

UTAH STATE NEWS RELEASES FOR 02-01-02

[USU CENTER WORKING TO ENSURE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND](#)

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USU CENTER WORKING TO ENSURE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

LOGAN -- Recent national legislation requires that schools ensure that all students achieve success, particularly those struggling with beginning reading. A new reading program created by the Center for Information Technology at Utah State University has helped schools dramatically improve the reading skills of elementary school students throughout the United States.

According to Alan Hofmeister, director of the Center for Information Technology, the Reading for All Learners Program (RALP) has been successfully implemented in a number of schools across the nation, including schools in Harlem, Puerto Rico, and in predominantly Native American schools in western states, as well as in Cache Valley. The program provides technical assistance and instructional materials to more than 160 school districts in 15 states.

"In many school districts, achievement scores are highly related to the income level of the neighborhood," said Hofmeister. "Our research has proven RALP works and it allows people with limited resources to have access to a program that helps their students."

RALP assists parents, tutors, volunteers and teachers in presenting reading in an easy-to-learn format using a series of 140 "little books" ranging in difficulty from kindergarten to mid-third grade. Designed especially for lower-income schools, the program is tailored to each child's individual reading level and allows students to work with a high-school volunteer or teaching aide, not just certified teachers.

Park Elementary School and district administrators in Cache School District joined with Utah State University five years ago to improve reading achievement for their students using RALP. Recent statewide Stanford Reading Achievement scores for Grade 3 identified Park Elementary as the only school in the state in a poverty-impacted neighborhood to reach the 80th percentile, Hofmeister said. Less than one percent of Utah schools reach the 80th percentile - even those in the most affluent neighborhoods.

"Our students are doing well and succeeding," said Mark Daines, principal of Park Elementary School. "Test scores were low and in need of improvement, but now they're very good."

For more information on RALP, see www.usu.edu/teach/read and www.readnyc.org. Contact

Hofmeister at (435) 787-3718 or Mark Daines at (435) 258-2344. The test results for Utah schools can be found at www.usoe.k12.ut.us/eval/.

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