The interior design course students used their computers to research and create innovative design ideas and then share them with other students, their teacher and even community members.

Disciplinary Issues

The Ames project data indicated a decrease in all aspects of disciplinary referrals with sixth grade students from the baseline year of 2006-2007 through 2008-2009. During the baseline year, out of 365 students there were 428 disciplinary actions involving 93 unique students. This means that the 25% of the sixth grade students were disciplined. There were 365 students again in the 2008-2009 school year and a total of 169 disciplinary actions. These disciplinary actions were brought against 58 unique students meaning that 16% of the students were disciplined.

The Jefferson-Scranton project data does not provide a 2007-2008 baseline for the student detentions and suspensions, but of the 48 students reported during the 2008-2009 school year, 15% of them experienced detention and 19% were suspended.

Movement towards Student-Centered Classrooms

The Ames project measured student-centered classrooms by the amount of faculty using the student-centered five-step *Achieve3000* lesson plans and the number of hours students spent logged into the program completing activities and written assignments.

Data collected through weekly “walk-throughs” by the building principal indicated that 100% of the sixth grade teachers were incorporating the *Achieve3000* lesson plans into their supplemental reading time. This usage was encouraged through the *Achieve3000* professional training .

The number of student hours logged into the *Achieve3000* program increased dramatically over the 2-year research project. During the initial year, 17 sixth grade teachers used the program. Their students logged on 855 times for a total of 306 program hours. They assigned 261 activities with 243 written assignments. During the 2008-2009 school year, 18 sixth grade teachers used the program with 17,331 logins totaling 8,039 program hours. They assigned 17,892 activities with 5,313 written assignments.

The Jefferson-Scranton project was student centered at its onset. The students learned how to cook food, manage a kitchen and run a restaurant by doing it. While Mrs. Carhill provided guidance in providing a supportive environment, the learning occurred as the students completed the tasks and reflected upon them. The computers empowered the students by providing them with readily available resources to accomplish their assigned tasks. The interior design course was another course where students' success was based upon the products they design using their research and the CADD software. This project was not designed to develop a student-centered learning environment but rather enhance the one that already existed. The grant proposed to measure student-centeredness through reviewing students' logs but no data was presented.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in the Ames Achieve3000 project was not quantifiably measured. Informational letters were sent to the parents of each student. They explained the program and provided instructions for logging into the system from home. The web-based solution offered parents the opportunity to create their own accounts so that they could contact the teachers regularly through the secure email system. There was no available data for the number of parent logins during the school year. Anecdotal data from the building principal indicated that there was a degree of parental interest in the program.

The Jefferson-Scranton project did not report on parent involvement.

Involvement of Community and Business Partners

The Ames project didn't report on involvement with community or business partners.

The Jefferson-Scranton project has provided a meeting venue for community members. Various business leaders and people from the community have come to the *RAM Restaurant* for meetings. During these meetings, the members could experience the students' work because all of the food was prepared and served by the students.

A local interior designer supported the work of the Interior Design (CADD) class by asking students to create an interior design for an actual home and then decorated that home based upon the students' design.

Lessons Learned

The Ames project collected and reported an extensive amount of data from their research:

- *Achieve3000* will remain a part of the sixth grade in the 2009-2010 school year. Measures will be taken to increase consistency in implementation.
- While *Achieve3000* showed a small positive effect on reading as measured by the *ITBS*, the effect was a reduction in the amount students' scores dropped between their fifth and sixth grade school years. This indicates that there are other instructional aspects of their sixth grade reading program that must be studied in order to better understand why their students are consistently showing a dip in scores at that grade level.
- Students who worked on the *Achieve3000* materials outside of school hours improved more than those who did not. The school administration plans to continue encourage student use outside of the normal school hours/days, and to encourage parents to log in to the program to see the learning activities involved.
- School administrators want to involve parents more in the process. They will attempt to solicit feedback from parents in a systematic fashion and plan to check with the company to see what type of reports are available in terms of parent use/logins.
- Staff development will be continued with the users of *Achieve3000*. The focus will be to move beyond using only the basic five-step implementation process so that teachers and students can benefit from additional aspects and strengths of the program.
- A video explaining the project was developed and is available for viewing on the ILTC website.

The Jefferson-Scranton project shared the following items:

- The grant has given the teacher and students the opportunity to grow independently and work at an individualized pace where the students can be successful.
- The Family and Consumer Science curriculum will be expanded throughout the up-coming years. The units will be aligned with the Iowa Core Curriculum and the 21st Century Skills.
- A video explaining the project was developed and is available for viewing on the ILTC website.

Appendix

Iowa Learning Technology Grant

Final Report (August 7, 2009)

Ames Community School District

As a recipient of the Iowa Learning Technology grant, the Ames Community School District implemented the supplemental reading program, Achieve3000. This computer assisted instructional program provides additional literacy opportunities that support the existing expectations and curriculum, and the purchase of sixty additional laptops (funded by the grant) gave us sufficient hardware to implement this computer assisted instructional program. The goals of this supplemental reading program are to:

1. Increase reading proficiency scores for all 6th grade students as measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) with attention given to those students who have not met grade level expectations in reading and as a are below the 41st percentile.
2. Establish baseline data and show growth in reading comprehension abilities for all 6th grade students as measured by the Achieve3000 Level Set/Lexile Pre/Mid-Year/Post Reading Assessments.
3. Establish implementation data points through lesson plans, Downey Three Minute Walk-Throughs, and examination of student work that will demonstrate a contribution of the supplemental literacy instruction to improved student learning.

Formative data are collected on a regular basis to monitor the program goals and other indicators. Below are the program goals, other indicators, the formative measures and the current status of implementation.

1. Increased student engagement: No baseline data available
 - a. Method: Achieve3000 Usage Report
 - b. Report generated through TeenBiz that will record student usage

- i. Through May 2008, 60% of 6th grade students met the 40-activity goal, which is a key benchmark for academic improvement per Achieve3000; this translates to one activity per week in a ten-month period. However, despite the fact that implementation did not begin until February 2008, virtually all students in the class were exposed to the program at the recommended pace of one activity a week during the implementation period. (An exact percentage would require a student-by-student analysis to pull out those who were only in the district for a short period of time during implementation.)
 - ii. For the 2008-2009 school year, 55% of 6th grade students met or exceeded the 40 activities goal, which is a key benchmark for academic improvement. This would equal one activity per week in a ten-month period.
 - iii. 2007-2008 - 348 students in 6th grade completed 15,050 multiple-choice activities and 4,567 written activities for the school year.
 - iv. 2008-2009 - 360 students in 6th grade completed 17,892 multiple-choice activities and 5,313 written activities for the school year.
2. Decreased disciplinary problems: baseline data – 6th grade discipline data from the 2006-2007 school year
- a. Method: Discipline Referral Data
 - b. Data collected and recorded at the building level indicate a significant decrease in all aspects of discipline from the baseline year of 2006-2007 through the 2008-2009 school year.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Total Students</u>	<u>Total Disciplinary Actions</u>	<u>Unique Students Disciplined</u>	<u>Percentage of Class Disciplined</u>
2006-2007	365	428	93	25
2007-2008	377	219	77	20
2008-2009	365	169	58	16

3. Increased use of computers for writing, analysis, and research: no initial baseline data available at the time of the grant application
 - a. Method: Achieve3000 Usage Report
 - b. Report generated through TeenBiz that will record student usage
 - i. BASELINE: Through May 2008, 60% of 6th grade students met the 40-activity goal (a key benchmark for academic improvement per Achieve3000), which is one activity per week in a ten-month period.
 - ii. For the 2008-2009 school year, 55% of 6th grade students met or exceeded the 40 activities goal, which would equal one activity per week in a ten-month period. Sixth grade students spent an average of 22 hours using Achieve3000 during the 2008-09 school year, the vast majority of which involved reading comprehension and writing of activities.
 - iii. BASELINE: Through May 2008, 282 out of 348 6th grade students (81%) used the program after-school hours, and 236 (68%) of 6th grade students used the program after-school on weekends or holidays.
 - iv. Through May 2009, 313 out of 360 students (87%) have logged in at least once after school with 3,560 multiple-choice activities completed outside of the school day.

- v. BASELINE: During the abbreviated implementation during the 2007-2008 school year, the 348 6th grade students completed 3,078 log-ins with 2,278 multiple-choice activities completed outside of the school day.
 - vi. Through May 2009, 360 students have logged in 3,551 times outside of school hours.
4. Movement toward student-centered classrooms: no baseline data available
- a. Method: Achieve3000 Usage Report, Lesson Plans, and Downey Three Minute Walk-Throughs
 - i. BASELINE: Through May 2008, 282 out of 348 6th grade students (81%) used the program during after-school hours, and 236 (68%) of 6th grade students used the program after-school on weekends or holidays.
 - ii. Through May 2009, 313 out of 360 students (87%) logged in at least once after school with 3,560 multiple-choice activities completed outside of the school day.
 - iii. BASELINE: Per the professional developers from Achieve3000, the staff has been focused on a five-step lesson plan for implementation. The five steps include the following: students will read and respond to the TeenBiz e-mail, read the article of the day, do the activity questions, answer the thought questions and vote in the poll. The staff is using model lesson plans provided from Achieve3000.
 - iv. Through May 2009, based on data gathered through weekly walk-throughs by the building principal, they are not creating their own lessons, but 100% of the 6th grade teachers are incorporating the Achieve3000 lesson plans into their supplemental reading time. Based on a 6th grade staff survey conducted in January 2009 (number of responses =

11), a majority (6) rated their Achieve3000 training as “Very effective,” four rated it as “Moderately effective,” and only one rated it as “Minimally effective.”

- v. BASELINE: 2007-2008 Teacher Usage – 17 6th grade teachers used the program last year, logging in 855 times totaling 306 program hours. They assigned 261 activities with 243 written assignments.
- vi. 2008-2009 Teacher Usage - 18 6th grade teachers utilized the program with 17,331 logins totaling 8,039 program hours. They have assigned 17,892 activities with 5,313 written assignments.
- vii. The Achieve3000 site contains thousands of articles gathered from the news media on hundreds of topics. Articles can be assigned (or suggested) by the teacher and emailed to the class via the internal email program, but students can also search the database for articles of interest. In the January 2009 staff survey mentioned above, six of the 11 responders indicated that both the students and the teacher play a major role in selecting articles, four indicate the students select most of the articles, and only one indicated that the teacher selects most of the articles.

5. Increased parental involvement: no baseline data available

- a. Method: Secure E-Mail Account
- b. This Web-based solution offers parents their own accounts so they can contact teachers regularly through the secure email system.
 - i. Parent letters including information about Achieve3000 and how it can be used at home were shared at Fall 2008 Parent/Teacher Conferences. Parents were also provided log in information, so this program could be accessed outside of the school day and/or during school breaks.

- ii. The district has no parent login data at this point. To our knowledge, there is not a pre-set report that will provide that information, but we will check with the company to see if that report exists or could be created. Anecdotal data from the building principal indicates that there is a degree of parental interest in the program.
6. Increased student achievement: BASELINE: Over the past 4 years, an average of 19% of 6th grade students have not been proficient as measured by ITBS, and baseline data will be established for all current 6th grade students prior to implementation of TeenBiz using the on-line Level Set/Lexile Assessment Tool.
- a. Methods: ITBS, On-line Level Set/Lexile Assessment Tool, Diagnostic Lexile Assessment Data embedded in non-fiction reading materials, Student Progress generated reports
 - i. Iowa Test of Basic Skills – For the 2007-2008 school year, 79% of 6th grade students were proficient as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. For the 2008-2009 school year, 80% of 6th grade students were proficient as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.
 - ii. 2007-2008 On-Line Level Set/Lexile Assessment – as shown in the table below, 139 students with less than 40 activities for the 2007-2008 school year averaged a grade level score of 5.2 and a 797 Lexile score on the pre-test, and the post-test average was a grade level of 6.2 with an 896 Lexile score. This group completed 3,485 multiple-choice activities. 209 students tested completed 40+ activities. Their pre-test average was a grade level of 6.1 and an 866 Lexile score with a grade level of 7.1, and they averaged a 967 Lexile score on the post-test. This group completed 11,249 multiple-choice activities.

- iii. 2008-2009 On-Line Level Set/Lexile Assessment – From August 20, 2008 – May 19, 2009, all participating students completed the LevelSet pre-test and post-test, with 291 students having valid test scores. The overall average Lexile gain for these 6th grade students was 74 Lexile Points, more than one and a half times the average expected Lexile gain of 46 points.
- iv. In terms of using the Student Progress generated reports, the 11 6th grade teachers who responded to the January survey indicated that they spent approximately an hour a week analyzing Achieve3000 reports on student data as individual teachers (with a range of 30 minutes to two hours). In addition, these teachers indicated in the survey that they spent approximately 45 minutes a week discussing Achieve3000 data in their team meetings (with a range of 0 minutes to two hours).

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Group of students</u>	<u>Pre-test Grade Level</u>	<u>Post-test Grade Level</u>	<u>Pre-test Lexile Score</u>	<u>Post-test Lexile Score</u>
2007-2008	Fewer than 40 activities (139)	5.2	6.2	797	896
2007-2008	40 activities or more (209)	6.1	7.1	866	967
2008-2009	Entire grade	5.2	6.2	820	894

7. Findings: The goals of this supplemental reading program are to:
1. Increase reading proficiency scores for all 6th grade students as measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) with attention given to those students who have not met grade level expectations in reading and as a result are below the 41st percentile.
 2. Establish baseline data and show growth in reading comprehension abilities for all 6th grade students as measured by the Achieve3000 Level Set/Lexile Pre/Mid-Year/Post Reading Assessments.
 3. Establish implementation data points through lesson plans, Downey Three Minute Walk-Throughs and examination of student work that will demonstrate a contribution of the supplemental literacy instruction to improved student learning.

Data for 6th grade from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills: Reading Comprehension would indicate no difference in 6th grade student achievement for 2007-2008 (79% proficient) and 2008-2009 (80% proficient). The baseline data collected for the LevelSet Lexile Pre/Post Reading Assessment shows an increase in the Lexile Reading Levels. The average increase for 6th grade students is 74 Lexile points, which exceeds the expected average Lexile Gains by 46 points. The data indicate a positive relationship between increased student Lexile gains and the number of activities completed. Per Achieve 3000, the recommended number of activities implemented over the course of a school year is 40 activities, which would equal one activity per week, per month over a ten-month period. The 6th grade students averaged 51 activities and exceeded the expected Lexile gains by 46 points.

In terms of some of the other goals that were included in the grant application, there were some positive results. For example, discipline referrals were down significantly from the baseline year of 2006-2007 (428 disciplinary referrals for 365 students) to 2008-2009 (169 discipline referrals for a different set of 365

students). While Achieve3000 provides many opportunities to engage students both during and outside the regular school day (articles that can be selected by the students, challenging thought/writing activities, etc.), the drop in disciplinary referrals over the past three years can more likely be attributed to:

- 1) differences among the classes and

- 2) a new preventive approach to discipline implemented by the middle school during the past two years.

While the gains in Lexile levels (as reported by Achieve3000) are encouraging, the district is focused on seeing gains in reading scores as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. As a whole, the sixth grade showed a significant decline from fifth grade on this measure, going from an average percentile rank of 71.82 to an average of 68.35 for students for whom we have data from both years (a drop of 3.47). Of the 240 students in that group, 131 (55%) saw declines in their ITBS reading scores, 80 of which were double-digit declines. Clearly there are issues in our sixth grade reading program that confound any effects of the Achieve3000 program, which was used in a supplemental role.

That said, it would appear that Achieve3000 may have a small positive correlation with ITBS reading scores. As shown in the table below, the students who used the program 40 or more times (a key measure in terms of effectiveness, according to data provided by the Achieve3000 company) saw their scores decline less than the group that used the program fewer than 40 times.

	5 th grade average percentile reading score on ITBS (2007-08)	6 th grade average percentile reading score on ITBS (2008-09)	Change in scores from 5 th to 6 th grade
Used Achieve3000 for 40 activities or more	75.00	72.45	-2.55
Used Achieve3000 for fewer than 40 activities	66.23	61.15	-5.08
Overall 6 th grade (2008-09)	71.82	68.35	-3.47

Further manipulation of the data into quartiles reveals a similar correlation. The top quartile in terms of Achieve3000 lessons completed saw their scores decline an average of only 1.82 points from fifth to sixth grade, compared to the average decline of 3.47. Those in the bottom quartile of use saw their scores decline by an average of 4.92 points.

Use of Achieve3000	Average number of uses in 2008-09	5 th grade average percentile reading score on ITBS	6 th grade average percentile reading score on ITBS	Change in scores from 5 th to 6 th grade
Top quartile	83.48	76.54	74.72	-1.82
2nd quartile	54.77	73.23	68.83	-4.40
3rd quartile	40.52	72.02	69.23	-2.78
4th quartile	24.71	65.31	60.39	-4.92

In sum, it appears that the use of Achieve3000 may have a small positive effect on reading as measured by ITBS. However, Achieve is used in a supplemental manner in our middle school, and there are other instructional aspects of our reading program at the sixth grade level that must be studied in order to better understand why our students are consistently showing a dip in scores at that grade level.

8. Recommendations for Future Actions: (Will complete once I have the rest of the data.)
 - i. We plan to continue the use of Achieve3000 at the sixth grade level for the 2009-2010 school year. We hope to increase the level of consistency in terms of implementation.
 - ii. We plan to continue to provide staff development for the users of Achieve3000, with a focus on moving beyond using only the basic five-step implementation process listed above, so that teachers and students can benefit from additional aspects and strengths of the program.
 - iii. We plan to continue to encourage student use outside of the normal school hours/days, and to encourage parents to log in to the program to see the learning activities involved. We will attempt to solicit feedback from parents in a systematic fashion, and will also check with the company to see what type of reports are available in terms of parent use/logins.
 - iv. We plan to analyze the Achieve3000 data in depth again next year, in the context of evaluating our reading program to ensure that it is as effective as possible for all of our students.

Jefferson- Scranton's ILTC Evaluation Report

2008-09 School Year

Grant recipient's midyear progress report and end of year evaluation report for your ILTC project should include the following:

1. A short Executive Summary, addressing the most important points of your full report

As we complete the first year of our grant, we feel that this project has made the biggest impact on our students and the use of instructional time. Throughout the year, the administration has visited the classroom and noted students working on projects at different levels. Some students would be just beginning the research, while others were just completing their project. The laptops have allowed students and the instructor to work independently throughout the year.

2. A description of the project:

As stated in the midyear review and upon reviewing the overall grant proposal, the components addressed in the project were evident in the midyear report and the end-of-the-year report. Presently, students come into the classroom, sit with their assigned laptops and work independently or they follow teacher instruction. Notes, written assignments, and demonstrations on the computer allow for the students to either review the information or learn it again. Students worked at their own pace to complete the written assignments and then proceeded into lab projects.

There are five goals that we established in our grant application for the project review.

- **The first goal was to increase student engagement. The best way to show this is through the video recording which will be sent to you this week with a hard copy of this report. Students took the technology assessment in the fall and spring. The enclosed chart addresses this testing. Although we saw a slight increase in proficiency, we struggled to have all the same students pretested and post tested. As the curriculum director for the district, I have also reviewed time on task in the classroom. At any time of the day, students are engaged using their laptops or doing lab work. In regards to attendance, although it was difficult to show how FCS classes**

affected the student's attendance over two years, as the attendance monitor for the high school, I found that students who did have a high rate of absences, still made sure that they were in these classes everyday. Doctor appointments were not scheduled against this time period.

- The second goal was to decrease disciplinary problems. The enclosed data will show the decrease in referrals per grade level.
- The third goal was to increase use of computers for writing, analysis, research, and technology projects. I am enclosing student work for review. These classes contain all levels of students and for Mrs. Carhill to keep everyone on task and moving towards a goal is amazing in itself.
- The fourth goal was to move towards a student-centered classroom. This is most evident in the RAM Restaurant classroom. Mrs. Carhill has three courses working within the one classroom. Her upper level RAM restaurant students are responsible for addressing all areas of the restaurant business just as a manager would do for a regular business. The next level students are the students who oversee the making of the food and the lower level student or students, who are in their first year, made the food and clean the areas of prep. All of these students need access to recipes and "how to" labs that can be found on the internet. Having the freedom to move within the classroom allows all students to take a peculiar part of the meal, research and develop the final product.
- The fifth goal is to increase student achievement. While this is every school district's goal, I believe that the more students are engaged in their own learning, the higher their scores will be. The enclosed data chart addresses this goal. Please note the students who were proficient are in orange and red numbers. If they should growth the box is yellow. While we did not improve as much as the district had hoped, we do believe the achievement within the classroom did increase.

The number of teachers is one, but the number of students involved in the *Ram Restaurant* is 25 and the number of students in the interior design course is 12. This year an interior design student

worked in cooperation with the construction course in developing and implementing the layout of the furniture for the home that was built in Jefferson.

The Jefferson-Scranton High School Administration is here to support Mrs. Carhill in this project and to assist her with student discipline. Along with Mrs. Carhill, the superintendent, other building principals and the curriculum director will all take part in the advisory team meetings that are being scheduled for the summer and fall of 2009.

Mrs. Carhill's classes have also been a showcase for districts in Iowa. We have had two schools come to Jefferson-Scranton to review her courses for implementation in their districts. We have also had the Iowa Teacher of the Year from Norwalk, a FCS instructor himself, review our course work. As a district we are inviting the Career and Technology Consultant from the Iowa Department of Education to return to our district this fall to actually see how this grant has had an impact on our students and instructional time.

Presently Mrs. Carhill is working with Iowa Central Community College and Iowa Lakes Community College in connection with their foods and culinary courses. She is working very hard to match our courses with their programs for our students to continue their education past high school. Our courses currently align with Iowa Central and Iowa Lakes Community Colleges.

We have not had any changes with vendors or software.

As for professional development, Mrs. Carhill has been a leader in our district in showing how the Iowa Core Curriculum and 21st Century skills can be infused into the curriculum. Mrs. Carhill worked with Mrs. Van Sickle, the other half of the FCS department, in developing this format in the summer of 2008.

Currently, we do not have any barriers or problems.

For each of the above, any available documentation supporting the description should be identified and/or provided in an appendix.

3. Description and documentation for identified outputs and outcomes. The nature of the evidence/documentation should be clear. Appropriate analyses or summaries of the documenting evidence should be identified

and/or made available. The report should discuss the project's positive and negative effects on

- student engagement

Student engagement within the classroom has increased. An individual can see this is by walking and noting the engagement of students into the department classroom any day of the week along with observing students working on their assignments or making up work. There are a few students who were working at a faster pace. They were encouraged to do the enrichment activities. I feel we can also measure student engagement by the number of referrals. Enclosed data chart shows the number of referrals.

- disciplinary problems

Number of disciplinary problems is shown on the enclosed data chart. If the disciplinary action went down the box is highlighted in blue.

- use of computers and software for writing, analysis, and research

The district has enclosed a student work CD to show how the instructor has incorporated the computer work and use of the software. Samples of student work are also included.

- movement toward student-centered classrooms

The best way to show how the class has moved towards being student centered is by experiencing the class. With so many students who are at different levels of learning, the only way this class can be successful is by being student centered. The same can be said for the other classes that are taught by Mrs. Carhill. Whether she is working with the Fabric Fun class or Interior Design students, the student is always responsible for their homework and project completion.

- parental involvement

This is an area we will continue to improve upon for the 2009-2010 school year. We believe the advisory committee that will meet in the summer of 2009 will give us the opportunity to address this need.

- improved vendor and other business relationships

We have had several school districts, business leaders and people from the community come to the RAM Restaurant for meetings. All of the food that is served has been prepared by this class and served by the students.

- increased student achievement

I truly believe that the students in the RAM Restaurant program and Interior Design program are more engaged and given more freedom for their learning. In turn, they are being more successful. The enclosed data chart addresses student achievement. Please remember if they are proficient, the box is orange and if they increased the box is yellow. In the yellow boxes if the number is red they were also proficient.

- other outcomes important to the project

The enclosed data chart addresses the following data: students' gpa, attendance, Iowa Testing Education Development (ITED) scores and detentions/ suspensions and other data that will help show the success of the grant. Please note that reviewing the freshman data, there is no comparison done for gpa and discipline, since this data is not available. For the senior data, this class level is not required to take ITED tests.

4. After completion of the discussion of outcomes, including any not mentioned above that are important for this project, the report should conclude with a discussion of the following

- Conclusions about overall value of the project

When speaking with Mrs. Carhill about the Ram F.A.C.T. project, she is just overwhelmed by how things are going this year. Just the idea of not having to leave the classroom for technology instruction is great. She has told me on several occasions, that when students are gone, they know where to find the instruction that they missed and how much time they have to make it up.

- Lessons learned about what to do and not do

In my experience, this grant has given the teacher and students the opportunity to grow independently and work at a pace where each individual student can be successful.

- Recommendations to others about how to be successful with similar projects

Find the money to help build the classroom technology environment to move students ahead. Students learn faster by doing than by just sitting.

- Suggestions for improving the local project or the larger state-level Iowa Learning Technologies program

I believe that marking state money to increase technology in the classroom is probably the right step forward. Technology is changing so fast that our students are up to date more than the school districts. As school districts in Iowa we need to embrace technology rather than fighting and trying to control it in the school systems.

- Plans for the coming year with regard to sustaining, expanding or curtailing the project and the rationale for those actions

We will be expanding the information the students receive. The units will be matched with the Iowa Core curriculum and the 21st Century skills. We will also update any technology software that is needed and continue to expand the student-centered concept in the classroom. As a district we are also implementing trimesters for the first time. This has proven to be more challenging scheduling students than we previously thought. We are excited to see how the change will impact our students and students from East Greene and Paton-Churdan.