



## ELEMENTARY SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ACHIEVE DISTRICT DRA CRITERIA FOR GRADE LEVEL READING!

### Case Study

#### Quick Facts:

Union Hill Elementary School

49 schools

Round Rock ISD

Student population: 45,000

Suburban district outside Austin TX

Diverse ethnic base

#### BACKGROUND

Cindi Mireles, a resource/inclusion teacher at Union Hill Elementary, began using Failure Free Reading in October 2010 with the majority of her 3rd grade pullout students. She added a second group of 3rd grade students in January and a third group of 3rd graders in March. Most of the students have a learning disability classification in reading and/or in writing, and most had received two full years of prior Tier II reading intervention and had failed to make significant progress.

#### YEAR 1 IMPLEMENTATION

Most of the students made remarkable progress with Failure Free. Thirteen students from the initial group began reading two years behind grade level, and 6 students one year behind. By the end of the school year, none of the students were reading two years behind, and only 2 students were one year behind. Some of the students took TAKS M and the rest took TAKS A. All of them passed their TAKS tests and 4 of them were commended in Reading. Remarkably, more than one half of the students scored higher than 38 on the Developmental Reading Assessment® (DRA) which met Round Rock ISD's criteria for grade level reading!

#### YEAR 2 IMPLEMENTATION

This year Mireles' students are now in 4th grade and none of them regressed in their DRA scores. "I have 15 students this year, some are new and some are continuing Failure Free from last year. Their DRA scores at the beginning of the year are from 20 to 40", according to Mireles.

Bian Makawi, a 3rd grade Special Education teacher, started using Failure Free in the fall of 2011, with a total of twelve 3rd graders who have learning disabilities. She pulls four small groups for 30-40 minutes each day. Most of the students are reading at the 1st grade RL. According to Makawi, the students "really like it and experiencing a lot of success with it".

Molly Messana, a 5th grade special Education Teacher, also began using Failure Free with three small pullout groups of LD and OHI students in the fall. Her students started out reading from the 1st to the 3rd grade RL. "We've seen such great success with fluency", according to Messana. "One student quickly improved from 50 to 70 WPM and no longer sounds like a robot reader. He likes doing the program. It makes them all feel like they know what they're doing".

*"At first they say we're just repeating, but at the end, they say 'oh my gosh this is so cool.'*

*They really like the book at the end. They like the progression from where they started to where they ended up". - Molly Messana*

*“One student was not able to read simple three-four letter words before starting on Failure Free. The other day, his mother said he still can’t read. But then he read a Red level book to her!”.*  
*-Bian Makawi*

*“One of the very first things I noticed was how quickly my students’ self-esteem was elevated. They were actively participating in our small group lessons and discussions and were confident enough to begin working independently. Within the first two months, their general education teachers and I began to see their learning transfer into their homeroom classrooms. Their homeroom teachers noticed that the students were needing less and less assistance in reading across a variety of subjects and that they were now participating and following along during reading time”.* -Cindi Mireles

**Below are the DRA scores for Cindi Mireles’ LD students and how they progressed through the year.**

<b>October 2010 Group</b>		
Beginning of year DRA score	Mid year DRA score	End of year DRA score
2	6	Moved in January
3	20	30
3	10	20
6	20	34
6	20	28
10	24	38
10	20	30
14	28	38
14	28	38
20	40	40
24	40	40
24	40	40

<b>January 2011 Group</b>		
October DRA score	December DRA score	May DRA score
XX	10	38
XX	20	40
XX	20	38
XX	24	40

<b>March 2011 Group</b>		
October DRA score	December DRA score	May DRA score
XX	14	28
XX	6	24
XX	6	20

Copyright Failure Free Reading 2011. All Rights Reserved.

## **ABOUT FAILURE FREE READING**

Failure Free Reading’s unique language development based (non-phonetic) approach to reading intervention was developed for the very lowest achieving readers by former special education director Dr. Joseph Lockavitch. In numerous

quality research studies, the programs have produced dramatic gains in reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, attitudes, positive behaviors and esteem for low incidence, LD, at-risk, and ELL/ESL populations.