

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Eric Witherspoon  
Superintendent

**From:** Laura Cooper  
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

**Date:** May 8, 2007

**RE: REPORT ON LITERACY PROGRAM**

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Literacy efforts are at the center of the Board of Education Goal #1 - *To strengthen instruction and curriculum to achieve measurable academic gains for all students and to accelerate the learning of students who are not yet meeting standards.* As part of this goal there are two literacy strategies:

1. The Literacy Program will provide sustained support in grades 9-12 to students not yet reading at grade level. The program, including the addition of a second Read 180 lab for special education, will be evaluated.
2. Humanities and reading teachers in English, History, and Special Education will work with Dr. Alfred Tatum in a professional development program and will implement a common approach to improving reading comprehension for students.

On Monday, May 14, we will report to the Board on these two specific strategies.

The first strategy—Evaluation of the Literacy Program—is addressed in the evaluation report written by Dr. Judy Levinson, Director of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation. The demographic and student achievement data—and the chart summarizing what’s working and what needs be changed—are invaluable to the entire literacy team in formulating recommendations for next year.

The memo from Judith Ruhana, English Department Chair, and Jennifer Fisher, History/ Social Science Department Chair, builds upon the summary provided in Dr. Levinson’s report by summarizing the recommendations developed by the literacy team for strengthening the program for next year. This memo also briefly summarizes the impact of the work with Dr. Alfred Tatum on improving reading comprehension in English, history, and reading classes. The department chairs will be joined by a few of the English and history teachers who will share what they have discovered since they’ve begun using different reading strategies to help students learn more English and history.

LAC:lcj  
Attachments

# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** May 7, 2007

**To:** Eric Witherspoon  
Superintendent

**From:** Judith Ruhana, English Department Chair  
Jennifer Fisher, History Department Chair

**RE: LITERACY REPORT**

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In addition to the formal Board Report on Literacy, we would like to share input and plans for improving the program developed by the Literacy Team. We also want to update you on the progress we have made in working with Dr. Tatum to incorporate reading into some English and History classes.

## PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

### Assessments

- There are a number of assessments used in the literacy program. For instance, we use the Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP) to assess gains over the year because it is a cloze, non-timed reading test. The Individual Reading Inventory (IRI) is used in the Enriched classes as a diagnosis tool. (Both assessments are given in May and are not reported as part of the Board Report.) We also use Explore and PLAN assessments to look at reading achievement and students.
- We need to review all of the assessments. The reading team will work with Dr. Levinson in the summer to recommend assessments that will allow for diagnosis of reading problems as well as monitor progress in reading. We will also work on refining the “exit” criteria for the courses in this program.

### Curriculum

- The teachers in the literacy program will work this summer to align their curriculum even more closely. This will allow for more consistency in instruction and strengthen the students’ ability to transition from one subject to another and to use the strategies across content areas.

### Program Structure

- The teachers of 2 Humanities Enriched surveyed the students and found that students resented having no choice about the History they are scheduled for in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore, we will spend time in 07-08 looking at different models that would give students more choice yet to continue to give them literacy support.
- In 2006-2007, the Literacy program had two coaches assigned to the Humanities classes to help implement literacy strategies. The number of coaches will be increased for the 2007-2008 school year.

### **Coordination of Services**

- There needs to be a coordination of the placement of struggling readers into the programs that best meet their needs, including PROJECT EXCEL and The Academy. There needs to be one person who schedules and checks the placement of students into these programs.

### **Humanities Professional Development with Dr. Tatum**

- A team of teachers in history, English, and Special Education worked extensively with Dr. Alfred Tatum, professor and expert in adolescent literacy from Northern Illinois University, to implement four common reading strategies in all the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities classes, in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities Enriched classes and in Special Education classes. This involvement will be broadened to include all teachers who sign up to work with Dr. Tatum in a special Summer Intensive Workshop on June 12-14. Dr Tatum will continue to work with these same departments in the 07-08 school year to strengthen the strategies used and to look carefully at texts, curriculum, effective student effort, student engagement, and beliefs about achievement. The four strategies used this year are:
  - Think-and-Search Questions
  - Semantic Mapping
  - Reciprocal Questioning
  - CLOZE Reading
- In 2006-2007, the Literacy program had two coaches assigned to the Humanities classes to help implement literacy strategies. The number of coaches will be increased for the 2007-2008 school year.

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Evaluation Report on the Literacy Program  
2006-07

Judith Levinson  
Carrie Livingston  
May 9, 2007

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## Summary of Key Findings: What We Have Learned About the Literacy Program

One of the board goals for 2006-07 is to provide evaluation information on the Literacy Program, including the addition of a second *READ 180* lab for special education. This report provides data to answer the following questions:

- ❖ Who are the students in the current *READ 180*, Enriched, and Freshman Reading Programs, what scores place them there, and how are they doing?
- ❖ For students who were in *READ 180*, Enriched, and Freshman Reading in 2005-06, how are they doing as sophomores?
- ❖ Who are the students in the *READ 180* special education program, what scores place them in the program, and how are they doing?

The following data were collected:

Target Group	Measures
Current 2006-07 Freshman Literacy Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Hum.Enr./<i>READ 180</i> students</li> <li>• Freshman Reading students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• EXPLORE test scores</li> <li>• Degrees of Reading (DRP) test scores</li> <li>• Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)</li> <li>• NC grades</li> <li>• Student Survey</li> </ul>
Sophomore Cohort who were in 1 Hum.Enr./ <i>READ 180</i> , and Freshman Reading in 2005-06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• EXPLORE/PLAN longitudinal analysis</li> <li>• Degrees of Reading test scores</li> <li>• Course Grades</li> <li>• Types of Courses Enrolled as Sophs./Jrs.</li> </ul>
Current 2006-07 Special Ed. <i>READ 180</i> students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• EXPLORE test scores</li> <li>• Scholastic Reading Inventory</li> <li>• NC grades</li> <li>• Student Survey</li> </ul>

### What is working?

- Students generally like their literacy classes, and report that they are learning and using reading strategies.
- Fifty percent of 2006-07 *READ 180* students improved their lexile score by 50 or more points; 34 percent of students improved their lexile score by 100 or more points.
- Students who were in *READ 180* in 2005-06 showed some improvement from EXPLORE to PLAN. Scores shifted upward and more students placed in the second and third quartiles on PLAN compared to EXPLORE.
- Attendance in freshman literacy courses improved in 2006-07 compared to the last two years. For example, in 2004-05, the percentage of NC grades for *READ 180* classes was 17 percent while in 2006-07, the percentage of NC grades was 9 percent. For Freshman Reading students, the NC percentage decreased from 12 percent in 2005-06 to 3 percent in 2006-07.
- Some students move into mainstream and even honors courses after their freshman year. While some of these students are struggling in these courses, others are maintaining a “C” or better.
- For the *READ 180* course in special education:
  - This school year is the first time that this course is being offered. Teachers feel the *READ 180* course is rich in materials, well-organized, engaging, age-appropriate and addresses fluency.
  - Of the 13 students for whom there were pre/post SRI test scores, 77 percent of them gained 50 points or more and 54 percent made a gain of 100 or more points.
  - Students like their *READ 180* class and report that they are using the reading strategies taught in the *READ 180* program.

## What Needs to be Changed?

- It is clear that teachers are working hard and provide examples of successes and progress. Student feedback is positive as well. However, the data indicate that the progress is not what we would like to see and believe can happen.
  - Although half of the students in *READ 180* increase their lexile score by 50 points, 41 percent show a decrease in their lexile score.
  - Although one-quarter of Freshman Reading students increase their percentile score from the EXPLORE to PLAN test and move into the third quartile after their freshman year, about 20 percent more of students fall into the bottom quartile after their freshman year.
  - Students in the Literacy Program have not learned the fundamentals of reading comprehension over their nine years of schooling. More discrete targets need to be set for students and monitored over time.
  - The present assessment system is not sufficient for diagnosing and monitoring change. Although EXPLORE to PLAN provides good data, the attrition in this group of students from year to year means that we do not always have pre/post data. The DRP does not provide detailed diagnostic information and teachers are not always confident with the results of the SRI. Instead, a consistent within year pre/post assessment is needed that provides solid diagnostic information that teachers can trust.
- Placement and Exit Criteria need to be reviewed and clarified.
  - At ETHS, we now have a number of programs in addition to the Literacy Program (e.g., The Academy, special education, Project EXCEL, etc.) that target struggling students. However, the criteria for placement into these programs are similar, and it is not always clear which program will best serve these struggling readers. Students are placed in one program and then later, it is discovered that these students have been placed in another program. The organization is large and communication vehicles have not been set up to work out these complex placement decisions.
  - The multiple measures used for placement need to be reviewed to determine the best predictors for success in the various programs. For example, it is not clear whether the science reasoning EXPLORE score is a good predictor of a struggling reader.
  - Currently, scores at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading are the ultimate criterion for exit out of the program. However, several measures are used and the PLAN score is not available until the end of the first semester of sophomore year. This is too late for making course decisions for sophomores. This is another reason why a more consistent assessment system in the freshman year might help to determine when to exit out of the program.
- Although attendance has improved for the freshman program, students continue to receive NC grades. A special intervention is needed to address this problem. Students cannot learn if they are not present in classes.
- There are several courses associated with the Literacy Program and it is not always clear how they fit together. Further, other programs such as The Academy, Project EXCEL and special education focus on literacy. A better-coordinated program is needed within and across programs.
- The Freshman Reading course has been in place for a while. Using the experience from the last couple years, the curriculum should be reviewed with the purpose of developing a written curriculum that identifies critical reading strategies for instruction that connect to English and history and other core academic classes.
- For the *READ 180* class in special education:
  - Teachers indicate that non-readers are not addressed well by the *READ 180* program.
  - Teachers have modified the rotation focused on independent reading because they report students are easily distracted and have a hard time being independent.
  - Teachers say that it will take two years to really learn the program because of the range and quantity of materials.
  - A large percentage (22%-28%) of students receive NC grades in reading, English and history. Teachers report that the NC grades are not a result of students avoiding this particular class; rather they miss class because of extenuating circumstances such as incarceration, suspension or family circumstances.

## Evaluation Report on the Literacy Program: 2006-07

### Purpose

One of the board goals for 2006-07 is to provide evaluation information on the Literacy Program, including the addition of a second *READ 180* lab for special education. This report provides data to answer the following questions:

- ❖ Who are the students in the current *READ 180*, Enriched, and Freshman Reading Program, what scores place them in the program, and how are they doing?
- ❖ For students who were in *READ 180*, Enriched, and Reading in 2005-06, how are they doing as sophomores?
- ❖ Who are the students in the *READ 180* special education program, what scores place them in the program, and how are they doing?

### Literacy Program Description

The Literacy Program is designed to provide support for students who enter ETHS reading below grade level. The program is comprised of a sequence of courses that provide reading instruction and show students how to use these skills in their other courses. The program is intended to “catch up” many students so they will exit from the program at the end of the freshman or sophomore year. However, some students require ongoing support. The Literacy Program is comprised of the following components:

- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities Enriched:** Two credits are awarded, one each in history and English. Instruction is implemented in a two-period block.
- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Enriched/*READ 180*:** Two elective credits are awarded for this 90-minute class. Students are placed in this class if they fall in the 1<sup>st</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> percentile on the EXPLORE reading-based tests (Reading and Science) and if these scores are consistent with their DRP scores.
- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading:** One elective credit is awarded. Students are placed in this course if they fall in the 29<sup>th</sup>-49<sup>th</sup> percentile on EXPLORE reading-based tests and if these scores are consistent with the DRP score.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities Enriched:** Two credits are awarded, one each in history and English. Instruction is implemented in a two-period block.
- **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Interventions:** In *3 English 1* and *4 English 1* classes, students receive explicit literacy instruction.

For more detailed information on program components, see Attachment 1.

### Data Collection

To address the board goal, data were collected using the student information database to gather information on student demographics, grades, and EXPLORE/PLAN scores. Other assessment data were also analyzed such as scores from a reading inventory that is part of the *READ 180* program and scores from the Degrees of Reading (DRP) test. In addition, student surveys were administered to freshmen and teacher interviews were undertaken with special education faculty to gather their feedback about their new course.

The report is organized in three parts:

- Part I provides data on the current 2006-07 freshmen in *READ 180*, Freshman Reading, and English/history Enriched courses.
- Part II provides data on the sophomore cohort who were in *READ 180* or Freshman Reading courses in 2005-06. For this section, the purpose is to follow up on students a year after they received freshman literacy support.



- Part III provides data on the current 2006-07 freshmen in the new *READ 180* course offered to special education students.

**Part I: Who are the students in the current 2006-07 1 Humanities/*READ 180*, Freshman Reading and 2 Humanities/ Enriched Program, and what do we know about them?**

**Demographics.** Table 1 shows demographic information for the total group of Literacy students enrolled as of semester 1 in this 2006-07 school year as well as from school year 2005-2006.

**Table 1. Literacy Program Demographics**

		2005-2006 (N=187)						2006-2007 (N=172)					
		1 Humanities Enriched/ <i>READ 180</i>		Frosh Reading		2 Humanities Enriched		1 Humanities Enriched/ <i>READ 180</i>		Frosh Reading		2 Humanities Enriched	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sex	Female	24	47.1%	39	52.7%	30	48.4%	21	38.2%	26	35.6%	20	45.5%
	Male	27	52.9%	35	47.3%	32	51.6%	34	61.8%	47	64.4%	24	54.5%
Ethnic Description	Asian	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Black	35	68.6%	60	81.1%	51	82.3%	39	70.9%	47	64.4%	29	65.9%
	Hispanic	12	23.5%	11	14.9%	6	9.7%	10	18.2%	12	16.4%	13	29.5%
	Multiracial	2	3.9%	1	1.4%	2	3.2%	2	3.6%	2	2.7%	1	2.3%
	White	2	3.9%	1	1.4%	3	4.8%	3	5.5%	12	16.4%	1	2.3%
Income Level	Low Income	42	82.4%	58	78.4%	46	74.2%	39	70.9%	43	58.9%	36	81.8%
	Non-Low Income	9	17.6%	16	21.6%	16	25.8%	16	29.1%	30	41.1%	8	18.2%
Grade	9	51	100.0%	74	100.0%	0	0.0%	55	100.0%	73	100.0%	8	18.2%
	10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	62	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	36	81.8%
	11	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	12	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total		51		74		62		55		73		44	

**NOTE:** Of the 198 students in 2006-07, 19 are reclassified: 8 in Grade 9 and 10 in Grade 10

- The total numbers for each of these courses have remained relatively the same for the two years presented. However, there has been a slight shift in the ethnic composition for the Freshman Reading course; a higher percentage of white students and a lower percentage of Black students are enrolled in 2006-07 than in 2005-06.
- There is a greater percentage of non-low-income students in freshman reading in 2006-07 compared to 2005-06.
- Of the 198 students enrolled in a literacy course in 2006-07, 19 students are reclassified – 8 into Grade 9 and 10 into Grade 10.

**Test Score Entry Data.** Table 2 shows the EXPLORE scores in reading for the current 2006-07 freshman students as well as students that were in the freshman program in 2005-06<sup>1</sup>. The test data are reported by quartile groupings: students in the bottom quartile have percentiles of 1 to 24; students in the second quartile have percentiles from 25 to 49; students in the third quartile have percentiles from 50 to 74; and students in the top quartile have percentiles from 75 to 99. As noted above, students are placed in *READ 180*/Enriched Humanities when their EXPLORE and DRP reading scores are in the bottom quartile<sup>2</sup>. Students are placed in Freshman Reading when their scores fall in the second quartile (29<sup>th</sup> to 49<sup>th</sup> percentile). Students' science scores are also reviewed because of the reading required for this test component.

**Table 2. EXPLORE Reading Test Results: Quartile Groupings**

	1-24		25-29		50-74		75-99	
	Percentile		Percentile		Percentile		Percentile	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2005-06 (n=118)	46	39.0%	71	60.2%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%
2006-07 (n=98)								
1 Hum. Enr./ <i>READ 180</i>	25	61.0%	14	34.1%	2	4.9%	0	0.0%
Frosh Reading	16	28.1%	41	71.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

<sup>1</sup> In 2005-06, the scores for 1 Hum. Enr./*READ 180* and Frosh Reading were not disaggregated.

Table 3 shows the DRP scores for the 2006-07 freshman literacy courses. The numbers are smaller because not all students were retested on the DRP; testing occurred at the middle schools and not all students were present on the day of testing.

	1-24		25-29		50-74		75-99	
	Percentile		Percentile		Percentile		Percentile	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2006-07 (n=84)								
1 Hum. Enr./READ 180	20	55.6%	16	44.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Frosh Reading	5	10.4%	42	87.5%	1	2.1%	0	0.0%

- The scores for the two 2006-07 courses differ slightly from the entry criteria because both the EXPLORE and DRP reading scores are used. Science scores are also reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The placement criteria were established to provide multiple measures to determine placement. Although the intent is a positive one, that is to have several measures rather than than one to make placement decisions, the criteria are confusing and it is not always clear why students are placed in one literacy course as opposed to another. Some students above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile end up in the reading programs and some students in the bottom quartile end up in Freshman Reading rather than *READ 180*. Also, it is unclear why the EXPLORE science reasoning score is used as a measure of reading comprehension. In addition, there are several programs at ETHS that work with struggling readers and it is not always clear which program will best serve these students. Some students who should be in the literacy programs end up in other programs and some students who should be in other programs such as The Academy end up in the mainstream literacy courses.

**Pre/Post Change in Reading.** The *READ 180* system includes an assessment called the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) that provides test scores in lexiles. A lexile is a unit for measuring text difficulty. Scores range from 10 to 1700. A spokesperson for the *READ 180* company reported that high school students should move 50 lexile points in a year. Table 4 shows the points gained from fall to spring for the literacy students. Unfortunately, not all students had pre/post measures.

No. of Points Gained	n	%
200 pts. or greater	6	14%
100-199 pts.	9	20%
50-99 pts.	7	16%
25-7-49 pts.	2	4%
0-24 pts.	2	4%
Negative growth	18	41%

- 50% of students gained 50 points or more, 8 percent gained between 0 and 49 points, and for 41 percent of the students, lexiles decreased.

<sup>2</sup> Although the bottom quartile is from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> percentile, students with percentiles up to the 28<sup>th</sup> percentile rank are placed in 1 Hum. Enr./*READ 180*.

**Attendance.** Table 5 shows the NC grades for the current freshman and sophomore students. NC data were reviewed because it is an indicator of attendance in classes.

	2003-2004		2004-2005		2005-2006		2006-2007	
	NC	Total #	NC	Total #	NC	Total #	NC	Total #
<b>Program/Course</b>								
1 Hum. Enr./READ 180								
-Reading	9%	43	17%	47	14%	51	9%	54
-English	12%	43	9%	47	12%	51	6%	55
-History	9%	43	11%	47	10%	51	9%	55
-Science							0%	4
Frosh Reading								
-Reading	4%	83	8%	63	12%	74	3%	73
-English	5%	80	6%	63	5%	74	3%	73
-History	5%	80	5%	63	4%	74	1%	73
-Science							3%	36
2 Hum. Enr.								
-Reading								
-English	10%	52	0%	37	15%	62	16%	44
-History	13%	52	8%	37	11%	62	9%	44
-Science							9%	43

- The data suggest that, overall, NC grades are down from previous years for the freshmen students, although almost 10 percent of 1 Hum. Enr./READ 180 students continue to receive NC grades in reading and history.
- Students in 2 Humanities Enriched receive a large percentage of NC grades in English, history and science.

**Student Survey Results.** In 2003-04, a special reading survey was designed for the literacy program. The survey was revised and administered to all freshman literacy students in April 2007. In prior years, it was only administered to 1 Hum. Enriched/READ 180 students. Attachment 2 shows the results for this survey as well as results from earlier years.

- In response to a question asking students how much they understand when they read for science, math, English, or history class...
  - Two-thirds of READ 180 students indicated they understand a lot or nearly all of the material for English, math, and history. This percentage is higher for this group for history and math compared to last year's READ 180 group. Although science understanding is lower (39%) than the other subjects, the percentage is higher than the last two years of cohorts.
- Generally, 80 percent or more of both READ 180 and Freshman Reading students report using specific strategies that are taught in the literacy program. A smaller percentage of Freshman Reading students report highlighting or taking notes on important information compared to READ 180 students.
- A higher percentage (45%) of students than in previous years report that Literacy teachers know what they are capable of doing academically.
- Two-thirds or more of students...
  - Get excited about some of the books they read.
  - Think reading is a good use of time.
  - Think reading is interesting.
  - Share what they read with others.
  - Report that there are a lot of reading materials at home.

- Only 43 percent like to read a book when they have free time and only 34 percent report going to the library or bookstore to read.

Students were also asked open-ended questions. Some representative responses to these items are:

*Item: "What do you like about your Reading/READ 180 or Humanities Enriched classes?"*

- "I like that we get time to read during the day. Sometimes I don't get to read at home so I read at school as much as I can before we do something else. Also I like group reading. Then you can compare what you know about the book from others."
- "I like the fact that we can get ourselves better at reading."
- "I enjoy my reading class because my teacher knows what she is teaching without confusing me. She helps her students individually, and is open to new ideas."
- "They help us when we need it."
- "The teachers explain everything properly so that I can understand it well."

*Item: "What do you think needs to be improved about your Reading/READ 180 or Freshman Reading classes?"*

- "I think I should read more often to find words and meanings I don't understand."
- "I think I shouldn't be in the classes, and get moved to a regular class."
- "I think that we should be reading books just like the honors students. Just because we have bad comprehension doesn't mean we're not smart. So I think they should give us more challenging books than just some books that I feel are too easy."
- "We do almost the same things every day. I am talking about the rotations. It just gets really boring doing the same thing everyday but sometimes we do other better and exciting work."
- "I don't think anything should be improved in my *READ 180* class everything is perfect I love the way my teacher is teaching my class."

**Part II: For students who were in 1 Humanities Enriched/READ 180, and Freshman Reading in 2005-06, how are they doing as sophomores?**

The focus of this section of the report is on the progress of students who started in the Literacy Program as freshmen in 2005-06 and are now in their second year at the high school. Even though all of these students should be sophomores in 2006-07, some of these students have been reclassified to Grade 9 status because they lacked the 24 credits required for sophomore status.

**Demographics.** Table 6 shows the demographic characteristics for the 39 Humanities Enriched/*READ 180* students and the 59 Freshman Reading students who remain at ETHS.

		2006-2007 (n=98)			
		Enriched/ <i>READ 180</i> (05-06)		Freshman Reading (05-06)	
		n	%	n	%
Sex	Female	20	51.3%	32	54.2%
	Male	19	48.7%	27	45.8%
Ethnic Description	Asian	0	0.0%	1	1.7%
	Black	26	66.7%	47	79.7%
	Hispanic	10	25.6%	10	16.9%
	Multiracial	1	2.6%	0	0.0%
	White	2	5.1%	1	1.7%
Income Level	Low Income	32	82.1%	48	81.4%
	Non-Low Income	7	17.9%	11	18.6%
Grade	9 (reclassified)	8	20.5%	6	10.2%
	10	31	79.5%	53	89.8%
Total # students		39		59	

**Longitudinal Analyses of Test Scores.** Table 7 shows the change in quartile distribution from EXPLORE to PLAN. EXPLORE is administered in December of eighth grade and PLAN is administered in October of 10th grade. Of the 39 students in the *READ 180* cohort, 22 students had both EXPLORE and PLAN scores; of the 59 students in the Freshman Reading cohort, 37 students had both EXPLORE and PLAN scores. For the students missing scores, either they did not take the EXPLORE test in eighth grade or they did not show up to take the PLAN test on Assessment Day or the make-up day. These data should be interpreted with caution because a large percentage of students did not have pre/post scores.

	Avg Scale	1-24		25-29		50-74		75-99	
	Score - Reading	Percentile		Percentile		Percentile		Percentile	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>1 Hum. Enr./READ 180 (05-06)</i> (n = 22)									
EXPLORE	10.14	16	72.7%	6	27.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PLAN	12.55	13	59.1%	7	31.8%	2	9.1%	0	0.0%
<i>Frosh Reading (05-06)</i> (n = 37)									
EXPLORE	11.41	6	16.2%	31	83.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PLAN	13.54	14	37.8%	14	37.8%	9	24.3%	0	0.0%

- For the *READ 180* students, scores shifted upward and more students fell in the second and third quartiles on PLAN compared to EXPLORE.
- For the Freshman Reading students, results were mixed. A larger percentage of students fell in the bottom quartile but 24 percent moved into the third quartile.

Because a good number of students did not have both EXPLORE and PLAN scores, a second analysis was conducted. Freshman students take the Degrees of Reading test in February of eighth grade and again take this test at the end of freshman year. Unfortunately, many scores were not available. For the 22 *READ 180* students who had both pre and post DRP scores, the results mirrored the EXPLORE/PLAN analysis.

**Course Grades.** Table 8 shows the course grades for the two sophomore cohorts. The data represents the grades in history, English, math and science courses for students who started as freshmen in 2005-06.

	2006-2007					
	A/B	C	D/F	I	NC	Total #
<b>Program/Course</b>						
1 Hum. Enr./READ 180 (05-06)						
-English	13%	30%	38%	8%	13%	40
-History	23%	45%	18%	10%	5%	40
-Science	29%	46%	20%	0%	6%	35
Frosh Reading (05-06)						
-English	24%	32%	32%	5%	7%	59
-History	33%	39%	18%	6%	4%	51
-Science	32%	24%	32%	2%	10%	59
**NOTE: 1 student from READ 180 group took two courses English (1 Hum Eng Enr Aca & 2 Hum Eng Enr Aca) and two history courses (1 Hum HSS Enr Aca & 2 Hum HSS Enr Aca) courses in 06-07 Sem 1						

- As sophomores some students do quite well in English, history and science, receiving A, B and C grades. However, a large percentage of both former *READ 180* and Freshman Reading students receive D and F grades, particularly in English. Also, one-third of former Freshman Reading students receive D and F grades in science.
- Attendance continues to be a problem for these students as evidenced by NC grades.

**Sophomore/Junior Courses in English and History.** Attachment 3 shows a flow chart of the students in each type of literacy course last year and what classes they are in this year.

- Of the 51 students in 1 Humanities Enriched/*READ 180* in 2005-06, 25 (49%) ended up in 2 Humanities Enriched, 9 (18%) were in level 2 courses, 6 (12%) are in special education or Academy classes, and 12 (24%) are no longer at ETHS.
- Of the 74 students in Freshman Reading in 2005-06, 8 (11%) are in 2 Humanities Enriched classes, 51 (69%) are no longer enrolled in the Literacy Program (8 students are in honors classes) and 15 (20%) are no longer at ETHS. Eight students are not enrolled in a history course, and 8 are in special education or Academy courses.
- Of the 62 students in 2 Humanities Enriched in 2005-06, 40 (64%) are in the Literacy Program (3 English 1), 13 (21%) are no longer in the Literacy Program (of which 4 are in special education or Academy), and 9 (14%) are no longer at ETHS.

**Part III. Who are the students in the *READ 180* special education program, what scores place them in the program, and how are they doing?**

The special education *READ 180* program (READSPED 180) was implemented this school year beginning in the fall. The target group was all Grade 9 students in the Instructional Program in special education. The skill levels of these students are three to five years below grade level. Of the 31 students in this program, only 18 could be scheduled into classes. Teachers participated in a two-day training session prior to the beginning of the school year. Consultants returned after school started to provide additional assistance.

**Demographics.** Table 9 shows the demographic information for this group of students.

<b>Table 9. Literacy Program - 06-07 Special Ed Demographics</b>		<b>2006-2007 (n=18)</b>	
		<b>Special Ed READ 180</b>	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Sex	Female	3	16.7%
	Male	15	83.3%
Ethnic Description	Black	12	66.7%
	Hispanic	2	11.1%
	Multiracial	2	11.1%
	White	2	11.1%
Income Level	Low Income	12	66.7%
	Non-Low Income	6	33.3%
Grade	9	18	100.0%
Total # students		18	

- A total of 18 students are served in the program. Three classes are offered each staffed by a special education teacher.
- More males than females are served by the program.

**Test Score Entry Data.** Table 10 shows the EXPLORE scores in reading for the current 2006-07 freshman students in this program.

<b>Table 10. EXPLORE (2005-2006) National Norm Reading Test Results: Quartile Groupings (n=11)</b>									
	<b>Avg Scale</b>	<b>1-24</b>		<b>25-29</b>		<b>50-74</b>		<b>75-99</b>	
	<b>Score - Reading</b>	<b>Percentile</b>		<b>Percentile</b>		<b>Percentile</b>		<b>Percentile</b>	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
EXPLORE	9.64	9	81.8%	2	18.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

- The majority of the students scored in the bottom quartile on the EXPLORE test.

**Pre/Post Change in Reading.** Information from the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) was also collected for students in READSPED 180. As stated in an earlier section, scores are reported as lexiles. Lexiles range from 10 to 1700 and expected growth for high school students in the *READ 180* program is 50 points or more. Table 11 shows the points gained from fall to spring for the students in the special education *READ 180* program. Although there are 18 students in the program, five students have not yet been administered the spring test.

<b>Table 11. SRI Lexile Growth: 2006-07 Special Education Group of READ 180 Students (n=13)</b>		
<b>No. of Points Gained</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
200 pts. or greater	4	31%
100-199 pts.	3	23%
50-99 pts.	3	23%
25-7-49 pts.	0	0%
0-24 pts.	0	0%
Negative growth	3	23%

- 77 percent of students gained 50 points or more and 54 percent made a gain of 100 or more points
- 23 percent had a decrease in their lexile score

**Attendance.** Table 12 shows NC grades for the READSPED 180 students.

	2006-07	
	NC	Total #
<b>Program/Course</b>		
Sp. Ed READ 180		
-Reading	22%	18
-English	28%	18
-History	22%	18
-Science	0%	10

- Attendance is a problem in the special education *READ 180* classes. Between 22 percent and 28 percent of students received NC grades in reading, English and history. Teachers report that the NC grades are not a result of students avoiding this particular class; rather they miss class because of extenuating circumstances such as incarceration, suspension or family circumstances.

**Student Survey Results.** Along with students in mainstream *READ 180* and Freshman Reading, the students in the special education classes of *READ 180* were also administered the reading survey. Of the 18 students in the program, 13 completed surveys. Some students were absent. Attachment 2 shows the results for this group of students as well as mainstream students.

- In response to a question asking students how much they understand when they read for science, math, English, or history class...
  - A large percentage of students indicated that they understand a lot or nearly all of the material for English (85%). Percentages were lower for history (42%), math (25%) and science (42%).
  - Generally, 70 percent or more of students report using specific strategies that are taught in the literacy program.
  - Percentages were slightly higher for special education students than their mainstream counterparts for the item, "How often did you read for fun this semester?"
  - About 58 percent of students reported that their literacy teachers encouraged them to do better in class more than six times in the semester.
  - Two-thirds or more of students...
    - Think reading is a good use of time.
    - Think reading is interesting.
    - Share what they read with others.
    - Report that there are a lot of reading materials at home.
  - Only 39 percent like to read a book when they have free time and only 23 percent report going to the library or bookstore to read.



Students were also asked open-ended questions. Some representative responses to these items are:

*Item: "What do you like about your READ 180 class?"*

- "I like *READ 180* because it's a good use of time and I get to learn about things I did not know!"
- "I learn new words everyday and we read."

*Item: "What do you think needs to be improved about your READ 180 class?"*

- "Maybe more programs on the computer."
- I think *READ 180* is a good class and it should stay the same.
- "I have improved my reading, which I have a good flow as I read. If you join *READ 180*, your reading habits will improve."

Since the special education component of *READ 180* is new, teachers in this program were interviewed to gather background on implementation and feedback. Teachers generally like the program because they believe it is age-appropriate, engages students, has high interest reading material, and addresses fluency. It is rich in supplementary materials and well organized. Teachers report that students like it, find the activities varied, and do not mind the double period. When asked about weaknesses, teachers indicated that non-readers are not addressed well by the *READ 180* program. Teachers have modified the rotation focused on independent reading because they report students get distracted easily and have hard time being independent. Some students get tired of the routine, and students sometimes spend a lot of time on the spelling portion which is the least valuable of the skill sets offered. Also, they say that it will take two years to really learn the program because of the range and quantity of materials.

## Summary

### What is working?

- Students generally like their literacy classes, and report that they are learning and using reading strategies.
- Fifty percent of 2006-07 *READ 180* students improved their lexile score by 50 or more points; 34 percent of students improved their lexile score by 100 or more points.
- Students who were in *READ 180* in 2005-06 showed some improvement from EXPLORE to PLAN. Scores shifted upward and more students placed in the second and third quartiles on PLAN compared to EXPLORE.
- Attendance in freshman literacy courses improved in 2006-07 compared to the last two years. For example, in 2004-05, the percentage of NC grades for *READ 180* classes was 17 percent while in 2006-07, the percentage of NC grades was 9 percent. For Freshman Reading students, the NC percentage decreased from 12 percent in 2005-06 to 3 percent in 2006-07.
- Some students move into mainstream and even honors courses after their freshman year. While some of these students are struggling in these courses, others are maintaining a "C" or better.
- For the *READ 180* course in special education:
  - This school year is the first time that this course is being offered. Teachers feel the *READ 180* course is rich in materials, well-organized, engaging, age-appropriate and addresses fluency.
  - Of the 13 students for whom there were pre/post SRI test scores, 77 percent of them gained 50 points or more and 54 percent made a gain of 100 or more points.
  - Students like their *READ 180* class and report that they are using the reading strategies taught in the *READ 180* program.

### What Needs to be Changed?

- It is clear that teachers are working hard and provide examples of successes and progress. Student feedback is positive as well. However, the data indicate that the progress is not what we would like to see and believe can happen.

- o Although half of the students in *READ 180* increase their lexile score by 50 points, 41 percent show a decrease in their lexile score.
- o Although one-quarter of Freshman Reading students increase their percentile score from the EXPLORE to PLAN test and move into the third quartile after their freshman year, about 20 percent more of students fall into the bottom quartile after their freshman year.
- o Students in the Literacy Program have not learned the fundamentals of reading comprehension over their nine years of schooling. More discrete targets need to be set for students and monitored over time.
- o The present assessment system is not sufficient for diagnosing and monitoring change. Although EXPLORE to PLAN provides good data, the attrition in this group of students from year to year means that we do not always have pre/post data. The DRP does not provide detailed diagnostic information and teachers are not always confident with the results of the SRI. Instead, a consistent within year pre/post assessment is needed that provides solid diagnostic information that teachers can trust.
- Placement and Exit Criteria need to be reviewed and clarified.
  - o At ETHS, we now have a number of programs in addition to the Literacy Program (e.g., The Academy, Special Education, Project EXCEL, etc.) that target struggling students. However, the criteria for placement into these programs are similar, and it is not always clear which program will best serve these struggling readers. Students are placed in one program and then later, it is discovered that these students have been placed in another program. The organization is large and communication vehicles have not been set up to work out these complex placement decisions.
  - o The multiple measures used for placement need to be reviewed to determine the best predictors for success in the various programs. For example, it is not clear whether the science reasoning EXPLORE score is a good predictor of a struggling reader.
  - o Currently, scores at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading are the ultimate criterion for exit out of the program. However, several measures are used and the PLAN score is not available until the end of the first semester of sophomore year. This is too late for making course decisions for sophomores. This is another reason why a more consistent assessment system in the freshman year might help to determine when to exit out of the program.
- Although attendance has improved for the freshman program, students continue to receive NC grades. A special intervention is needed to address this problem. Students cannot learn if they are not present in classes.
- There are several courses associated with the Literacy Program and it is not always clear how they fit together. Further, other programs such as The Academy, Project EXCEL and special education focus on literacy. A better-coordinated program is needed within and across programs.
- The Freshman Reading course has been in place for a while. Using the experience from the last couple years, the curriculum should be reviewed with the purpose of developing a written curriculum that identifies critical reading strategies for instruction that connect to English and history and other core academic classes.
- For the *READ 180* class in special education:
  - o Teachers indicate that non-readers are not addressed well by the *READ 180* program.
  - o Teachers have modified the rotation focused on independent reading because they report students are easily distracted and have a hard time being independent.
  - o Teachers say that it will take two years to really learn the program because of the range and quantity of materials.
  - o A large percentage (22%-28%) of students receive NC grades in reading, English and history. Teachers report that the NC grades are not a result of students avoiding this particular class; rather they miss class because of extenuating circumstances such as incarceration, suspension or family circumstances.

# Attachment 1

## Attachment 1

### Literacy Program Description

The Literacy Program is designed to provide support for students who enter ETHS reading below grade level. The program is comprised of a sequence of courses that provide reading instruction and show students how to use these skills in their other courses. The program is intended to “catch up” many students so they will exit from the program at the end of the freshman or sophomore year. However, some students require ongoing support. The Literacy Program is comprised of the following components:

- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities Enriched:** Two credits are awarded, one each in history and English. Instruction is implemented in a two-period block. This program includes reading strategies across the curriculum, writing, vocabulary, study skills, and technology skills. Students are placed in this course sequence if they fall in the 1<sup>st</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading based tests (Reading and Science) on the EXPLORE, and these scores are consistent with scores on a second reading assessment, the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) administered in February to eighth graders.
- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Enriched/READ 180:** Two elective credits are awarded for this 90-minute class. Students are placed in this class if they fall in the 1<sup>st</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading-based tests (Reading and Science) on the EXPLORE and these scores are consistent with the DRP scores. *READ 180* is an intensive reading intervention program that offers: 1) technology-based assessment; 2) individualized instruction; and 3) a variety of materials at all instructional levels. The class begins and ends with whole-group instruction. Within the class period, students are divided into three small groups that rotate among three stations. The three small group rotations are: meeting with the teacher to receive specific instruction on skills at the students’ level; use of the *READ 180* software in intensive, individualized skills practice; and independent work in reading and writing using the paperbacks and audio books.
- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading:** One elective credit is awarded. Students are placed in this course if they fall in the 29<sup>th</sup> – 49<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading-based tests on the EXPLORE and these scores are consistent with the DRP score. This yearlong course provides reading instruction to enable the students to achieve in regular level classes. It includes reading strategies across the curriculum, vocabulary, writing, study skills, and technology skills.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities Enriched:** Two credits are awarded, one each in history and English. Instruction is implemented in a two-period block. The English instructor in this team is also a reading teacher. Students are placed here if they need continued help in reading and/or if they perform poorly on the Freshman Writing Proficiency Common Assessment and are recommended by their current teachers.
- **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Interventions:** In *3 English 1* and *4 English 1* classes students receive explicit literacy instruction. Students are placed in these classes if they need continued help in reading and/or if they perform poorly on the Sophomore Literary Analysis Common Assessment and are recommended by their current English teachers.

# Attachment 2

**Attachment 2.**

**Freshman Reading/READ 180 Literacy Program Student Survey - 2007**

**Student Survey: How much do you understand when you read material for the following classes?**

	2003-04	2005-06	2006-07	2006-2007 Subgroup:		2006-2007
	READ 180	READ 180	Total Group	READ 180	Frosh Reading	Special Ed
	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all	A lot/All or nearly all
English	76%	74%	66%	65%	68%	85%
History	68%	36%	58%	65%	54%	42%
Science	12%	26%	41%	39%	41%	42%
Math	76%	57%	69%	67%	71%	25%

*NOTE:* Data for the Total Group in 2006-07 includes the READ 180 and Frosh Reading subgroups. Previous years only included data for the READ 180 students.

**Student Survey: How often do you use the following strategies when reading?**

		Number of Responses	Sometimes/ Often
I connect what I read to my life.	2003-04	34	71%
	2005-06	49	83%
	2006-07	106	77%
	READ 180	43	79%
	Frosh Reading	60	77%
	Special Ed	13	69%
I think about what I already know about a topic to help me understand what I am reading	2003-04	34	77%
	2005-06	49	94%
	2006-07	106	82%
	READ 180	43	84%
	Frosh Reading	58	81%
	Special Ed	13	100%
I make predictions about what might happen next.	2003-04	34	77%
	2005-06	49	86%
	2006-07	106	84%
	READ 180	43	84%
	Frosh Reading	60	83%
	Special Ed	13	100%
I look for specific information about what happened when, how and where it happened.	2003-04	34	59%
	2005-06	49	88%
	2006-07	106	79%
	READ 180	43	79%
	Frosh Reading	60	82%
	Special Ed	13	100%
I guess meanings of words I don't know from the context.	2003-04	34	82%
	2005-06	49	83%
	2006-07	106	81%
	READ 180	43	74%
	Frosh Reading	60	83%
	Special Ed	12	75%
I look for the main idea.	2003-04	34	82%
	2005-06	49	86%
	2006-07	106	87%
	READ 180	43	86%
	Frosh Reading	58	86%
	Special Ed	13	100%

		Number of Responses	Sometimes/ Often
I read the words under pictures and graphs.	2003-04	34	85%
	2005-06	49	92%
	2006-07	106	85%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	84%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	60	95%
	<i>Special Ed</i>	13	92%
I highlight or take notes on important information as I read.	2003-04	34	62%
	2005-06	49	89%
	2006-07	106	63%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	72%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	60	57%
	<i>Special Ed</i>	13	69%
I re-read sections to understand what I am reading better.	2003-04	34	74%
	2005-06	49	96%
	2006-07	106	86%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	91%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	59	81%
	<i>Special Ed</i>	13	69%
I read slower to understand difficult material better.	2003-04	34	88%
	2005-06	49	88%
	2006-07	106	80%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	84%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	60	77%
	<i>Special Ed</i>	13	85%
I make inferences about the text after I'm done reading.	2003-04	NA	NA
	2005-06	49	83%
	2006-07	106	78%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	79%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	60	78%
	<i>Special Ed</i>	13	85%

Student Survey: Teacher Encouragement and Miscellaneous

How often did you read for fun this semester? (magazines, newspapers, poetry, books and on-line "e-zines" or articles)	Number of Responses	1-2 times a week	Almost every day	
		2003-04	34	32%
2005-06	48	17%	35%	
2006-07	103	27%	22%	
<i>READ 180</i>	40	25%	20%	
<i>Frosh Reading</i>	60	27%	25%	
<i>Special Ed</i>	13	8%	31%	
How comfortable do you feel coming to a "Literacy" teacher for help with class work?	Number of Responses	Comfortable	Very comfortable	
2003-04	34	35%	24%	
2005-06	48	38%	35%	
2006-07	105	36%	26%	
<i>READ 180</i>	43	40%	30%	
<i>Frosh Reading</i>	59	34%	22%	
<i>Special Ed</i>	13	23%	39%	

How well do "Literacy" teachers know what you are capable of doing academically?		Number of Responses	They somewhat know	They really know	
	2003-04	34	42%	42%	
	2005-06	48	54%	38%	
	2006-07	103	48%	40%	
	<i>READ 180</i>	42	45%	45%	
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	58	50%	34%	
<i>Special Ed</i>	13	23%	69%		
How often during this semester has a "Literacy" teacher congratulated you on a good grade or other academic achievement?		Number of Responses	3-4 times	5-6 times	More than 6 times
	2003-04	34	24%	21%	9%
	2005-06	48	42%	15%	15%
	2006-07	105	30%	11%	20%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	21%	14%	21%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	59	37%	10%	20%
<i>Special Ed</i>	13	23%	23%	31%	
How often during this semester has a "Literacy" teacher encouraged you to do better in class?		Number of Responses	3-4 times	5-6 times	More than 6 times
	2003-04	34	21%	15%	27%
	2005-06	48	25%	21%	29%
	2006-07	100	18%	14%	32%
	<i>READ 180</i>	43	19%	9%	44%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	54	15%	19%	24%
<i>Special Ed</i>	12	0%	17%	58%	
How many minutes a day do you read silently in school?		Number of Responses	11-20 minutes	21-30 minutes	More than 30 minutes
	2003-04	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005-06	46	43%	33%	15%
	2006-07	90	50%	24%	16%
	<i>READ 180</i>	34	59%	26%	6%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	54	44%	22%	22%
<i>Special Ed</i>	10	30%	40%	20%	
How many minutes a day do you read at home?		Number of Responses	11-20 minutes	21-30 minutes	More than 30 minutes
	2003-04	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005-06	45	40%	20%	4%
	2006-07	101	21%	24%	13%
	<i>READ 180</i>	42	21%	21%	12%
	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	56	21%	23%	14%
<i>Special Ed</i>	9	22%	33%	22%	

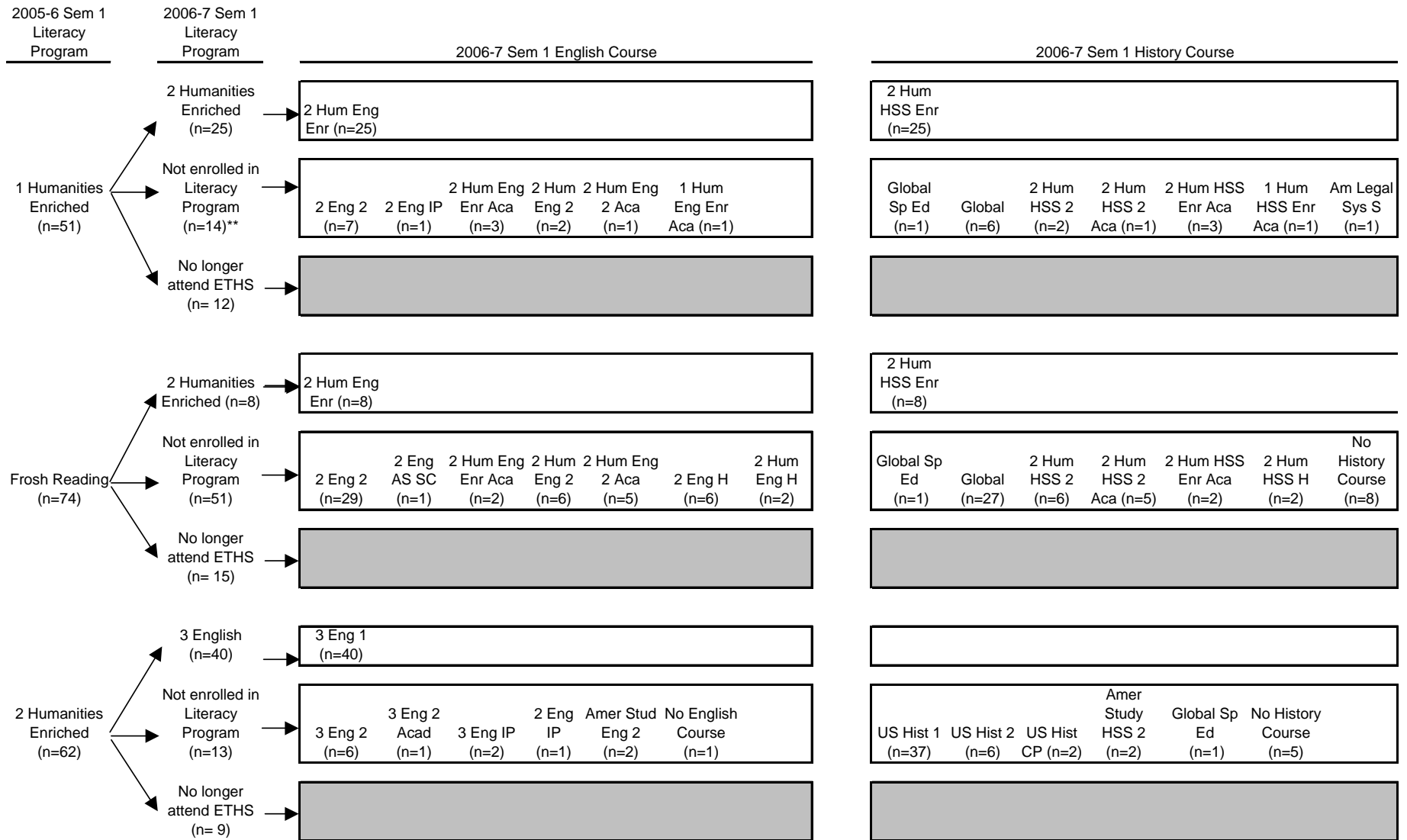
Student Survey: Attitudes Toward Reading

	2005-06	2006-07			
		Total Group	<i>READ 180</i>	<i>Frosh Reading</i>	<i>Special Ed</i>
	Agree/Strongly agree	Agree/Strongly agree	Agree/Strongly agree	Agree/Strongly agree	Agree/Strongly agree
I like to buy books.	31%	42%	33%	50%	31%
I like to read a book when I have the free time.	35%	43%	44%	41%	39%
I get excited about some of the books I read.	67%	70%	65%	73%	46%
I think reading is a good use of time.	77%	63%	65%	59%	69%
I think reading is interesting.	71%	69%	79%	59%	69%
I like to read to escape from problems.	26%	27%	14%	33%	23%
I like to broaden my interests through reading.	29%	37%	30%	42%	31%
I like to receive books as gifts.	20%	24%	21%	27%	8%
I share what I read with others.	62%	66%	67%	63%	69%
There are a lot of reading materials at home: books, magazines, etc.	90%	84%	81%	85%	85%
I read with my parents.	16%	14%	16%	12%	15%
I go to the library or bookstore to read.	35%	34%	30%	37%	23%



# Attachment 3

**2005-6 to 2006-7 Literacy Program Course Tracking**



**\*\*NOTE:** 1 student took two English courses (1 Hum Eng Enr Aca & 2 Hum Eng Enr Aca) and two history courses (1 Hum HSS Enr Aca & 2 Hum HSS Enr Aca) courses in 06-07 Sem 1