

**Evaluation of TargetTeach® on
Reading Performance in the
Hazel Crest School District 152.5**

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Evaluation Study / Purpose

TargetTeach[®], the educational model developed by Evans Newton Incorporated, is based on the latest educational research on curriculum alignment, formative assessment, and professional development with coaching. Curriculum alignment is the process of organizing three key elements in a classroom so that they are closely matched (aligned). The three elements are: (a) instruction and materials, (b) outcomes or standards, and (c) tests. The most efficient and effective student learning will occur when classroom instruction and materials align with desired outcomes and standards which are further aligned with tests. Formative assessments, as applied in the TargetTeach[®] model, provide periodic measurement of standards covered during a set timeframe within the school year, resulting in data that teachers can use to guide remedial instruction. ENI's formative assessments mirror state high-stakes tests in content, format, and level of performance so that students also become more comfortable in taking state tests. ENI's alignment and assessment tools are supported by proven professional development and coaching to ensure fidelity of implementation to achieve desired student outcomes.

The primary objective of the TargetTeach[®] program is to improve student achievement in specific content areas. The following report examines the effects of TargetTeach[®] on reading achievement in the Hazel Crest School District 152.5 in Hazel Crest, Illinois. During the 2005-06 school year, Hazel Crest began implementing TargetTeach[®] reading materials aimed at improving student achievement on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). Results of TargetTeach[®] are focused on outcomes of the state test for grades three (3) through eight (8). The single research question was whether there would be an increase in reading achievement scores for students in classrooms implementing TargetTeach[®], as compared to their scores before implementation.

Methods

Data Source

The district in this study is the Hazel Crest School District 152.5 in Hazel Crest, Illinois. It is a small district of five schools that serves nearly 1,200 students in grades K-8. The District is comprised of 90% African American students, followed by 7% Hispanic. The remaining students are White (2%) and multi-racial (1%). Approximately 73% of students qualify for the national free and reduced lunch program.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the TargetTeach[®] program, standardized reading test scores for grades three through eight are examined. The District data used in this study consists of reading scores on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). Academic performance is examined as the percent of students scoring in the Below or At/Above Proficient achievement levels. Data were retrieved for academic years: 2004 – 05 (baseline or pre-implementation year), 2005 – 06, 2006 – 07, and 2007 – 08.

The 2004-2005 academic year was the baseline, pre-implementation year for reading. Data from the following years – 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 – represent the post-implementation years. The ISAT was only administered to grades 3, 5, and 8 during the baseline year although data is available for three years of student scores for grades 4, 6, and 7.

Participants

The participants were 3rd through 8th grade students. The number of participants, by year, were as follows:

	Year			
	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
3 rd grade	92	104	129	119
4 th grade	n/a	97	120	134
5 th grade	141	132	116	132
6 th grade	n/a	134	137	115
7 th grade	n/a	115	126	144
8 th grade	150	113	128	135

Measures

Analyses focused on proficiency level performance differences using two subgroups; namely, below standard proficiency and at or above standard proficiency. These subgroups were determined using the state guidelines for cut scores for the four achievement levels: Academic Warning (W), Below Standards (B), Meets (M), or Exceeds (E) standards. From these achievement levels, the performance data was dichotomized into the two subgroups in the following manner; below standard proficiency (W or B) and at or above standard proficiency (M or E).

To examine differences in student performance across school years, variables included the performance levels and year. The study evaluated the difference between these years to see whether implementation of TargetTeach® impacted student performance.

The analysis was primarily conducted using a multi-year, cross sectional design. The analysis compares scores from the different students enrolled in the 3rd through 8th grade during the years of study. Chi-square tests were conducted to investigate overall performance differences using the proficiency variable as outcome variable. Additional longitudinal analysis was conducted to compare performance levels for students who had valid scores for at least three years of the study.

Academic performance is therefore examined in three ways: 1) percent of students within a grade scoring in the At or Above Proficient compared to the Below Proficiency achievement levels by year, 2) A chi-square test investigating performance differences between the pre implementation to the post implementation levels of achievement within grade level, using proficiency level as the outcome variable; and 3) a longitudinal analysis of performance levels for students with valid scores over three years.

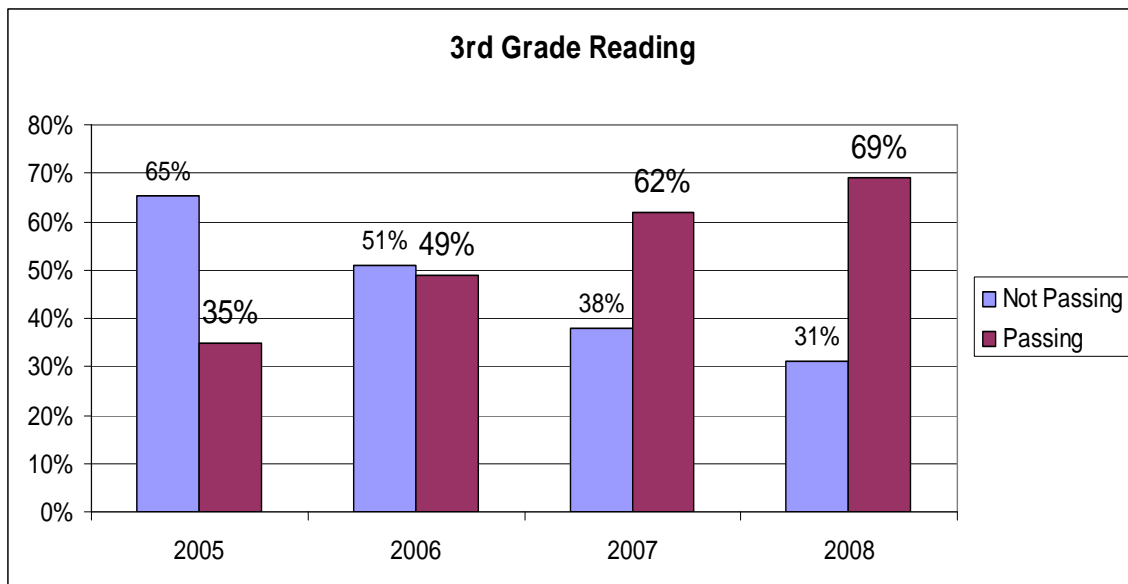
Results

Reading

Student data was arranged to show the percentages of students at/above or below proficiency in reading on the ISAT. For 3rd grade reading, as shown in Figure 1, as compared to the baseline year, there is an apparent increase each year in the number of students at or above proficiency on the reading test. As illustrated below, student achievement increased each year

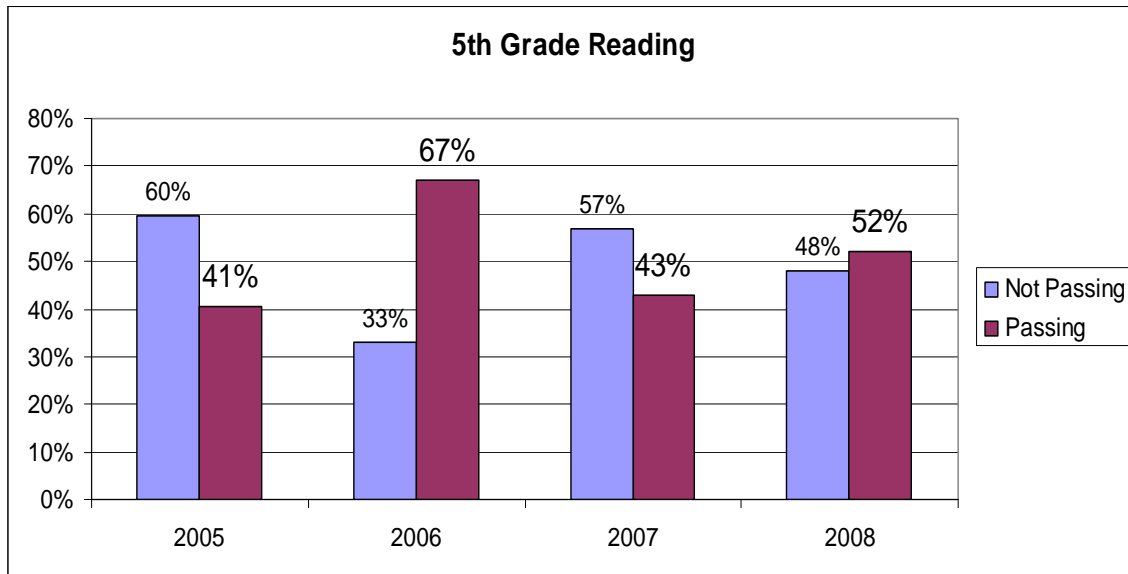
from a 35% passing rate in the baseline year, before TargetTeach[®] implementation, to a 69% passing rate after three years of implementation.

Percent of 3rd grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year

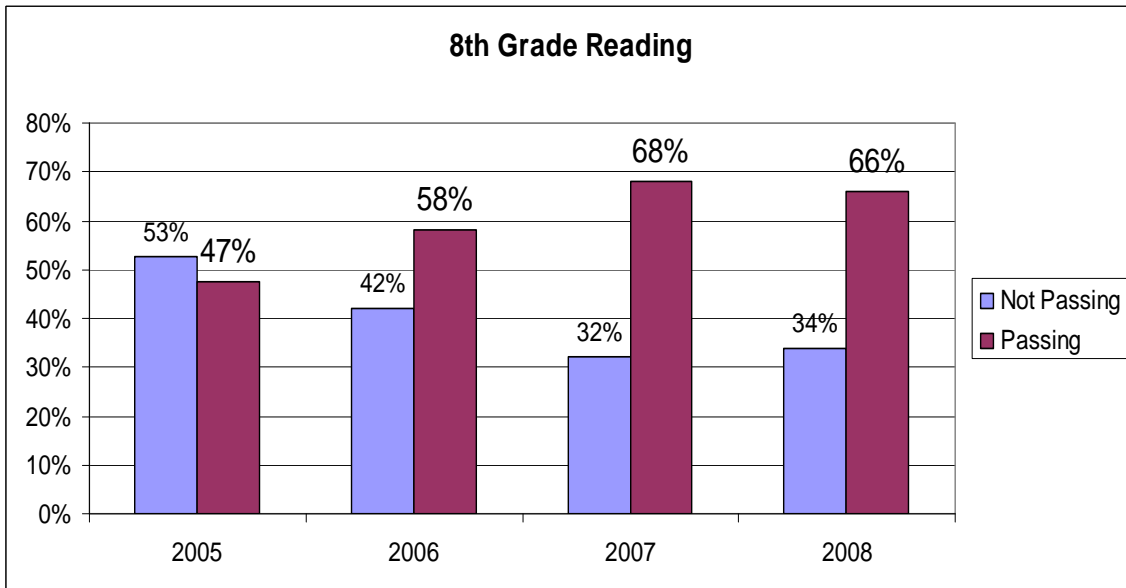


The charts below provide a similar look at performance over time for grades 5 and 8. The performance level of 5th graders had a dramatic increase or spike in the first year of implementation, followed by a decline in scores that then began a more gradual increase in the last year of implementation. The 8th grade performance, similar to that of the 3rd grade, shows a general increase over time, although there was a slight decline in the last year. For each grade level (3, 5, and 8), the increase in performance level from baseline to post-implementation was significant ($p < .01$).

Percent of 5th grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year

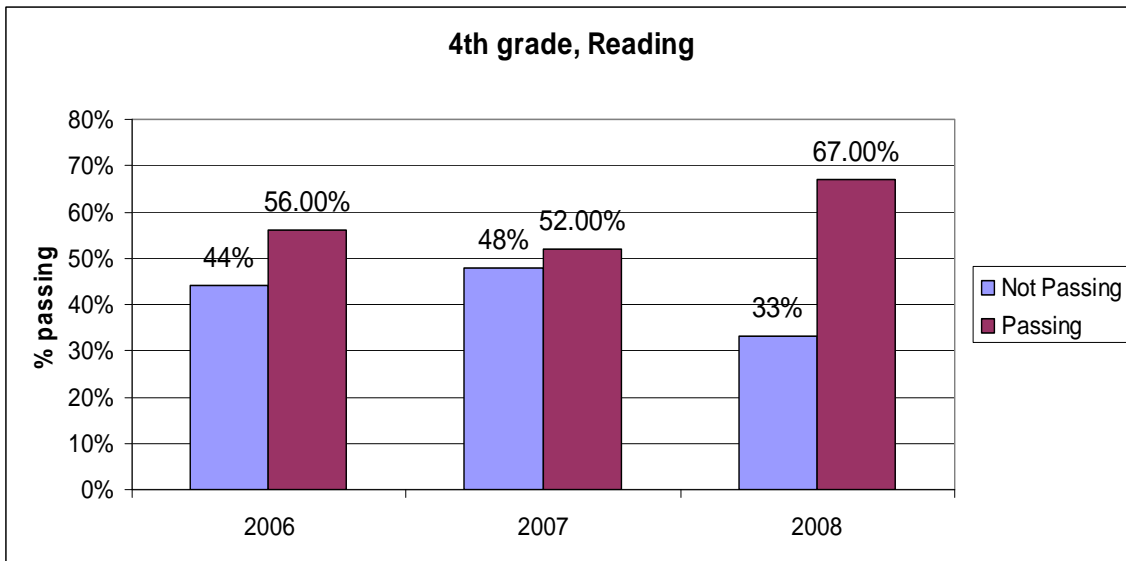


Percent of 8th grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year

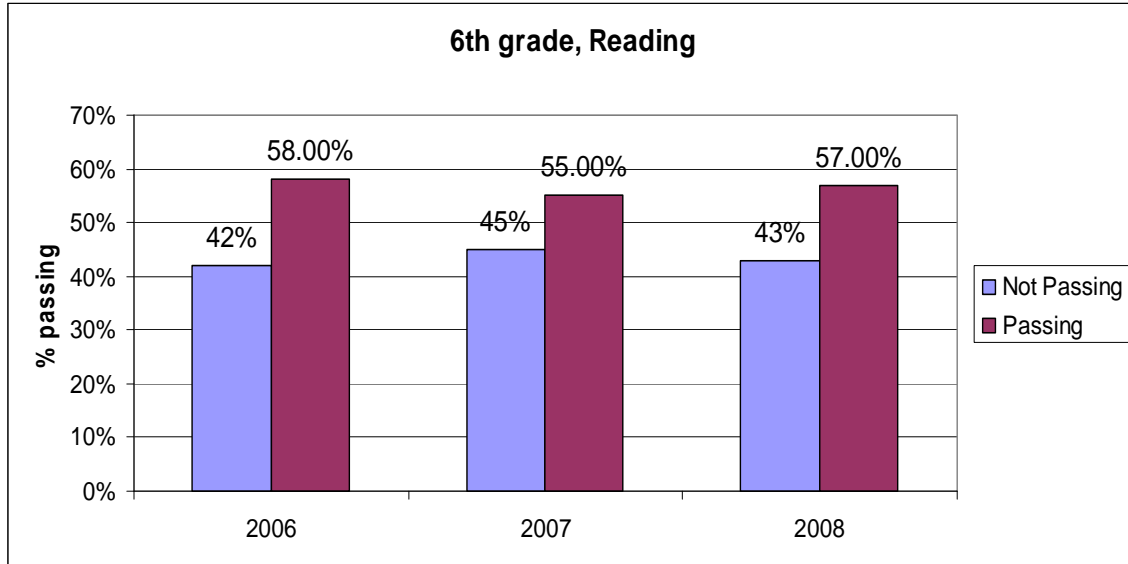


Baseline year (2004-2005) data are not available for grades four, six, and seven because those grades were not tested on the ISAT during that year. The charts below provide a look at performance levels in those grades over time starting in the first year of TargetTeach implementation.

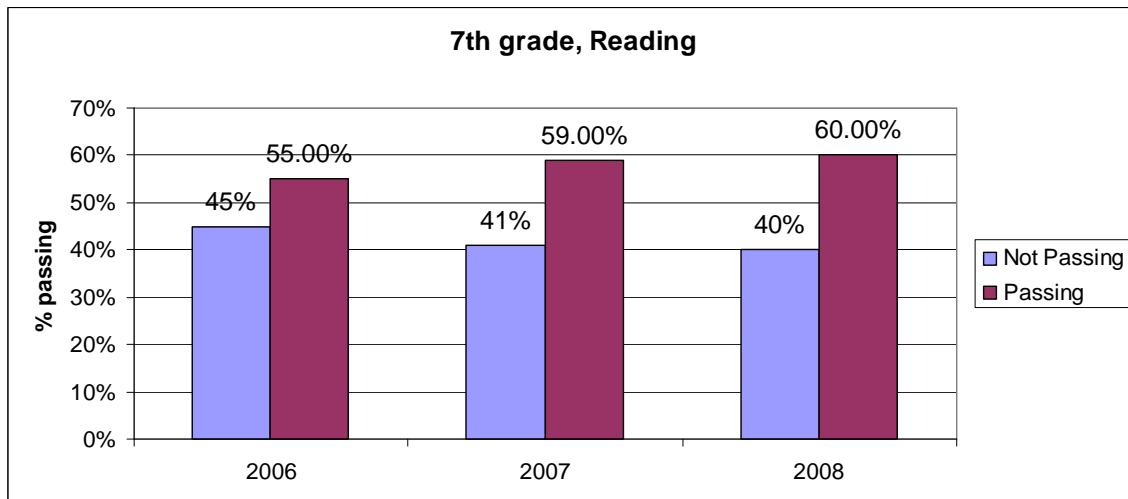
Percent of 4th grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year



Percent of 6th grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year



Percent of 7th grade students scoring in the Below Proficiency or At or Above Proficient achievement levels on the ISAT Reading Test from the 2005 to the 2008 academic year



Although there were minor fluctuations in the percent passing category, overall results show a general increase in the percentage of students passing the reading test when the first year data is compared to the last (2007-2008) school year data. One exception occurred in 6th grade reading, where the passing rate in the last year of data (2008) was one percentage point lower than that of the first year's data.

Longitudinal Achievement

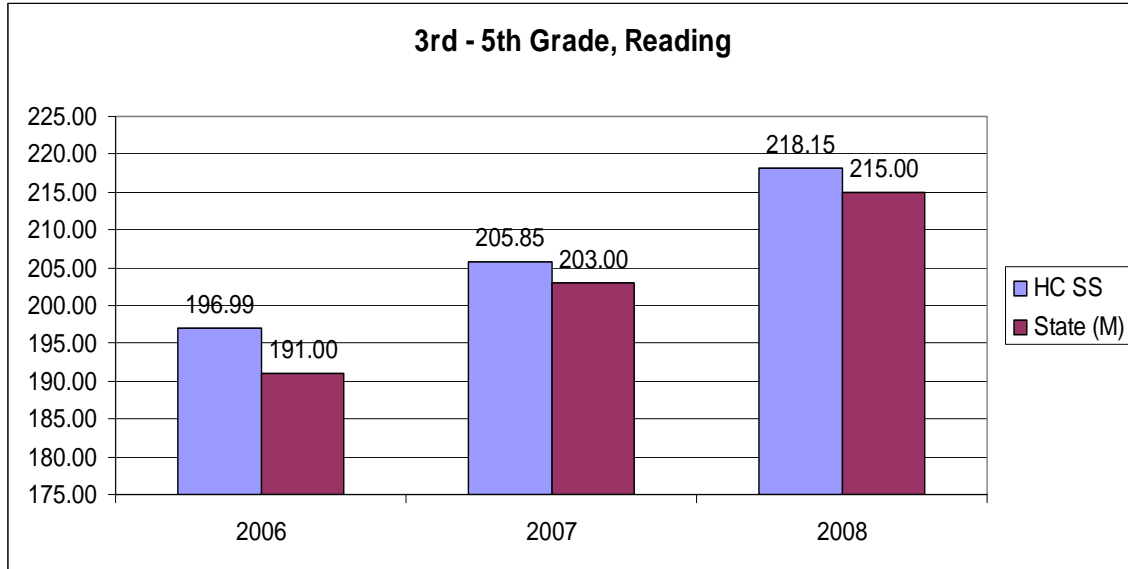
Because of the number of years the study data captures, students were able to be tracked by their performance levels from one grade to the next. The chart below provides the number of students with valid scores by grade and year on the ISAT.

Grade Cohort, n	Year		
	2006	2007	2008
3 rd Grade	70		
4 th Grade	59	70	
5 th Grade	83	59	70
6 th Grade	71	83	59
7 th Grade		71	83
8 th grade			71

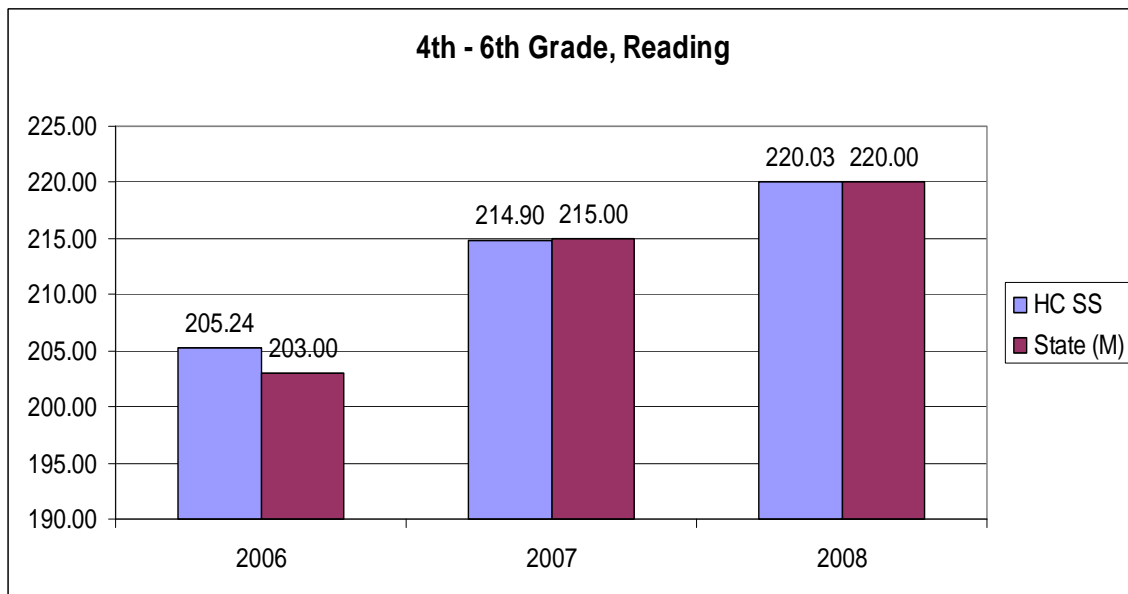
The longitudinal analysis presented here examines the performance of a subset of students for whom we have data at three different points in time. The scale scores for each grade were used in this analysis. The cut point for basic proficiency established by the Illinois

Department of Education was used in the charts below. The average or mean score for the cohort is compared to the state's cut score for proficiency. Only students with scores in each year were included. HC SS is the Hazel Crest scale score.

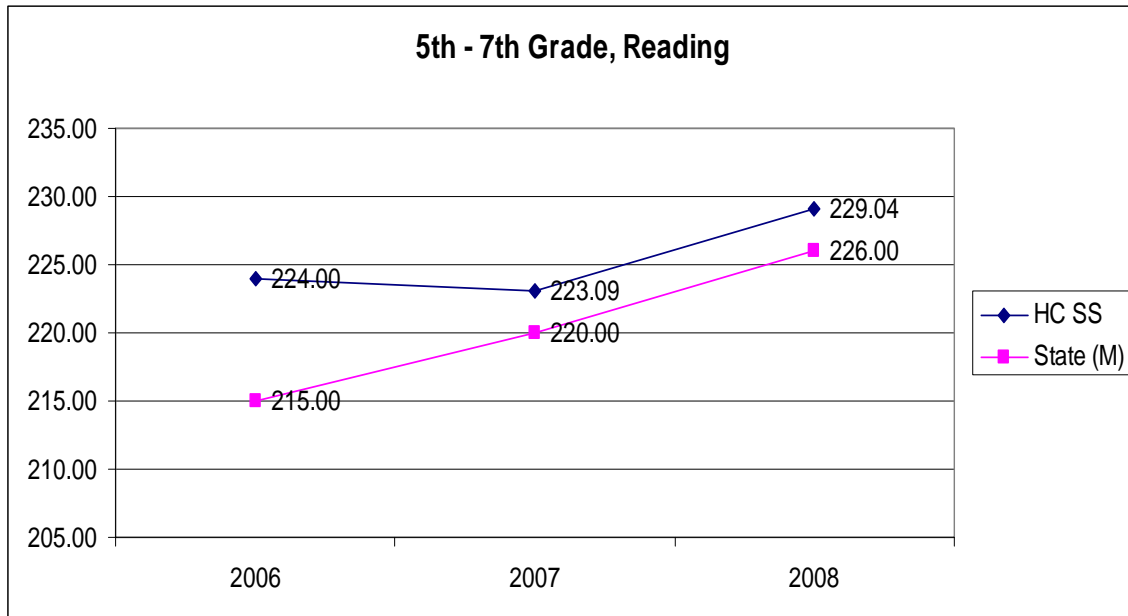
Longitudinal students' mean score compared to state proficiency score, grades 3-5



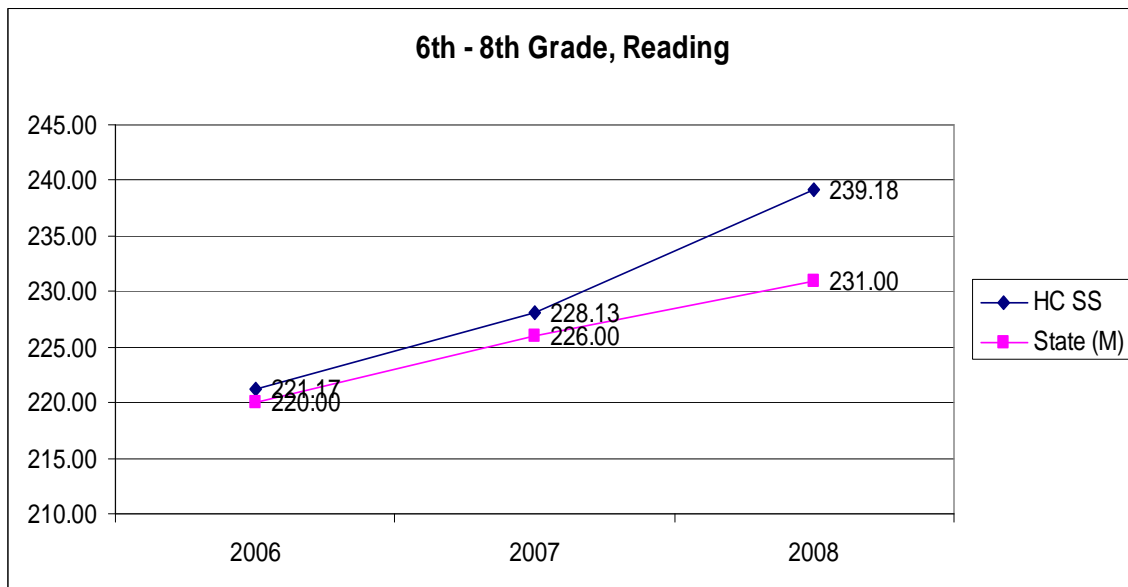
Longitudinal students' mean score compared to state proficiency score, grades 4-6



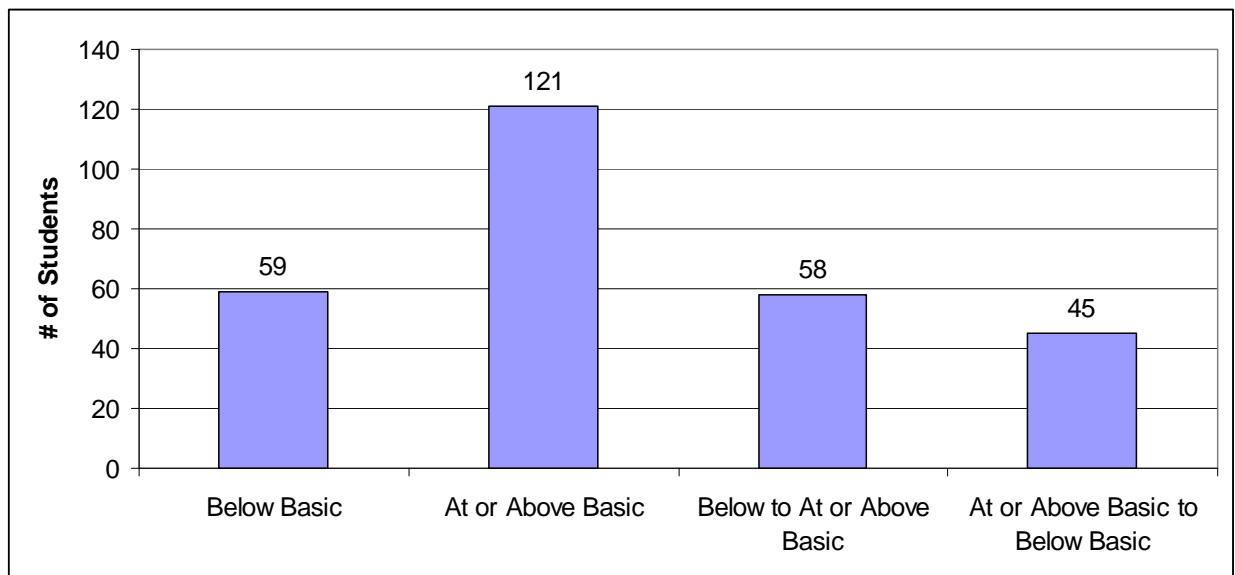
Longitudinal students' mean score compared to state proficiency score, grades 5-7



Longitudinal students' mean score compared to state proficiency score, grades 6-8



In order to examine individual student change in reading achievement from 2006 to 2008, students were classified into one of four achievement change categories. The first category consisted of student who performed *Below Basic* in each year of the test. The second category contained students who scored *At or Above Basic* in each year. These are students with no change in performance level. The third and fourth categories illustrate those students who moved categories over time: those students who moved from *Below Basic* to *At or Above Basic* or from *At or Above Basic* to *Below Basic*. If a student’s performance level started and ended within the same category (with a middle-year fluctuation), they were counted within the “no change” category.



As can be seen in the chart above, the majority of students tracked over the three years of the study stayed in the same achievement group: 121 students *At or Above Basic* (no change in category) and 59 students *Below Basic* (no change in category). However, a larger number of

students moved up in achievement status, *Below Basic* to *At or Above Basic*, than did those who declined from *At or Above Basic* to *Below Basic*.

Conclusions

The results presented compare the performance of Hazel Crest District students in grades 3, 5, and 8 over four different years. The study used the first year of data (achievement levels before the implementation of TargetTeach®) as baseline data. Analysis of three years of post-implementation data shows an overall progressive increase in student achievement after the implementation of TargetTeach®. Student test results as examined in this analysis would indicate the positive impact of the TargetTeach® curriculum on a significant increase in student achievement levels in reading for the targeted schools.