Implementation of the Fast ForWord Family of Programs in Pottstown School District

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Pottstown School District
Scientific Learning Programs

- Fast ForWord Language
- Fast ForWord Language to Reading
- Fast ForWord Adolescent
What is the purpose of Fast ForWord?

- Fast ForWord is a program designed to improve:
  - Phonemic awareness
  - Phonics
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
  - Listening skills
  - Memory skills
  - Oral language skills
How does Fast ForWord work?

- Computer training program
- Students use head phones to listen
- Speech is slowed down and gradually increased based on student performance
How does Fast ForWord work?

- Program adapts to meet individual student strengths and needs
- Students participate for 30 school days
- Students complete 5 twenty-minute exercises (100 minutes daily)
Overview of PSD use of Fast ForWord Programs

- Have used Fast ForWord programs since Summer 1999
- 1500 students have participated in Fast ForWord programs, to date
Details Of Fast ForWord Language to Reading Study (Spring 2000)

- Study completed to provide data for doctoral dissertation

- “The Impact of the Fast ForWord Language to Reading program in Assisting 2nd Grade Students with Reading Skills”
  - 77 students
  - 2 elementary schools, 4 classes
  - Students of all ability levels
  - 6 week program
  - 55% free and reduced lunch rates
Student Reading tests completed before and after Fast ForWord Language to Reading participation

Students were tested with the Woodcock-Johnson – Revised in the following areas:

- Letter and Word Recognition
- Passage Comprehension
- Word Attack
Results of Fast ForWord Language to Reading Study

Immediate Results:

- Low and average ability students showed significant improvement in comprehension skills
- Females made significant gains over males in comprehension
- Hispanic students made significant gains in phonic usage
Six months after completion of study, students were tested again in reading skills:

- **Letter and Word Recognition**
  - 16 students showed 1-2 years growth (AE and GE)
  - 2 students showed over 2 years growth (AE and GE)

(18 out of 61 students improved more than a year in Letter and Word Recognition)
Six months after completion of study, students were tested again in reading skills:

- **Passage Comprehension**
  - 26 students showed 1-2 years growth (AE and GE)
  - 9 students showed 2 or more years growth (AE and GE)
    - 5 of the 9 showed 3 years growth
    - 2 of the 9 showed 4 years growth

(35 out of 61 students improved more than a year in Passage Comprehension)
Six months after completion of study, students were tested again in reading skills:

- **Word Attack**
  - 11 students showed 1-2 years growth
  - 9 students showed over 2 years growth
    - 2 out of 9 showed 3 years growth
    - 1 out of 9 showed 4 years growth
    - 3 out of 9 exhibited decoding skills of a high school/college student

(20 out of 61 students improved more than a year in Word Attack)
Six months after completion of study, students were tested again in reading skills:

- Out of 61 students remaining from the original study:
  - 30 students improved a year or more in 1 area
  - 16 students improved a year or more in 2 areas
  - 4 students improved a year or more in all 3 areas

(50 out of 61 students [81%] improved a year or more in one or more areas of reading)
Pottstown School District Implementation

- Research shows that all students benefit from the Fast ForWord family of products

- We are providing the opportunity for all 2nd grade students to participate in FFL

  - Each 2nd grade class participates for 30 school days
Fast ForWord and PSSA

The 2002/2003 PSSA results reveal that:

Students who participated in Fast ForWord score, on average, **50 points higher in reading** than students who did not receive Fast ForWord training!
Fast ForWord and PSSA

The 2002/2003 PSSA results reveal that:

Students who participated in Fast ForWord score, on average, **50 points higher in math** than students who did not receive Fast ForWord training!
Fast ForWord and Title I Reading at Franklin Elementary

- 146 Title I eligible students have participated in the Fast ForWord Language program.

- 66 of these students [45%] have been exited from Title I after participating in Fast ForWord based on improvement in reading.
Parent Comments

- “My son wants to read to me constantly. He is using words I’ve never heard him use before!”

- “My son asks questions now; he rarely did that before. I can see a big difference in him.”

- “I’ve seen a lot of changes in my daughter. She is more expressive and asks questions using complete sentences. She has even started reading the newspaper!”
Student Comments

“Fast ForWord is teaching us to listen the first time.”

“Fast ForWord is teaching us to learn and know our sounds and know our words and helps our brain to learn. Also, it is fun to play and I think it’s a good thing we play it and I like it because it’s helping me.”