

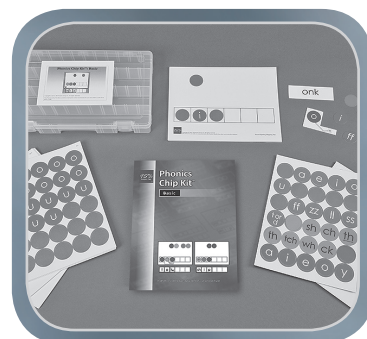


**Education Consulting and  
Professional Development**

*95 percent of students reading at  
grade level... an achievable goal*

# *Case Study: Closing the Gap for Students Receiving Special Education Services*

**Camanche Elementary School in Eastern Iowa  
Reports Record Gains in Less than One Year Using  
95 Percent Group's Multisensory Instructional Materials**



# Case Study: Closing the Gap for Students

*“We are very proud of our dramatic gains, but also really appreciate the fact that our special education students are excited about reading. 95 Percent Group’s products gave our students a big boost in confidence. They want to read more.”*

*– Micah L. Gearhart,  
Principal, Camanche  
Elementary School (IA)*



## HUGE GAINS IN RECORD TIME

***Camanche Elementary School in Eastern Iowa Reports Record Gains in Less than One Year Using 95 Percent Group’s Multisensory Instructional Materials.*** Camanche Elementary School, located in a small town of 4,500 people near Clinton, Iowa, is fortunate to have a passionate, enthusiastic principal, Micah Gearhart. He radiates enthusiasm for education and successful, excited kids and is always looking for new approaches that foster learning and improvement. His top concerns were the gap in reading between students receiving special education services and grade level students and the lack of significant improvement from year-to-year for the forty-eight students receiving Tier 3 and Title 1 interventions. Not only did Micah find a way to close the reading gap by introducing a new approach, but he and his team also improved reading scores in record time.

### **The Challenge: How to Close the Reading Gap for Students Receiving Special Education Services**

Special education teachers at Camanche had tried a variety of approaches with their students receiving Tier 3 interventions, most of whom have IEPs, but nothing was working well enough to close the gap. The initiative was so important to the school that they tracked anticipated progress and actual results in a spreadsheet. Their goal was that over the course of an academic year, the change in their students’ NWEA reading scores would reflect a full year’s growth plus an additional 10%, or 110%.

### **The Solution**

At a summer DIBELS Next<sup>®1</sup> training session, Micah first heard about 95 Percent Group. Then in November he heard about a two-day training to address the needs of struggling readers at his regional Area Education Agency (AEA 9). Mary Beilke, a Quality Learning consultant at the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency and one of the instructors for the workshop, would be modeling new instructional strategies, so Micah jumped at the chance to go.

He was so impressed with what he saw that he decided to use 95 Percent Group’s ***Phonics Chip Kits™*** and ***Phonics Lesson Library™ (PLL)*** in his school. He gave these materials, along with some coaching on how to use them, to three of his special education teachers: Samantha Moller, a first year teacher; Karen Stephan, a co-teacher; and Donna Judge, a veteran teacher.

At first, the teachers practiced with each other. Marty Krueger, a Special Education Consultant at the AEA, assisted with the professional

<sup>1</sup> DIBELS Next<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of Dynamic Measurement Group.

# Receiving Special Education Services

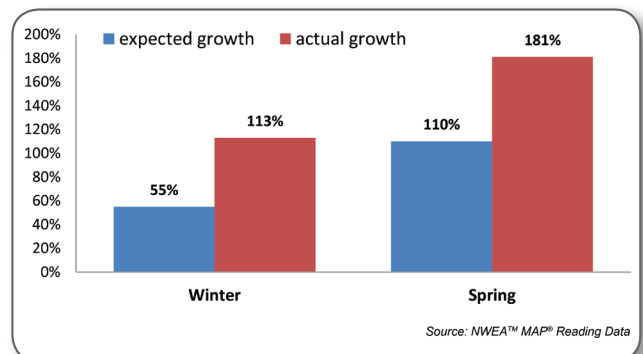
development. She reflected, “The teachers who implemented 95 Percent Group’s materials are self-starters who take the initiative and go. They only needed minimal coaching.” Marty joined the team monthly to monitor progress toward IEP goals. Marty reported, “The teachers and students have become the ‘experts.’ I have been continually amazed at how students can verbalize the patterns and apply skills they’ve learned in order to read words.”

In groups ranging from one to six students, the teachers introduced the lessons from the **Phonics Chip Kits™**, which employ a technique for using color-coded manipulatives to demonstrate phonics patterns. While the students were learning the phonics terms, the teachers read the scripts, telling their students, “We are trying something new and want to get it right.” Karen commented that, “I really like the scripts. At first, I memorized them. After I knew them, I could add my own personality.” According to Mary, the AEA consultant, “Implementation with fidelity is key, which is one reason these teachers got results. If I hear that a resource isn’t working, my first question is how was it implemented.”

During the 30 minutes to 1 hour spent in their Tier 3 classroom, the students used the **Phonics Chip Kits™** for 35 to 40% of their instructional time. They picked up the lessons amazingly quickly because of the visual cues of the color patterns in the chips. Samantha said, “When reading a word, the students relate back to the color pattern and carry it forward to other words. They look for patterns. It has really helped their reading and also helped with their spelling. Plus, it’s fun.”

## The Results

Within the first couple of months, the school had impressive results. By January, the average increase in reading for the forty-eight students receiving Tier 3 instruction was one full year plus an additional 13%, already ahead of the goal of 110%. Between November and the end of school, the change in reading scores was even more dramatic. These forty-eight students at Camanche gained an average of the full year plus 81% (or 181%), which is nearly two years in improvement in less than one year. Five students were reading so well that they were reading on grade level and moved off their IEPs.



When asked why the **Phonics Chip Kits™** and **Phonics Lesson Library™ (PLL)** work so well, Micah said that it takes a united effort with administrative support and very dedicated, passionate teachers. He believes that, “We are removing a barrier. Students don’t have to figure out how the lesson is going to flow and the content at the same time. When they know the flow, they can focus on the content. Consistently structured lessons are very important for these kids.”

Next year, based on this year’s success with students receiving Tier 3 interventions, the school plans to implement the **Phonics Chip Kits™** and **Phonics Lesson Library™ (PLL)** as a supplemental intervention throughout the school with students in Tier 2 groups. “Because our students will have a consistent structure and language from grade-to-grade, we’re excited about school-wide reading improvement,” said Micah. “We are seeing results because we have both fantastic teachers and fantastic materials.”

**95 Percent Group** is a recognized leader in reading improvement at K–12 schools through professional development and instructional tools. The professional development, resources, and ongoing coaching and mentoring we deliver are tailored specifically to address the needs of your teachers and students. Our services focus on your needs and your specific learning environment. We're specialists in reading—first, foremost, and only. Our knowledge in all components of reading instruction results in a highly comprehensive offering of professional development, instructional resources, and ongoing consulting with teachers and administrators to affect measurable and lasting improvement. We partner with schools to achieve our mission of sustainable improvements in reading achievement.

Because we are teachers, we have first-hand, authentic insight and experience about what works best and most consistently for students and teachers alike based on our own classroom experiences and our relationships with more than 1,000 schools and districts. This is more than theoretical—it's practical, proven, and based in classroom reality.

### **Our Approach Is Customized**

95 Percent Group recognizes that no two schools or districts are the same, so we customize a solution for you. It's important to take into account the progress you've already made in implementing RTI. We'll work with you to identify gaps, set goals, and plan steps to raise reading achievement. Our approach is all about partnership—we work with you to design a plan that is tailored to your school or district.

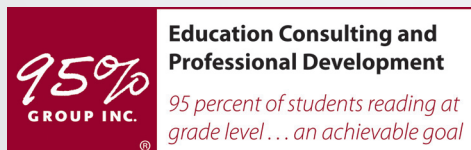
### **At the outset of an engagement we will:**

- Look at student data to learn where your instruction is effective
- Identify areas for improvement
- Evaluate your assessment instruments to ensure you have what you need
- Review your instructional materials
- Help you develop a plan to improve instruction to raise student results

### **For additional information about how we can assist you in improving student reading achievement, contact us:**

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