

Nelson County Mobile Preschool

NELSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NELSON, VIRGINIA

DISTRICT PROFILE

3,133 STUDENTS GRADES PRE-K - 12
80% White
19% African-American
1% Hispanic/Asian/American Indian

PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ IMPLEMENTATION

- Classroom/Family Homework Model
- Preschool, Began September 1999
- 100% Home Deployment
- Pre-Reading and Math Concepts Focus

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Screening Test for Educational Prerequisite Skills (STEPS)

RESEARCH TIME FRAME

2002-03 School Year

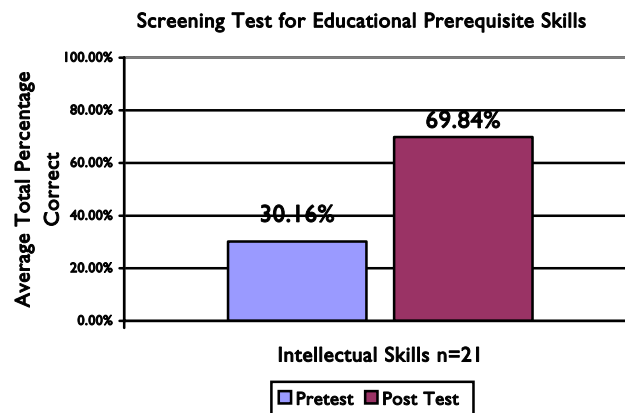
NELSON COUNTY MOBILE PRESCHOOL UNIT STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED GAINS ON THE SCREENING TEST FOR EDUCATIONAL PREREQUISITE SKILLS

DURING THE 2002-03 SCHOOL YEAR, PRESCHOOL STUDENTS POSTED GAINS IN INTELLECTUAL SKILLS, VERBAL INFORMATION, AND COGNITIVE STRATEGIES, AS MEASURED BY THE SCREENING TEST FOR EDUCATIONAL PREREQUISITE SKILLS (STEPS). SPECIFICALLY, STUDENTS MADE AN AVERAGE GAIN OF 39.68 (p<.001) PERCENTAGE POINTS IN INTELLECTUAL SKILLS, 17.46 (p<.001) PERCENTAGE POINTS IN VERBAL INFORMATION, AND 4.76 (p=.214) PERCENTAGE POINTS IN COGNITIVE STRATEGIES WHEN FALL AND SPRING SCORES WERE COMPARED. STEPS POST-TEST SCORES ALSO SHOW THAT 47.62% OF PRESCHOOL STUDENTS REACHED THE MAXIMUM SCORE IN INTELLECTUAL SKILLS, 71.43% REACHED THE MAXIMUM SCORE IN VERBAL INFORMATION, AND 76.19% REACHED THE MAXIMUM SCORE IN COGNITIVE STRATEGIES.

NELSON COUNTY MOBILE PRESCHOOL PURCHASED PLATO ACHIEVE NOW™ WITH TITLE I FUNDS IN SEPTEMBER 1999. THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAM WAS TO INCREASE LITERACY AND MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH EARLY INTERVENTION AND PARENT EDUCATION. STUDENTS USED PLATO ACHIEVE NOW IN THE CLASSROOM AND WERE ASSIGNED ONE ACHIEVE NOW ADVENTURES® LANGUAGE ARTS OR MATHEMATICS CD PER TWO-WEEK PERIOD FOR HOME USE. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS USING THE SCREENING TEST FOR EDUCATIONAL SKILLS TOOK PLACE IN SEPTEMBER 2002 AND MAY 2003. FAMILIES PROVIDED FEEDBACK ABOUT THE PROGRAM AT THE END OF THE YEAR BY COMPLETING A PLATO ACHIEVE NOW QUESTIONNAIRE.

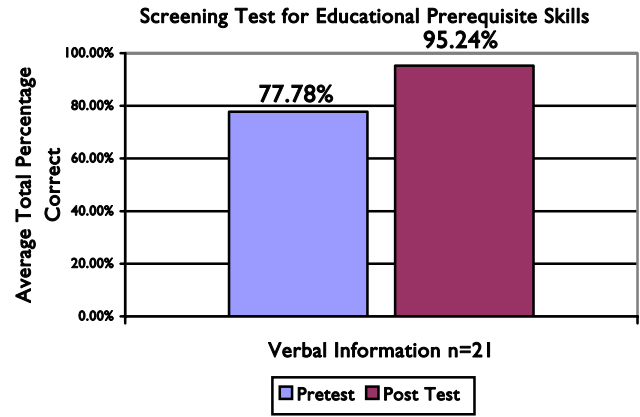
Significant gains posted by preschool students in Intellectual Skills

Preschool students using PLATO Achieve Now realized an average gain of 39.68 percentage points in Intellectual Skills when pre- and post-test scores were compared. Students scored an average of 30.16% on the pretest and 69.84% on the posttest in Intellectual Skills. The gain is statistically significant.



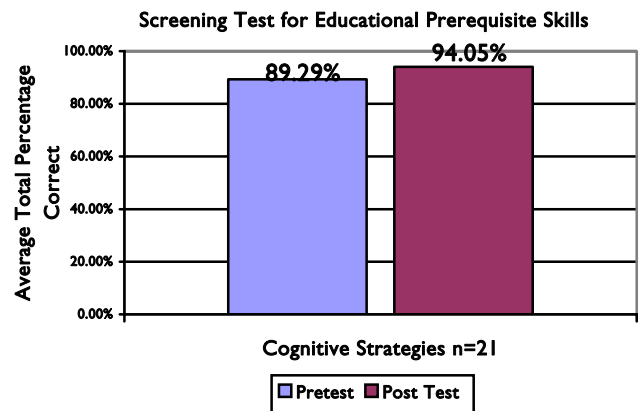
Verbal Information scores reveal gains made by preschool students

On the STEPS assessment, preschool students demonstrated an average gain of 17.46 percentage points in Verbal Information when pre- and post-test scores were compared. Students scored an average of 77.78% in Verbal Information on the pretest and 95.24% on the posttest. The gain is statistically significant.



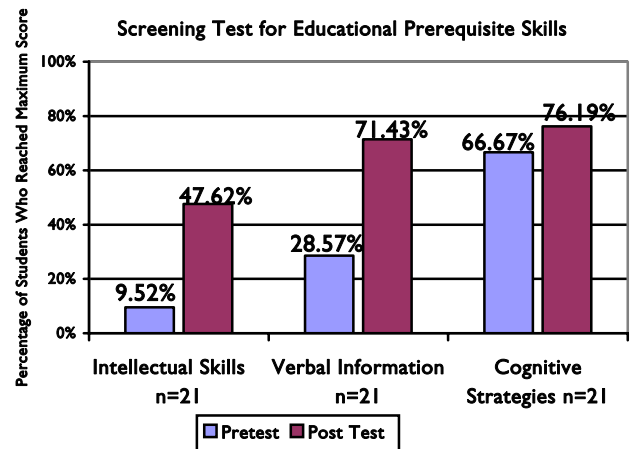
Preschool students improve in Cognitive Strategies scores

On the Cognitive Strategies subtest of the STEPS assessment, preschool students made an average gain of 4.76 percentage points when pre- and post-test scores were compared. Students scored an average of 89.29% in Cognitive Strategies on the pretest and 94.05% on the posttest. The gain is not statistically significant.



Maximum STEPS scores met by preschool students

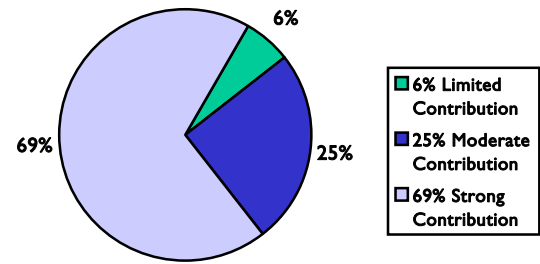
On the spring Screening Test for Educational Prerequisite Skills (STEPS), 47.62% of preschool students using PLATO Achieve Now reached the maximum score for Intellectual Skills, 71.43% reached the maximum score for Verbal Information, and 76.19% reached the maximum score for Cognitive Strategies.



Families note PLATO Achieve Now as a moderate to strong contributor to their child's reading performance

On the PLATO Achieve Now survey conducted at the end of the year 94% of families of preschool students reported that they felt PLATO Achieve Now made a moderate to strong contribution to their child's performance in reading.

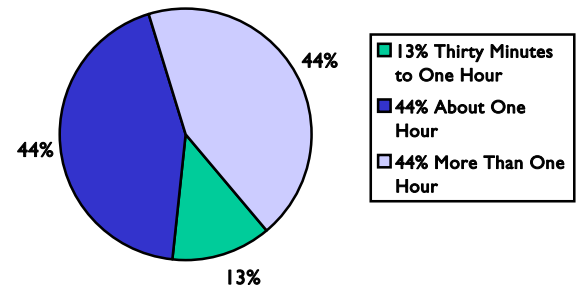
Families' Opinion About PLATO Achieve Now as a Contributor to Their Child's Performance in Reading



Families note time spent working with their child

At home, 88% of families reported they averaged one hour or more per day working with their child on PLATO Achieve Now. Thirteen percent of families reported working with their child thirty minutes to one hour per day, 44% of families reported working with their child about an hour per day, and 44% reported working more than one hour per day on PLATO Achieve Now.*

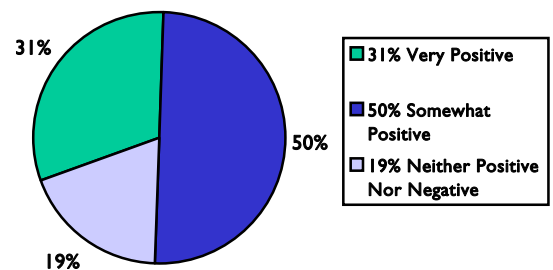
Impact of PLATO Achieve Now on Time Spent Working At Home With Children



Families report positive reaction to PLATO Achieve Now

On the PLATO Achieve Now survey conducted at the end of the school year, 81% of families of preschool students reported they felt somewhat or very positive about the PLATO Achieve Now program.

Families' Overall Reaction to PLATO Achieve Now



* Due to rounding, the sum of percentages may not equal to 100%.

Nelson County Mobile Preschool Program Background

The Nelson County Mobile Preschool program is located in rural Nelson County, Virginia and students completing the program attend kindergarten in Nelson County Public Schools. The classroom is housed in a small bus that travels to four locations throughout the county in public places where electricity is available. Students are transported to these locations by their parents or other caregivers. The program serves 23 students, who are divided into four groups. Each group of students attends either morning or afternoon sessions twice a week. The Nelson County Public Schools mission states: "Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing and creative environment for learning. In partnership with families and community, we are committed to providing quality instruction that fosters student success, respect, and diversity. We strive to enable students to become skilled, responsible, and contributing members of our global society."

Nelson County Mobile Preschool began implementing the standards-based PLATO Achieve Now™ curriculum in September 1999 with all enrolled preschool students to complement the High Scope Curriculum. This curriculum is based on a program of active learning in which teachers serve as facilitators by creating opportunities for the students to undertake self-planned activities and reflect on those activities. Teachers support learning by providing materials, adequate space, and a consistent daily routine. Adults strive to understand each child's developmental status and to provide direct and appropriate support of his or her activities based on the Key Experiences of the High Scope educational approach. The Key Experiences include creative representation, language and literacy, initiative and social relationships, movement, music, classification, seriation, numbers, space, and time.

Professional development was provided throughout the year, and included modeling of classroom lessons, analysis of student data, and alignment of program materials to student needs. The classroom teachers used PLATO Achieve Now to reinforce curriculum content in the classroom and at home. Students took home one language arts Achieve Now Adventures® CD every two weeks and were encouraged to explore the learning activities contained on that CD at least three times per week. Students have access to a PLATO® learning center in their classroom which is used for whole group instruction as well as independent and small group practice. In support of Nelson County's commitment to family involvement, three family nights were held during the 2002-03 school year to provide time for parents and students to interact with Achieve Now programs. Opportunities were also provided to familiarize families with the goals of the PLATO Achieve Now program as well as to celebrate student successes.

Results of the implementation were measured by spring and fall administrations of the Screening Test for Educational Prerequisite Skills, teacher surveys, and family surveys. Future plans for the PLATO Achieve Now program include continuing to use the program with preschool students. The preschool program plans to continue to research other funding sources to support the professional development component of the program. Through PLATO, access to technology has been made available in an equitable manner for all preschool students. Furthermore, the PLATO Achieve Now program involved families in their children's education, linked families to the school, and motivated student learning at school and at home.



Real learning. Real results.™