



November 2023

DIBS for Kids

Impact Evaluation Results

Prepared By Category One Consulting

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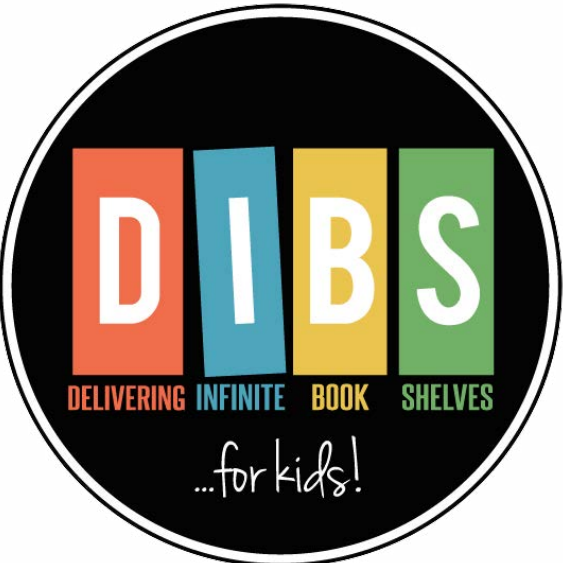


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About **DIBS for Kids**

History & Overview

DIBS for Kids is an Omaha-based non-profit that seeks to help schools provide every child with access to powerful in-home reading experiences every school night.



2011

DIBS for Kids was founded in 2011 and is currently supported by 2 full-time staff members and nine board members.

K-3rd

DIBS is focused on serving K-3rd grade classrooms due to the well-documented connection between 3rd grade reading proficiency and other important academic and life outcomes.

70%

OPS has 34 elementary schools with poverty rates over 70%. DIBS for Kids envisions significant literacy gains for Omaha students if they can support enough of these schools.

2021-22

Program Numbers



215 classrooms across **18** schools used the DIBS program



4,466 elementary students were served



788,924 books were taken home

DIBS continues to expand its services to additional schools and classrooms each year.

The Need for DIBS

Students growing up in poverty face many obstacles to reading.



61% of kids growing up in poverty don't have a single age-appropriate book in their homes. As a result, those students tend to experience significantly less one-on-one reading time.



Many empirical research studies have provided strong evidence of relationships among access to books in the home, time spent reading, and reading achievement.



After 3rd grade, the classroom dynamic changes from Learning to Read to Reading to Learn. If kids don't meet this milestone, it can impact the rest of their lives.



How DIBS Works

The DIBS process tackles the three largest obstacles to youth reading.

Access

DIBS raises funds to equip elementary classrooms with infinite – yes, infinite! – books for students to take home and read every school night.

Inventory

Kids choose and check out these books using kid-friendly QR-code-scanning technology that keeps track of book inventory, so teachers don't have to.

Participation

The DIBS system records how often students are checking out books, and teachers use that information to keep kids on track and encourage them to read at home.



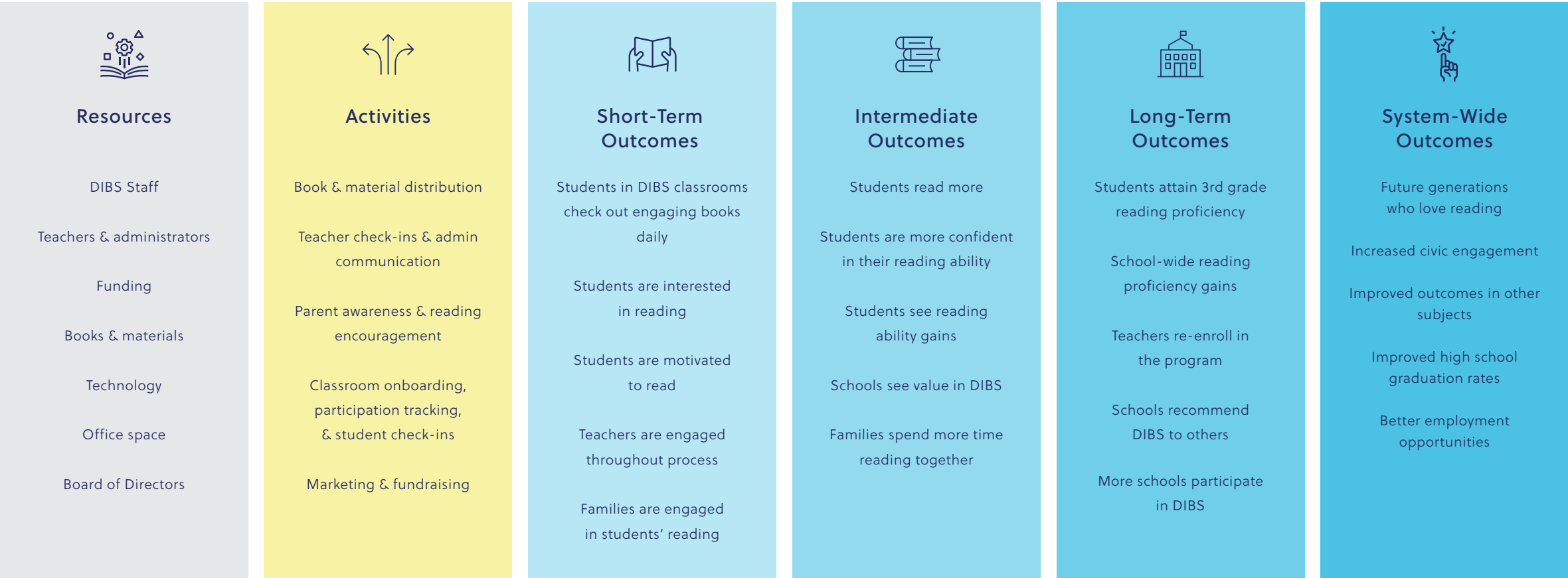
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Impact Evaluation Overview

Impact Evaluation Overview

Category One Consulting (C1C) partnered with DIBS to assess whether the program is achieving its intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes as outlined in the logic model below.

→ Intended Impact DIBS for Kids seeks to ensure all children in Omaha elementary schools with poverty rates over 70% are supported to read a book at home, every night, for fun. Doing so will result in nationally-significant literacy gains across the community.



Research Design

The impact evaluation consisted of a multi-year longitudinal design that followed two separate cohorts of DIBS students and was intended to answer three major impact-related research questions.



Research Questions

- Do program activities lead to the intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes above and beyond other factors?
- Which activities have the biggest impact on program outcomes?
- What factors (e.g., student characteristics, teacher practices, etc.) influence the relationship between activities and outcomes?



Research Design Details

Archival data related to student achievement and DIBS program participation were collected at the end of the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

The use of control groups established through matched sampling techniques allowed for identification of the unique impact of DIBS on reading achievement.

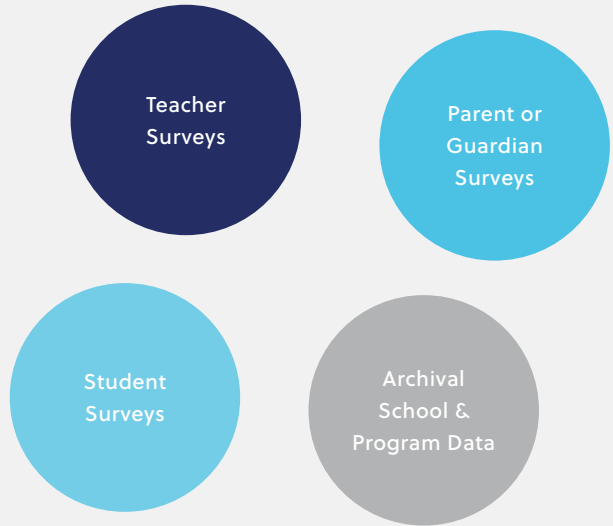
Teacher, student, and parent surveys were also conducted to assess participant perceptions and supplement archival data.

Archival and survey data were combined and analyzed to answer all impact-related research questions.



Data Sources

Evaluation findings were based on data gathered from four different sources.





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Teacher Feedback

Survey Participants

Teachers provided feedback on the DIBS program via an electronic survey in the spring of 2022 and spring of 2023. The response rate for both years was approximately 55%.



Teacher Ratings

Teachers rated all aspects of the DIBS program very positively with nearly all saying they intend to continue using the DIBS program next year.

Average Perception Score 1 = Strongly Disagree, 10=Strongly Agree



Additional Teacher Feedback

Teachers greatly appreciate that DIBS provides age-appropriate and engaging books for all their students. Key themes from teacher responses to open-ended items are highlighted below.



Note: Percentages indicate the percentage of respondents mentioning each theme.

Teacher Quotes

Below are some key quotes teachers provided about the DIBS program.



Teacher Suggestions

Teacher suggestions for improving DIBS for Kids are highlighted below. The most common suggestions focus on adding more book choices or materials for teachers and improving book check-out technology and software.



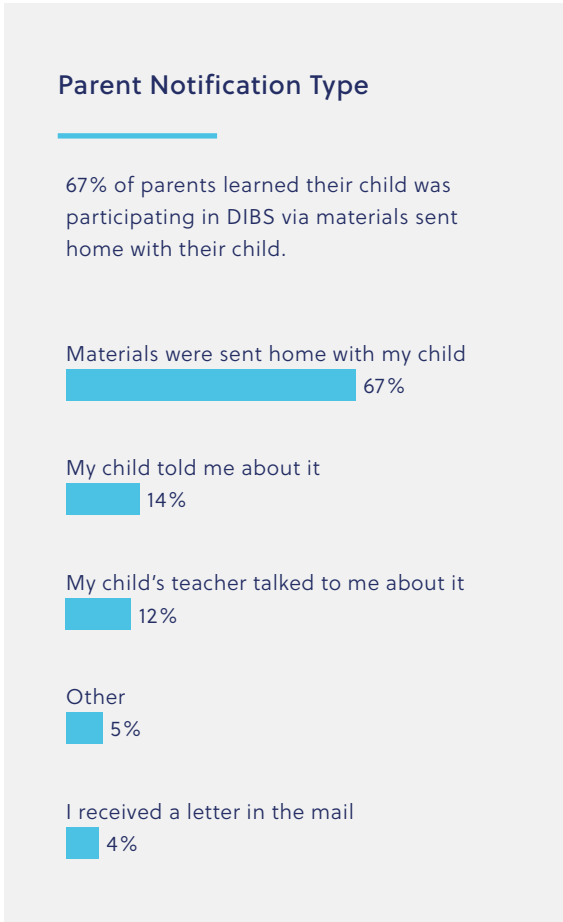
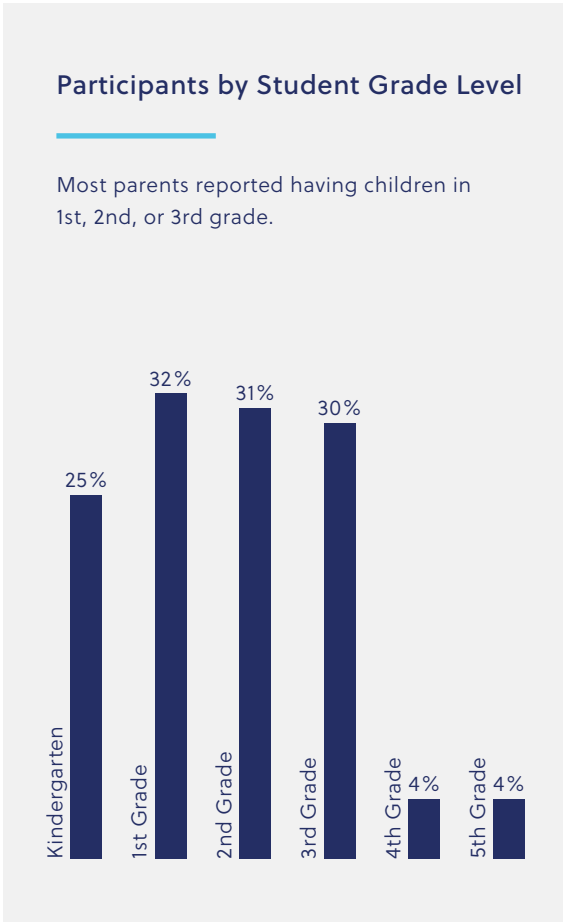
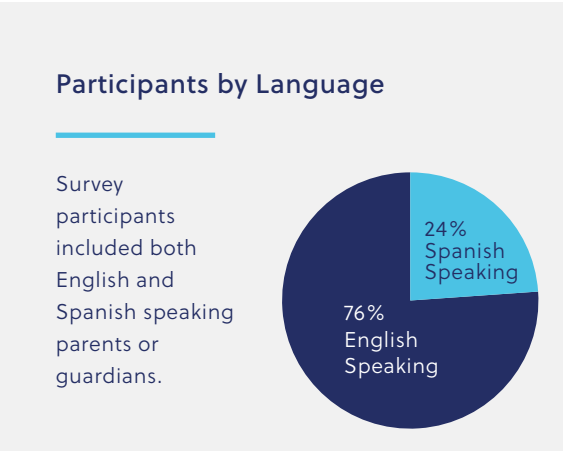
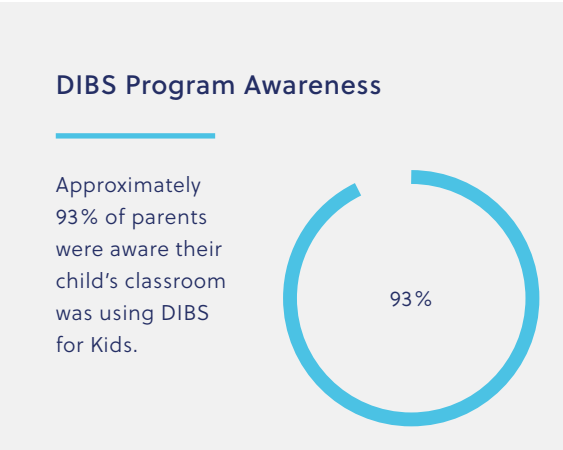


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Parent/Guardian Perceptions

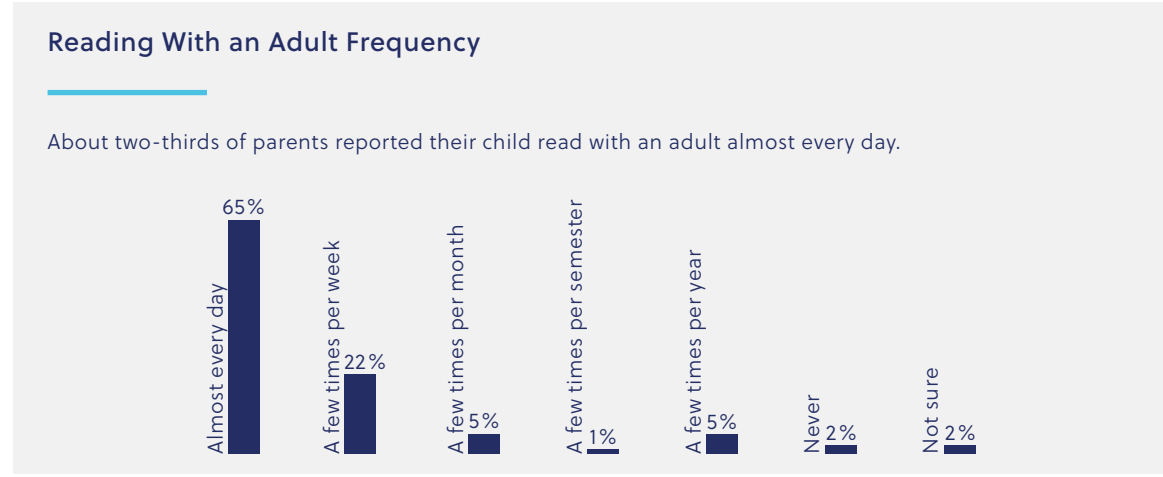
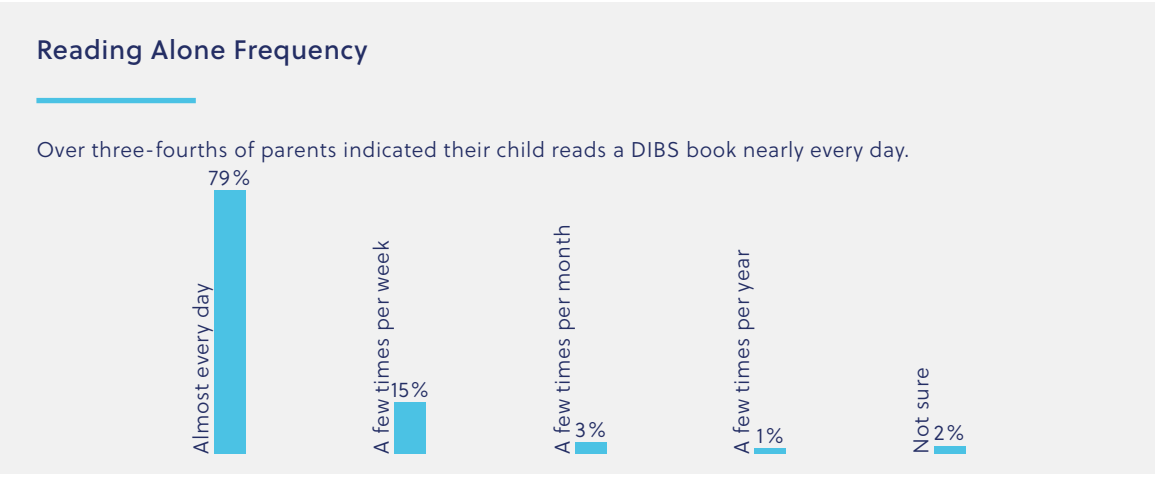
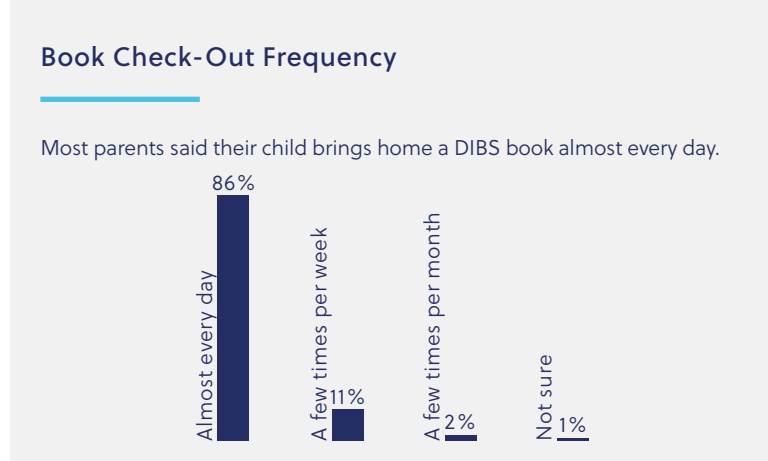
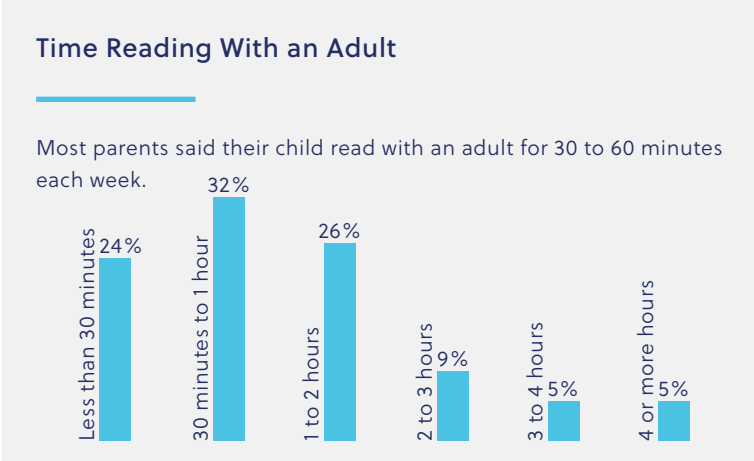
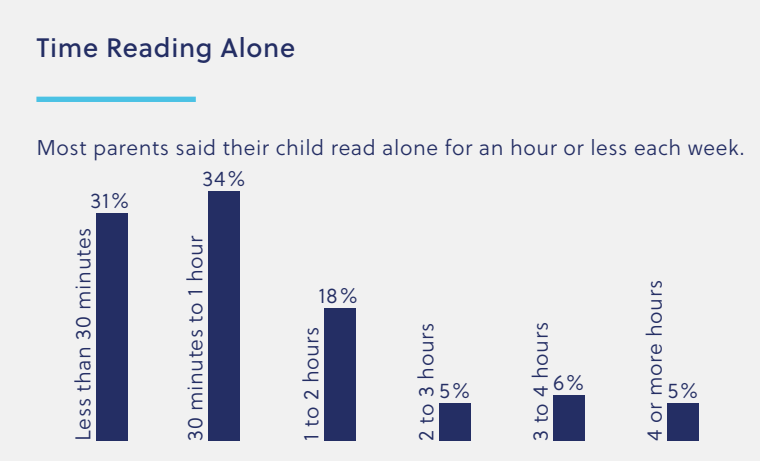
Survey Participants

Over 100 parents or guardians representing students across grades K-5 provided feedback on the DIBS program and their child's reading habits via an electronic survey.



Reading Habits

Student reading habit details as reported by parents or guardians are described below. Most said their children read alone or with an adult nearly every day.

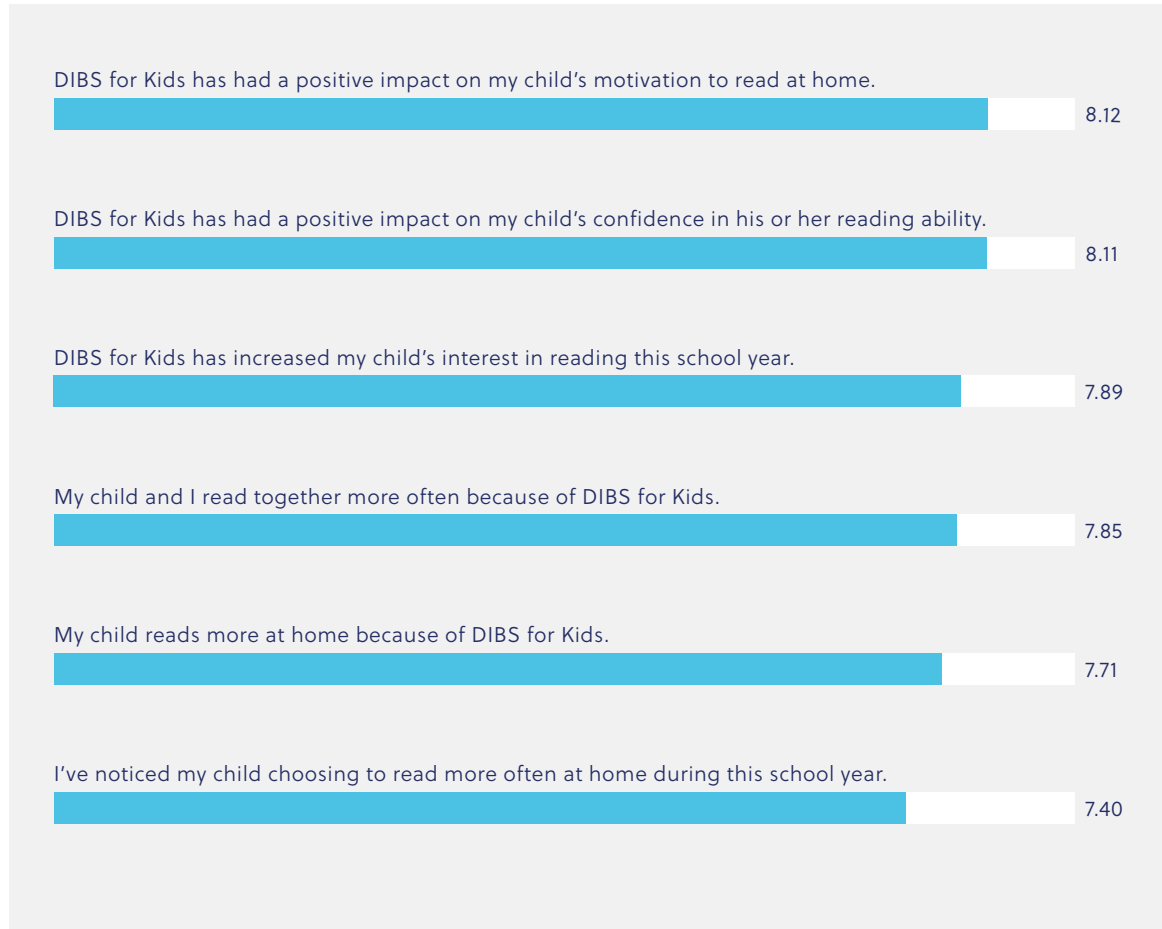


Parent/Guardian Ratings

Parents and guardians rated all aspects of the DIBS program very positively with the vast majority agreeing that DIBS positively impacted their child’s reading ability.

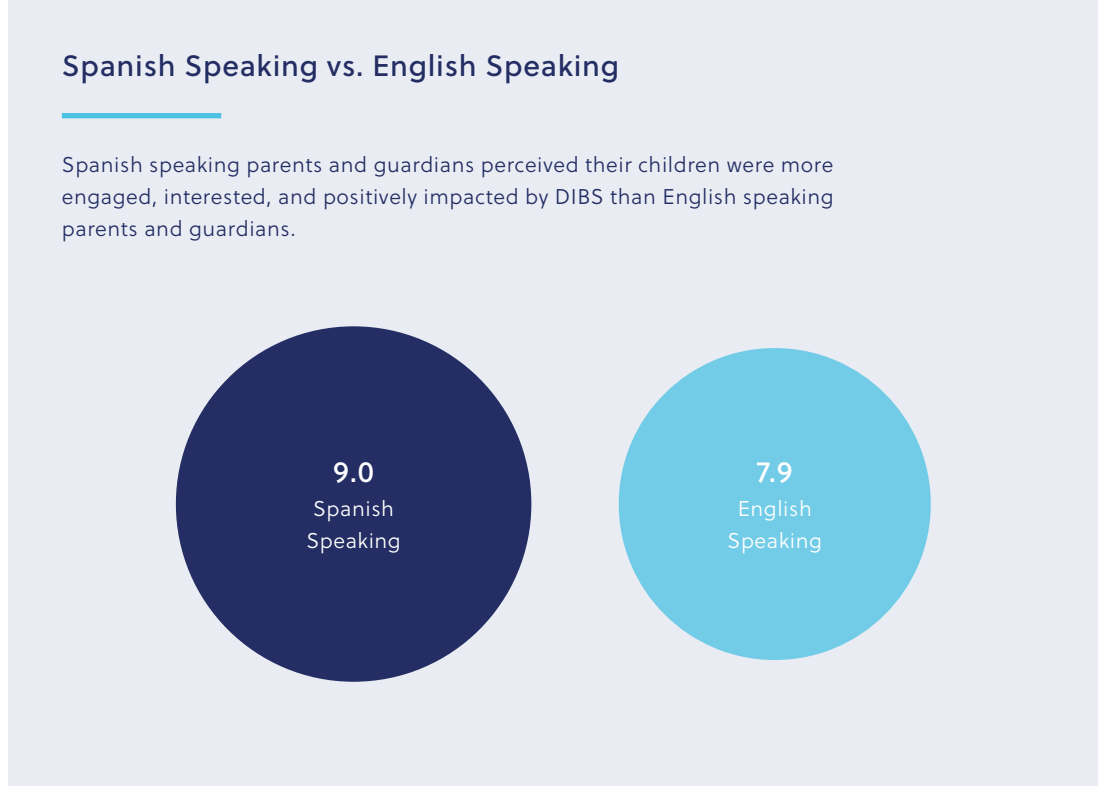
Average Perception Score

1 = Strongly Disagree, 10=Strongly Agree



Group Differences

Parents and guardians who read with their kids every day, as well as Spanish speaking parents and guardians, rated DIBS impact on their students higher on average.

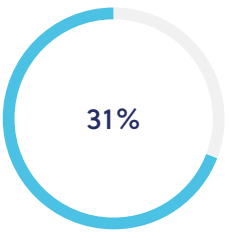


The numbers above indicate the average parent rating for each group on a scale of 1-Strongly Disagree to 10-Strongly Agree.

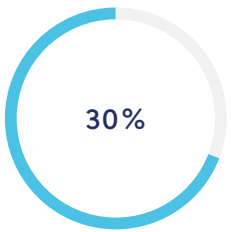
Additional Parent/Guardian Feedback

Parents/guardians reported several important benefits of the DIBS program. The most common benefits listed included that DIBS promotes more frequent reading in children and helps increase children’s reading ability.

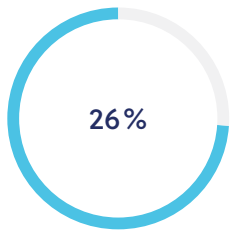
DIBS for Kids promotes more frequent reading in children.



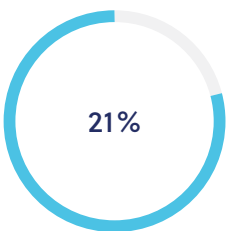
DIBS helps increase children's confidence, responsibility, and autonomy.



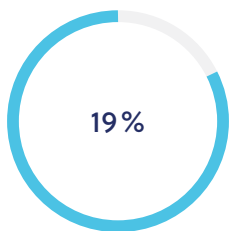
DIBS helps increase children's reading level and overall ability.



DIBS provides children with more reading options with broader topics.



DIBS facilitates children's interest and excitement for reading.



Note: Percentages indicate the percent of respondents mentioning each theme. N = 81

Parent/Guardian Quotes

Below are some key quotes parents/guardians provided about DIBS.



“Wish there were more advanced books available for the advanced readers. Otherwise, a wonderful program.”

“DIBS helps to hold my child accountable for her reading each day. DIBS has helped greatly in creating healthy habits after school by reading each day. My child actually looks forward to picking a new book each day.”

“I would like that the books on certain days were in Spanish so that reading in Spanish is also practiced.”

“Thanks for this amazing resource!!!”

“The DIBS program allows children of all walks of life to have access to literature which is very important in their learning journey. Thank you DIBS for all you do. ”

“It’s a great program and it helps children learn more and have more excitement around reading.”





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Student Perceptions

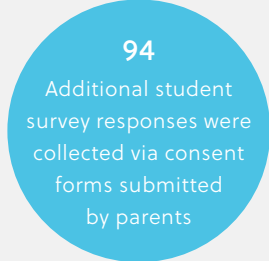
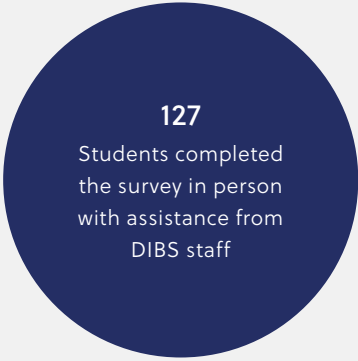
Survey Participants

A total of 127 students completed the DIBS student survey in person with assistance from DIBS staff. Participants were relatively evenly distributed across grades K-3.



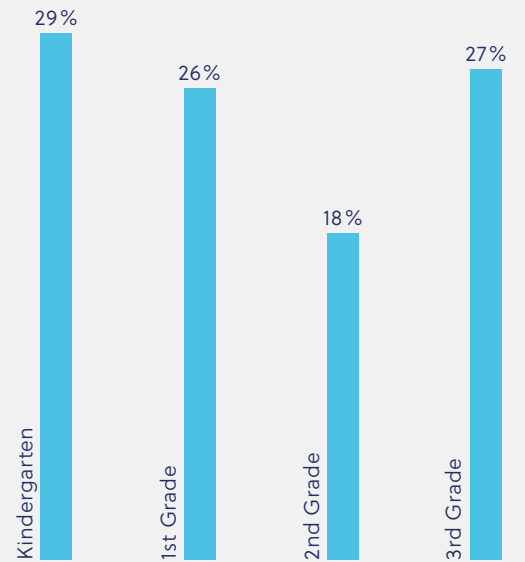
Total Student Survey Participants

In total, there were 221 responses collected from students spanning 12 different DIBS for Kids schools.



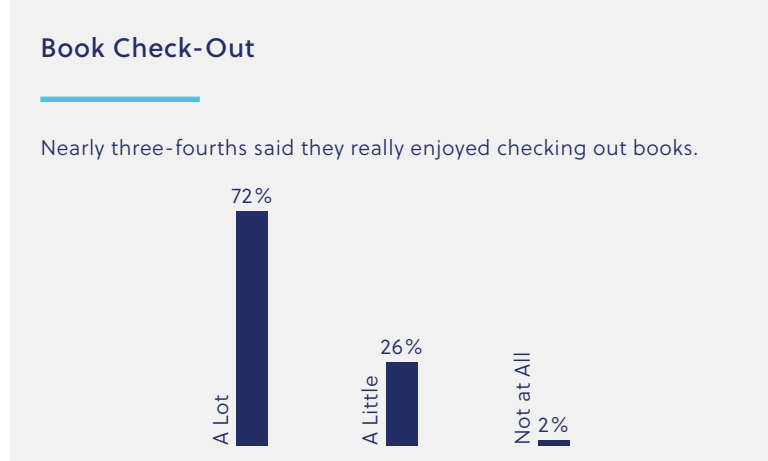
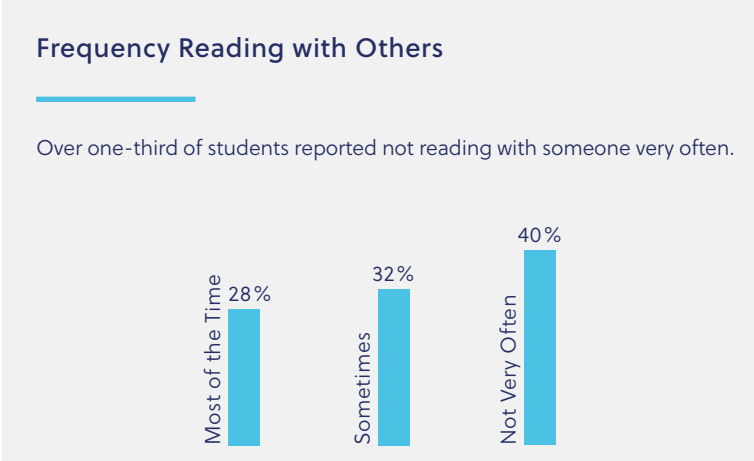
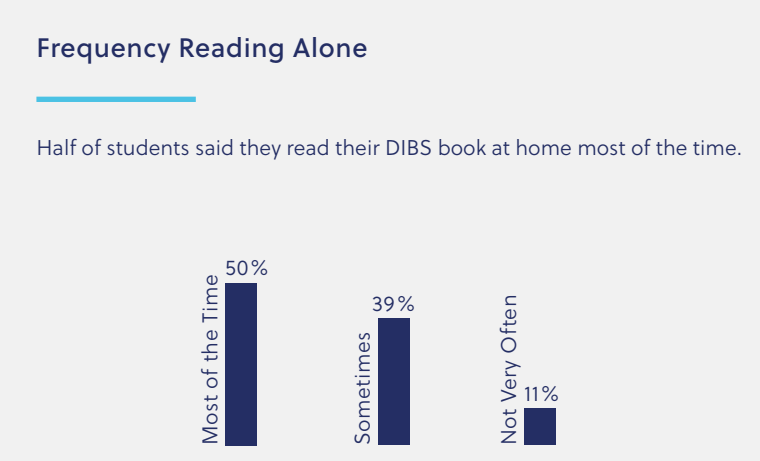
Participants by Grade Level

Survey participants were distributed across grade levels with the most respondents in Kindergarten.



Student Ratings

Student responses regarding their reading habits and opinions of DIBS are detailed below. Almost all said checking out DIBS books makes them excited to read.

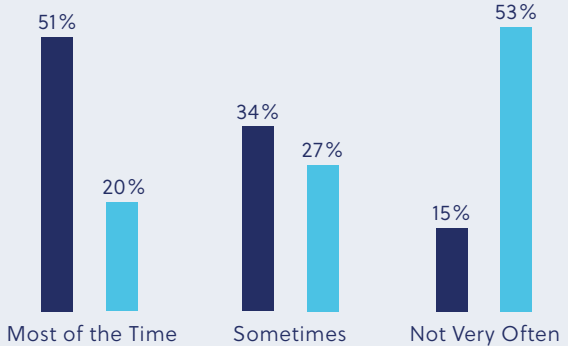


Group Differences

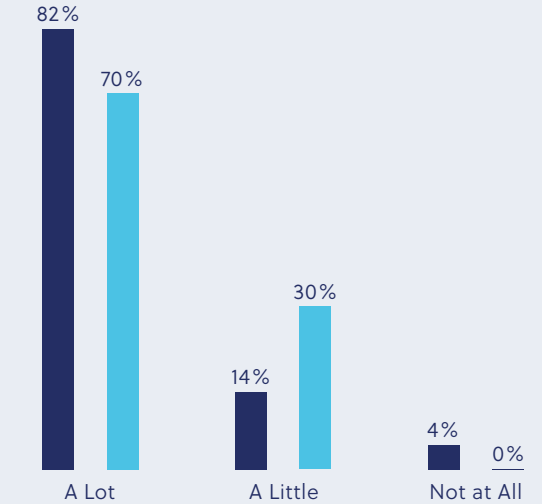
Analyses of group differences revealed that younger students were more likely to read a book with someone else and enjoyed checking out DIBS books more than older students.



How often does someone read your DIBS for Kids book with you at home?



How much do you like being able to check out DIBS for Kids books at school?

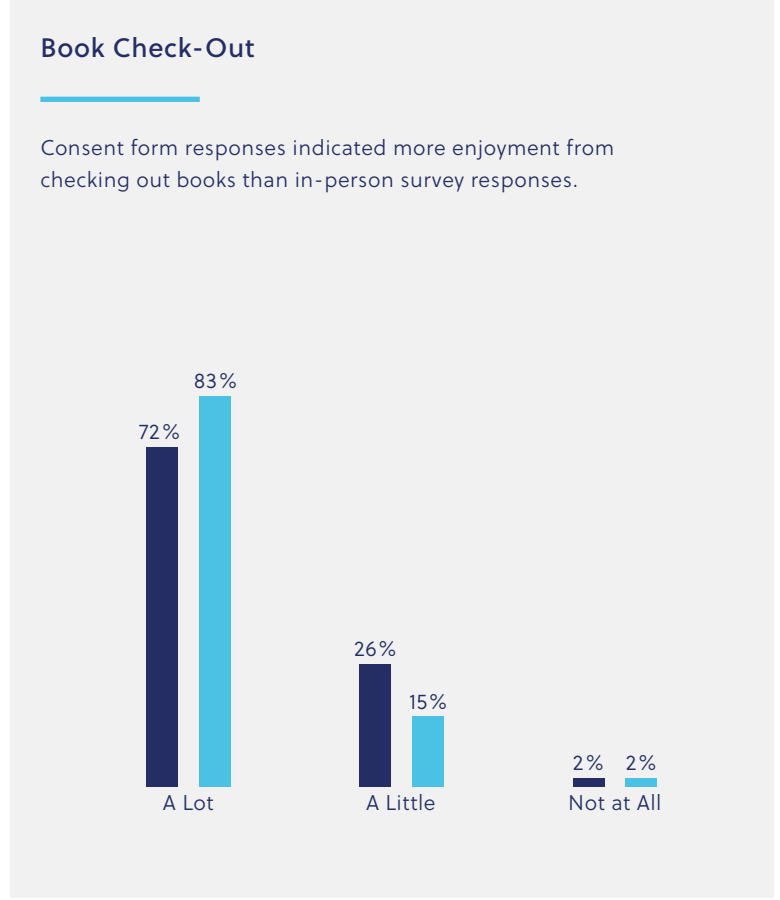
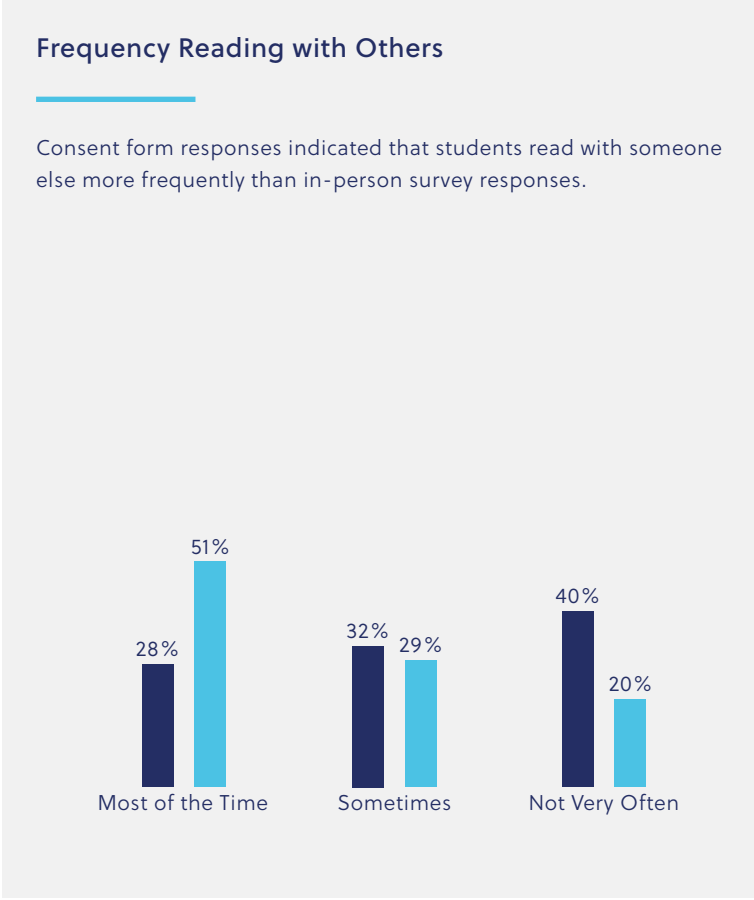
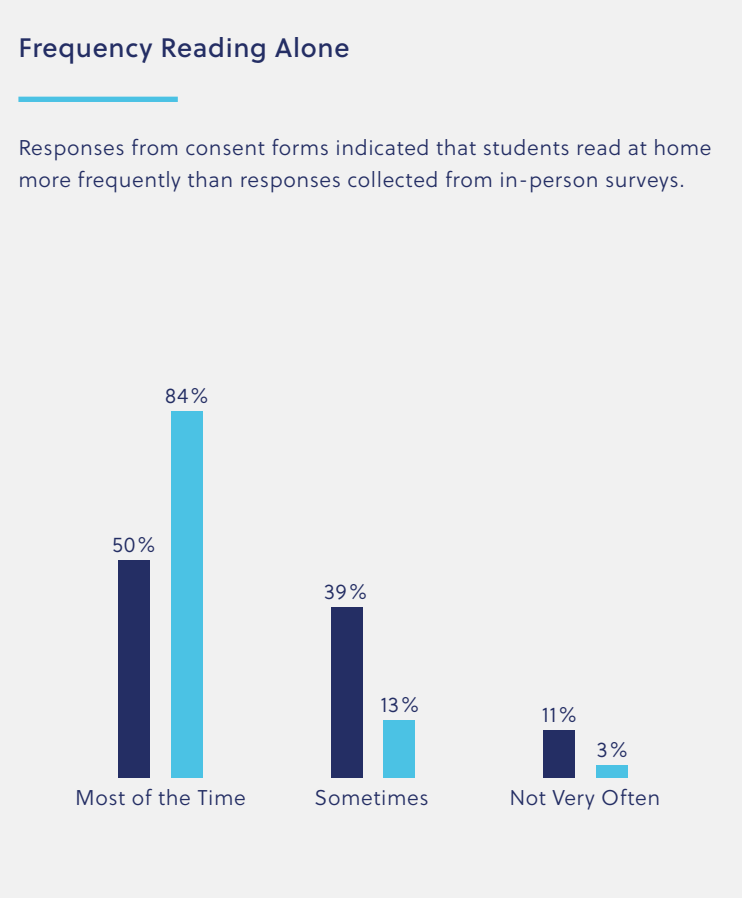


■ K & 1st Grade ■ 2nd & 3rd Grade

Student Versus Parent Ratings

Survey responses collected via consent forms showed students spend more time reading at home than those collected from students in person. This difference may be due to a social desirability effect among parents.

In Person Consent Form



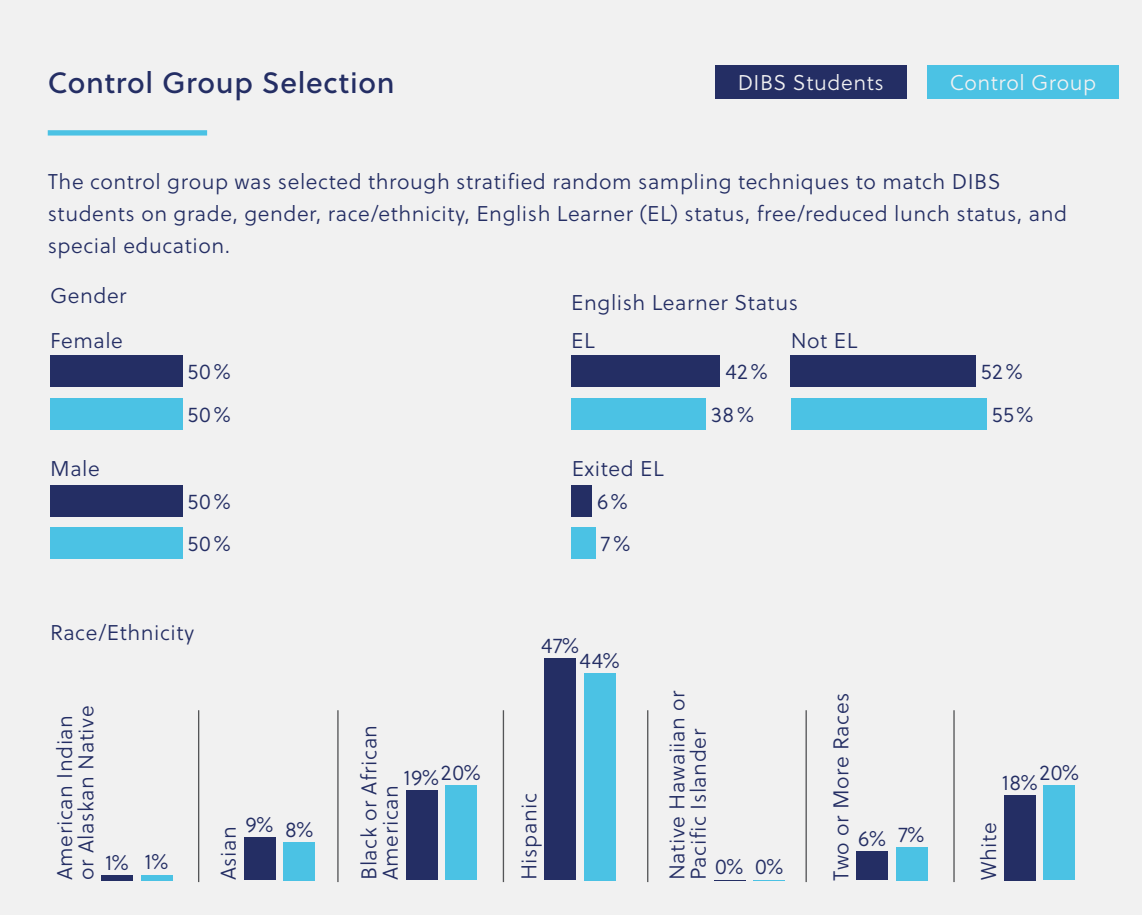


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Reading Achievement Impact

Reading Achievement Analyses

To assess the unique impact of DIBS on reading Achievement, NWEA MAP scores from over 4,000 K-5th grade DIBS students were compared to a control group of demographically similar students in non-DIBS schools.



NWEA Map Details



For the purposes of the DIBS evaluation, reading achievement was assessed by the NWEA MAP Reading assessment which students complete in the fall, winter, and spring of each school year.

The NWEA MAP is well- established as one of the most valid and reliable assessments for measuring achievement and growth in reading, math, and science.

The MAP is unique in that its Growth scores are provided on a Rasch Unit (RIT) scale ranging from 100 to 350 which measures achievement independent of a student's grade level.

In addition to the RIT score, the MAP provides growth norms which represent the expected RIT score increase from one test administration to another depending on a student's current achievement level.

The combination of both RIT scores and growth norms make the MAP especially useful for measuring academic growth over time and evaluating the impact of various academic programs and interventions.

Reading Growth Findings

Analyses of NWEA MAP RIT scores and expected growth norms indicate DIBS students saw significantly greater increases in reading achievement than students in the control group during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

Key Findings

In most years, DIBS students had greater RIT score increases and were more likely to meet expected growth goals than control group students; many of these observed differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$).

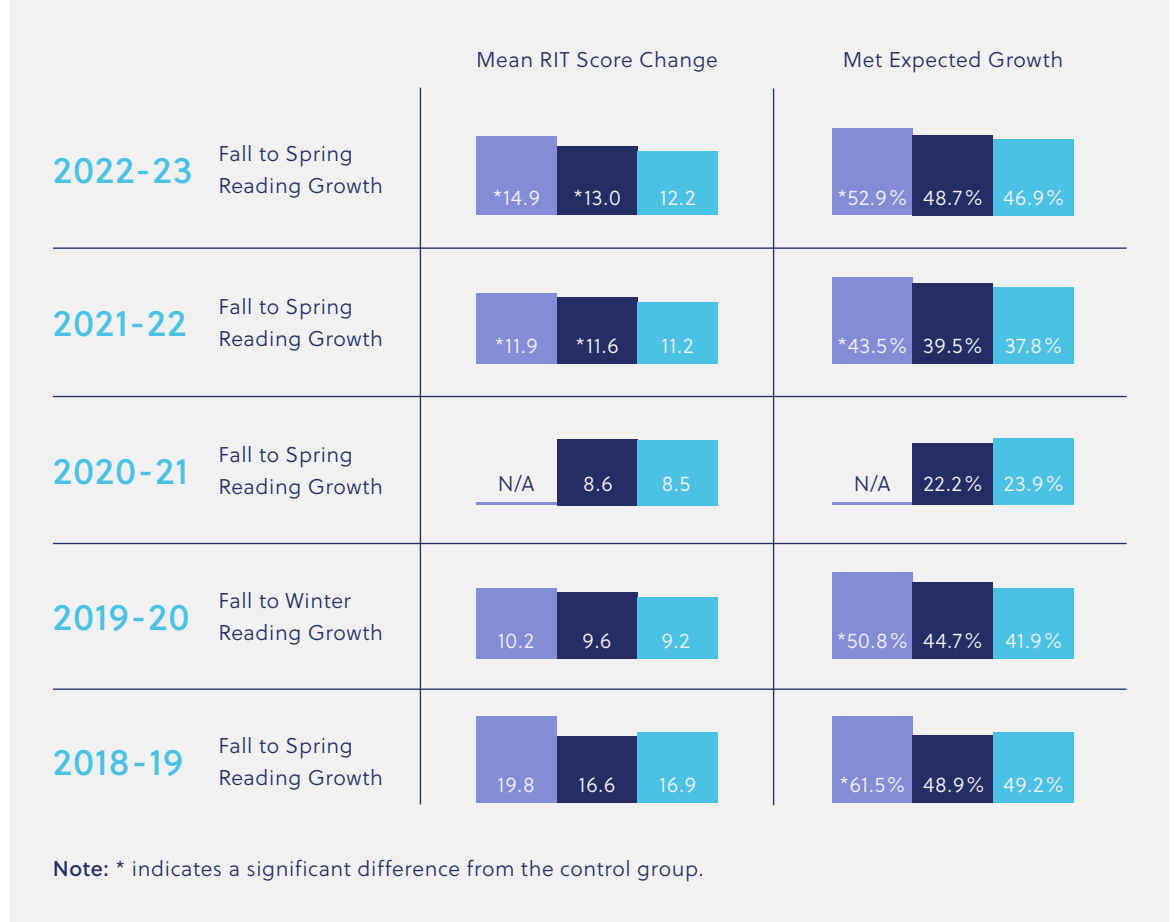
DIBS students who checked out 80 or more books during the year (DIBS-High Usage) had even larger RIT score increases and were even more likely to meet expected growth goals than control group students.

The observed impacts of DIBS on reading achievement in a single year are fairly small in terms of effect size; however, analyses indicate students with consistent (high usage) DIBS participation from kindergarten through 3rd grade could increase their reading ability by the equivalent of about one full grade level relative to non-DIBS students.

There were no significant interactions between group membership (DIBS-High Usage vs. DIBS-Overall vs. Control) and other variables suggesting the impact of DIBS on reading achievement does not vary significantly based on student characteristics including gender, race/ethnicity, EL status, prior reading achievement levels, and student/parent reported at-home reading frequency.

Growth data from 2019-20 reflects changes from fall to winter because students did not complete the MAP in spring due to school cancellations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were very limited DIBS book checkouts during the 2020-21 school year due to district policies that restricted shared materials to prevent the spread of coronavirus.





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Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Key Takeaways

Key takeaways from the impact evaluation include the following

→ Teacher Feedback

Teachers strongly agreed they liked having DIBS in their classroom and would recommend it to others.

They also agreed they received adequate support from DIBS staff to facilitate the program.

Teachers also said DIBS was increasing students' interest in reading and the time they spend reading at home.

Teachers really love that DIBS allows students to regularly access engaging books at appropriate reading levels.

→ Parent/Guardian Perceptions

Most parents said their child brings home a DIBS book and reads with an adult or alone almost every day.

They strongly agreed that DIBS helped them support their children in the area of reading.

Parents strongly agreed that DIBS positively impacted their child's reading ability and confidence.

Finally, they also agreed that DIBS helped increase their child's motivation for and interest in reading.

→ Student Perceptions

About half of students said they read their DIBS books at home most of the time.

Only 28% of students said they read their DIBS book with someone else on a regular basis.

Nearly three-fourths of students said they really enjoyed getting to check out DIBS books.

Over 90% of students said DIBS made them better readers and more excited to read.

→ Reading Achievement

Analyses of NWEA MAP RIT scores indicate DIBS students saw significantly greater increases in reading achievement than students in the control group during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

DIBS students were also significantly more likely than control group students to meet expected reading growth goals on the NWEA MAP.

DIBS students who checked out 80 or more books during the year (DIBS-High Usage) had even larger RIT score increases and were even more likely to meet expected growth goals.

Analyses indicate students with consistent DIBS participation from kindergarten through 3rd grade could increase their reading ability by the equivalent of one full grade level relative to non-DIBS students.

Recommendations

Recommendations based on the impact evaluation results are as follows

+ Improve Technology & Software

Continue to improve book check-out technology and software to enhance teacher and student experiences.

+ Encourage Reading at Home

Look for ways to further encourage students to check out DIBS books and read them at home on a regular basis.

+ Expand Book Selection

Continue expanding the selection of books at all reading levels and add more books in Spanish and other languages.

+ Provide More Teacher Guidance

Provide more guidance to teachers on how to encourage at-home reading and get the most out of the DIBS program.

Contact Us