

INDEPENDENT IMPACT STUDY

63% Decrease in Special Education Referrals in Bowling Green (KY) Schools Using Voyager Passport™

Implementation Objectives

Bowling Green City Schools needed reading intervention program proven to work with diverse student populations and improve student achievement and performance on Kentucky's state assessment, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). As part of its *21st Century* grant, the district chose to implement Voyager Passport™ because of its strong research-base.

Bowling Green began implementing Voyager Passport in grades K-3 during the 2004-2005 school year. Impressed with the immediate increase in student achievement, the district opted to expand the program into additional grade levels as well as special populations. During the 2005-2006 school year, Voyager Passport was implemented in grades K-6 with regular education and special education students.

To improve student achievement and decrease the number of special education referrals, the partnership between Voyager and the district emphasized:

- A strategy to ensure a successful implementation of the reading intervention programs with all students, including special education students
- Built-in progress monitoring and assessment
- Comprehensive launch training with all teachers
- Integrated, ongoing professional development
- Ongoing implementation support, including site visits, website, email, and phone support

Methodology

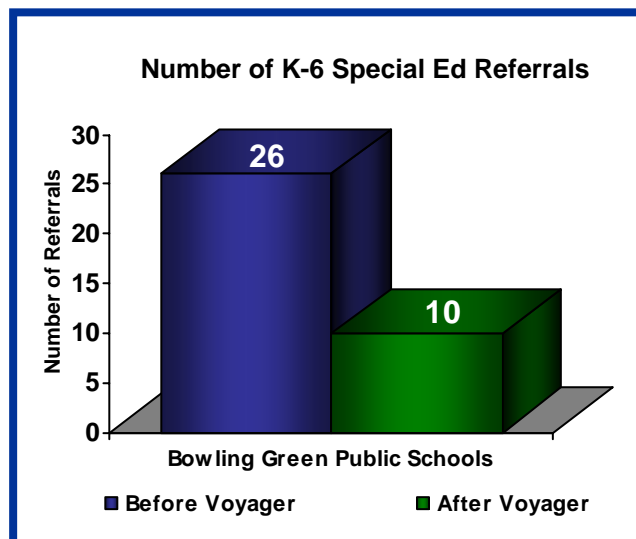
The number of students referred for special education after implementing Voyager Passport was compared with the number of students referred before Voyager.

Findings

More than 500 K-6 students were assessed by the school district to determine if they were at risk in reading. Of these students, 311 were selected to receive Voyager Passport.

Historically, eight percent, or 26, of these students would have been referred to special education. After Voyager Passport, only three-percent, or 10 students, were referred. This is a 63-percent decrease in the number of students referred for special education services.

Bowling Green continues to use Voyager Passport as well as Vmath with both regular ed and special ed K-6 students.



PROFILE

School Year: 2004-2005;
2005-2006

Location: Bowling Green, KY

District: Bowling Green City
Schools

Grade Level: K-6

Voyager Program:
Voyager Passport™

Assessment Tool: Special
Education Referral Rates

Demographic Data:

37% Caucasian

33% African American

17% Hispanic

4% Asian

9% Other

91% of students eligible for free or
reduced lunch

KEY FINDINGS

After 26-weeks in Voyager
Passport:

- The number of K-6 students referred to special education decreased from 26 students to 10.
- This is a 63-percent decrease in the number of students referred for special education services.

**“We are improving literacy because
of Voyager.”**

– Vicki Writsel, Associate Superintendent, Bowling Green City Schools

