

Review of response document presented by FAST at April 24th Pinellas County School Board Meeting

1. Studies cited in the report presented

- **Crowe, E.C., Connor, C.M, Petscher, Y. (2009).** Well-done research. However the authors have used the Oral language fluency as a measure of performance and this skill does not measure reading comprehension, which is the critical skill required for success on a high stakes assessment such as FCAT. While ORF is correlated with overall measures of reading achievement, ORF has limitations as it relates to measuring comprehension. This can be particularly significant for a program that explicitly teaches decoding to improve fluency like Reading Mastery.
- While the report was published in 2009, the data was from the 2005-2006 school year as part of an evaluation of the federal Reading First grant.
- This is a correlational study, which means that many factors and variables could contribute to the results. The authors point to potential bias as the curricula were not randomly assigned.
- The authors of the study have an excellent discussion section which includes limitations, cautions, and implications that should be considered when interpreting the results.
 - *“it is possible that other factors within and across schools could have contributed to our results”*
 - *“A strong evidence-based core curriculum in the hands of a well-trained teacher may provide a foundation for effective literacy instruction, but the curriculum alone may be insufficient for promoting effective instruction for all children.”*

2. Other studies cited in the FAST document found on the NIFDI sites were reviewed.

- Many of these studies have shown some improvements for some subgroups as measured by the Oral Language Fluency
- There is no information on the fidelity of the implementation
- There is not much information about the demographics of the students in the program
- These findings are mainly based on using Direct Instruction as a supplemental program, not a school wide core curriculum.

3. Schools cited in the report presented

- We reviewed the school improvement plans (SIP) and K-12 Reading plans for the schools referenced. None of these schools list Reading Mastery as a core or supplemental reading program in Chart C of their reading plan. Duval County does list Reading Mastery in the narrative section as a Comprehensive Intervention Reading Program (CIRP). However, the named schools do not list Reading Mastery for 2010-11. Additionally, the following information was lacking from our research
 - a. program implementation and fidelity
 - b. was it a school wide core curriculum or as a supplemental tool?
- Although, some of the schools did maintain high grades, it is hard to say that this is due to Direct Instruction.
- The majority of the school grades cited were from 2001-2004
- By the year 2010, there was little to no evidence that any of the schools still implemented Direct Instruction.

4. Analysis of the PCSB research brief presented

- Research & Accountability has reviewed the research brief previously provided to the FAST and the Board and confirms the earlier findings and comments.

● Additional research searched

- Studies outside the NIFDI website
Additional research is being conducted
- What Works Clearinghouse is one of the best sources for scientifically based instructional material. Pinellas County Schools has adopted a process that will rely, in large part, on the findings of this resource. As was indicated previously in the research brief, WWC had not found supportive research for Reading Mastery.

● Conclusive remarks

- Much research available is based on data through 2007. The teaching standards and assessments in Florida changed in 2010 to the “ Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and FCAT 2.0” which increasingly stress comprehension and critical thinking. Florida research on DI since this change is limited.
- Using the ORF Oral Reading Fluency as a measure of success has limitations for comparing programs, and it is not a skill that is required for success on FCAT.
- Presently, publisher McGraw Hill has not submitted an intent to bid Reading Mastery as a Comprehensive Core Reading Program for the Florida instructional materials adoption in the 2013-14 school year. It has been submitted as a Comprehensive Intervention Reading Program.