
Two Million Children

Success for All

Despite the constant public outcry about the crisis in American education, every community has one or more outstanding and often widely recognized public schools. Some of these appear to succeed because they serve children of wealthy, well-educated parents, or because they are magnet schools that attract motivated or high-achieving students. However, there are also schools that serve disadvantaged and minority children in inner city or rural locations and, year after year, produce outstanding achievement outcomes. Such schools play a crucial role in reminding us that the problems of our school system have little to do with the capabilities of children; they provide our best evidence that all children can learn. Yet, the success of these lighthouse schools does not spread very far. Excellence can be demonstrated in many individual schools but rarely in whole districts or communities. There are millions of children who are placed at risk by ineffective responses to such factors as economic disadvantage, limited English proficiency, or learning difficulties. How can we make excellence the norm rather than the exception, especially in schools serving many at-risk children? How can effective practices based on research and the experiences of outstanding schools be effectively implemented every day by hundreds of thousands of teachers?

Success for All is one answer to these questions. Begun in one Baltimore school in 1987, Success for All is used (as of fall 2008) in more than 1,200 schools in forty-seven states, plus schools in Britain, Canada, and Israel. More than two million children have attended Success for All schools. These schools are highly diverse. They are in most of the largest urban districts, but also hundreds of rural districts, inner suburban districts, and Indian reservations. Most are Title I schoolwide projects with many children qualifying for free lunches, but many are in much less impoverished circumstances.

Success for All is by far the largest research-based, whole-school reform model ever to exist. It is the first model to demonstrate that techniques shown to be effective in rigorous research can be replicated on a substantial scale with fidelity and continued effectiveness. Both the research and the dissemination of Success for All pose an inescapable challenge to educational policy. If replicable excellence is possible, then how can we accept the abysmal performance of so many children? This is not to say that every school needs to adopt Success for All, but what it does imply is that every school needs to create or adopt some program that is no less effective than Success for All. It is unconscionable to continue using ineffective practices if effective ones are readily available and capable of serving any school that is prepared to dedicate itself to quality implementation.

This book presents the components of Success for All, the research done on the program, and the policy implications of this research for the transformation of America's schools.

SUCCESS FOR ALL: THE PROMISE AND THE PLAN

To understand the concepts behind Success for All, let's start with Ms. Martin's kindergarten class, in an ordinary elementary school. Ms. Martin has some of the brightest, happiest, and most optimistic kids you'll ever meet. Students in her class are glad to be in school, proud of their accomplishments, and certain that they will succeed at whatever the school has to offer. Every one of them is a natural scientist, a storyteller, a creative thinker, a curious seeker of knowledge. Ms. Martin's class could be anywhere, in suburb or ghetto, small town or barrio, it doesn't matter. Kindergartners everywhere are just as bright, enthusiastic, and confident as her kids are.

Only a few years from now, many of these same children will have lost the spark they all started with. Some will have failed a grade. Some will be in special education. Some will be in long-term remediation, such as Title I or other remedial programs. Some will be bored or anxious or unmotivated. Many will see school as a chore rather than a pleasure and will no longer expect to excel. In a very brief span of time, Ms. Martin's children will have defined themselves as successes or failures in school. All too often, only a few will still have a sense of excitement and positive self-expectations about learning. We cannot predict very well which of Ms. Martin's students will succeed and which will fail, but we can predict based on the past that if nothing changes, far too many will fail. This is especially true if Ms. Martin's kindergarten class happens to be located in a high-poverty neighborhood, in which there are typically fewer resources in the school to provide top-quality instruction to every child, fewer forms of rescue if children run into academic difficulties, and fewer supports for learning at home. Preventable failures occur in all schools, but in high-poverty schools failure can be endemic—so widespread that it makes it difficult to treat each child at risk of failure as a person of value in need of emergency assistance to get back on track. Instead, many such schools do their best to provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of children possible, but have an unfortunately well-founded expectation that a certain percentage of students will fall by the wayside during the elementary years.

Any discussion of school reform should begin with Ms. Martin's kindergartners. The first goal of reform should be to ensure that every child, regardless of home background, home language, or learning style, achieves the success that he or she so confidently expected in kindergarten, that all children maintain their motivation, enthusiasm, and

optimism because they are objectively succeeding at the school's tasks. Any reform that does less than this is hollow and self-defeating.

What does it mean to succeed in the early grades? The elementary school's definition of success, and therefore the parents' and children's definition as well, is overwhelmingly success in reading. Very few children who are reading adequately are retained, assigned to special education, or given long-term remedial services. Other subjects are important, of course, but reading and language arts form the core of what school success means in the early grades.

The amount of reading failure in the early grades in schools serving disadvantaged students is shocking. In our studies of Success for All, we found that at the end of first grade about a quarter of students in our disadvantaged control schools could not read and comprehend the following passage:

"I have a little black dog. He has a pink nose. He has a little tail. He can jump and run." (Durrell & Catterson, 1983)

On the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 42 percent of African American fourth graders and 46 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could read at the "basic" level, compared to 76 percent of whites (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2005). What these statistics mean is that despite some improvements over the past twenty years, the reading performance of disadvantaged and minority children is still seriously lacking, and the deficits begin early.

When a child fails to read well in the early grades, he or she begins a downward progression. In first grade, some children begin to notice that they are not reading adequately. They may fail first grade or be assigned to long-term remediation. As they proceed through the elementary grades, many students begin to see that they are failing at their full-time jobs. When this happens, things begin to unravel. A child who has failed to learn to read by the third grade is headed for serious trouble. Failing students begin to have poor motivation and poor self-expectations, which lead to continued poor achievement, in a declining spiral that ultimately leads to despair, delinquency, and dropout.

Remediating learning deficits after they are already well established is extremely difficult. Children who have already failed to learn to read, for example, are now anxious about reading, and doubt their ability to learn it. Their motivation to read may be low. They may ultimately learn to read but it will always be a chore, not a pleasure. Clearly, the time to provide additional help to children who are at risk is early, when children are still motivated and confident and when any learning deficits are relatively small and remediable. The most important goal in educational programming for students at risk of school failure is to try to make certain that we do not squander the greatest resource we have: the enthusiasm and positive self-expectations of young children themselves.

In practical terms, what this perspective implies is that schools, and especially Title I, special education, and other services for at-risk children, must be shifted from an emphasis on remediation to an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. Prevention means providing effective preschool and kindergarten programs so that students will enter first grade ready to succeed, and it means providing regular classroom teachers with effective instructional programs, curricula, and professional development to enable them to ensure that most students are successful the first time they are taught. Early intervention means that supplementary instructional services are provided early in students' schooling and that they are intensive enough to bring students who are at risk quickly to a level at which they can profit from good quality classroom instruction.

Success for All is built around the idea that every child can and must succeed in the early grades, no matter what this takes. The idea behind the program is to use everything we know about effective instruction for students at risk to direct all aspects of school and classroom organization toward the goal of preventing academic deficits from appearing in the first place; recognizing and intensively intervening with any deficits that do appear; and providing students with a rich and full curriculum to enable them to build on their firm foundation in basic skills. The commitment of Success for All is to do whatever it takes to see that every child becomes a skilled, strategic, and enthusiastic reader by the end of the elementary grades and beyond.

Usual practices in elementary schools do not support the principles of prevention and early intervention. Most provide a pretty good kindergarten, a pretty good first grade, and so on. Starting in first grade, a certain number of students begin to fall behind, and over the course of time these students are assigned to remedial programs or to special education, or are simply retained.

Our society's tacit assumption is that those students who fall by the wayside are defective in some way. Perhaps they have learning disabilities, or low IQs, or poor motivation, or parents who are unsupportive of school learning, or other problems. We assume that since most students do succeed with standard pretty good instruction in the early grades, there must be something wrong with those who don't.

Success for All is built around a completely different set of assumptions. The most important assumption is that every child can learn. We mean this not as wishful thinking or just a slogan, but as a practical, attainable reality. In particular, every child without organic retardation can learn to read. Some children need more help than others and may need different approaches than those needed by others, but one way or another every child can become a successful reader.

The first requirement for the success of every child is *prevention*. This means providing excellent preschool and kindergarten programs, improving curriculum, instruction, and classroom management throughout the grades, assessing students frequently to make sure they are making adequate progress, and establishing cooperative relationships with parents so they can support their children's learning at home.

Top-quality curriculum and instruction from age 4 on will ensure the success of most students, but not all of them. The next requirement for the success of *all* students is *intensive early intervention*. This means one-to-one tutoring for primary-grade students having reading problems. It means being able to work with parents and social service agencies to be sure that all students attend school, have medical services or eyeglasses if they need them, have help with behavior problems, and so on.

The most important idea in Success for All is that the school must relentlessly stick with every child until that child is succeeding. If prevention is not enough, the child may need tutoring. If this is not enough, he or she may need help with behavior or attendance or eyeglasses. If this is not enough, he or she may need a modified approach to reading or other subjects. A Success for All school does not merely provide services to children, it constantly assesses the results of the services it provides and keeps varying or adding services until every child is successful.

Origins of Success for All

The development of the Success for All program began in 1986 as a response to a challenge made to our group at Johns Hopkins University by Baltimore's superintendent, Alice Pinderhughes, its school-board president, Robert Embry, and a former Maryland

Secretary of Human Resources, Kalman “Buzzy” Hettleman. They asked us what it would take to ensure the success of *every* child in schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged students.

At the time, we were working on a book called *Effective Programs for Students at Risk* (Slavin, Karweit, & Madden, 1989), so we were very interested in this question. After many discussions, the superintendent asked us to go to the next step, to work with Baltimore’s Elementary Division to actually plan a pilot program. We met for months with a planning committee, and finally produced a plan and selected a school to serve as a site. We began in September 1987 in a school in which all students were African American and approximately 83 percent qualified for free lunch.

The first-year results were very positive (see Slavin, Madden, Karweit, Livermon, & Dolan, 1990). In comparison to matched control students, Success for All students had much higher reading scores, and retentions and special education placements were substantially reduced.

In 1988–89, Success for All was expanded in Baltimore to a total of five schools. We also began implementation of Success for All at one of the poorest schools in Philadelphia, in which a majority of the students were Cambodian. This school gave us our first experience in adapting Success for All to meet the needs of limited English proficient students. In 1990–91 we developed a Spanish version of the Success for All beginning reading program, called Lee Connigo, and began to work in more bilingual schools as well as schools providing English as a Second Language instruction (Cheung & Slavin, 2005; Slavin & Madden, 1999b). In 1992, we received a grant from the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) to add math, science, and social studies to the reading and writing programs of Success for All (Slavin & Madden, 2000), and to help build an organization capable of scaling the program up to serve many more schools.

During the 1990s, Success for All (SFA) grew exponentially, adding from 40 percent to 100 percent to our network of schools each year from 1989 to 2001. As noted earlier, as of fall 2008, SFA is in about 1,200 schools in 400 districts in 47 states throughout the U.S. The districts range from some of the largest in the country, such as Atlanta, Kansas City, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and St. Paul, to such middle-sized districts as Alachua County, Florida; Bessemer, Alabama; Long Branch, New Jersey; Lawrence, Massachusetts; and Modesto, California, to tiny rural districts, including schools on several Indian reservations. Success for All reading curricula in Spanish have been developed and researched and are used in bilingual programs throughout the U.S. Almost all Success for All schools are high-poverty Title I schools, and the great majority are schoolwide projects. Otherwise, the schools vary widely.

Theoretical Basis of Success for All

Success for All was designed to put into practice the findings of research on effective practices in elementary school instruction, curriculum, school and classroom organization, assessment, accommodations for struggling students, parent involvement, and professional development. It was designed to anticipate all the ways in which students who are at risk could fail in school and to provide interventions in advance to avoid negative achievement trajectories and increase the chances of positive trajectories. The overall program theory is called multidimensional intervention theory, which holds that making significant differences in the achievement of students who are at risk requires intervening on many fronts.

Multidimensional intervention theory does not, however, mean throwing together disparate elements. Instead, it requires careful assembly of research-proven practices to form a coherent approach. In the area of instructional process, the theory builds on earlier work by Slavin (1987, 1994, 2006), which describes a model of instructional effectiveness called QAIT, for *quality, adaptation, incentive, and time*. These are the alterable components derived from Carroll's (1963) model, which combines innate and alterable variables.

Quality refers to presentation of information and skills to help students learn, including curriculum, lesson presentation, and effective use of technology.

Adaptation refers to means of continuously assessing student progress and adapting the level and pace of instruction to the needs of all children.

Incentive refers to strategies to increase students' motivation to learn.

Time refers to both clock time allocated to instruction and effective use of this time.

A key assertion in the QAIT model is that the elements are multiplicatively related to instructional effectiveness (IE), or the ability of a program or teacher to add value to children's learning:

$$IE = f(Q \times A \times I \times T)$$

The multiplicative relationship has two important consequences. First, if any element is zero, instructional effectiveness is zero. Second, efforts to maximize all four QAIT components are likely to have far greater impacts than efforts focused on just one.

Success for All is explicitly built to put the QAIT theory into practice by focusing on multiple dimensions of instructional design simultaneously.

Quality

Success for All impacts quality of instruction on several dimensions. First, it uses reading materials that are colorful, engaging, and well-organized, and in line with the findings of the National Reading Panel (2000). They incorporate use of phonics, metacognitive comprehension strategies, fluency strategies, and vocabulary development. The materials include detailed teachers' manuals and daily lessons. At the kindergarten and first grade levels, embedded multimedia is used (animations and puppet skits) to reinforce phonics and vocabulary skills (Chambers, Cheung, Madden, Slavin, & Gifford, 2006, 2007; Chambers et al., in press). Success for All gives teachers effective instructional strategies to maximize active teaching and learning, derived in particular from process-product studies (e.g., Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986). The program uses cooperative learning strategies (Slavin, 1995, in press), which give students opportunities to try out their understandings in a safe environment, to receive immediate feedback, and to "learn by teaching" in describing their current state of knowledge to a peer.

Adaptation

Instructional quality depends on giving students content that is appropriate to their needs, which is in their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), but not already learned. The program structure of Success for All is adaptive, as students are regularly

given reading assessments, the results of which are used to group and regroup children across classes and across grades for instruction (Gutiérrez & Slavin, 1992). For example, a teacher teaching a reading group at an early second grade level might work with a group that includes first, second, and third graders all needing instruction at that level. This allows instructors to focus instruction on a level that is right for all of the students, and to more effectively meet students' needs, remediate specific deficiencies, and challenge students to accelerate their learning. When further adaptation is required for students who are below grade level, especially first graders, the one-to-one tutoring that is part of the Success for All model provides the tailored instruction needed to help them catch up with their peers.

Incentive

High-quality instruction does not matter if students are not motivated to learn. There are several elements built into Success for All to maximize incentives to learn. In cooperative learning, a central feature of SFA, groups can earn recognition only if all team members have learned, so they encourage and help each other to master academic content (Rohrbeck, Ginsburg-Block, Fantuzzo, & Miller, 2003; Slavin, in press). Evidence of progress in reading is also motivating to students, especially if they have had difficulty in the past. Progress based on assessments is explicitly communicated to individual students and parents.

Time

Time is addressed in Success for All in several ways as well. To increase the amount of direct instructional time in reading, students are regrouped across grade and class lines into reading classes at one instructional level. In this structure, each student is involved with the teacher in instruction for the full 90-minute reading block. Because the group is at one level, class lessons are fast-paced and focused, and keep students enthusiastically engaged. Teachers learn routines to improve their classroom management skills and make effective use of time, based on the work of Evertson, Emmer, and Worsham (2000). Further, use of high-interest, motivating strategies (such as cooperative learning) increases time on task, as students exert efforts to help themselves and their teammates achieve individual and team success. The program also extends instructional time for students who need it by providing one-to-one tutoring.

Supporting Instructional Change: Multidimensional Intervention

The QAIT model serves as an organizing concept for the instructional elements of Success for All, but many supports are needed to enable, encourage, and require the use of these powerful instructional processes. Intervention and support must occur in many areas. Success for All is explicitly designed to include essential elements that go beyond the classroom and are described in the multidimensional intervention model summarized in Figure 1.1.

In addition to setting the stage for powerful instruction in the classroom, multidimensional intervention theory requires that these additional elements be fully addressed, including the use of data to keep instruction focused, the development of schoolwide supports to ensure that every student is ready to benefit from instruction, and the availability of strong professional support for all staff.

Figure 1.1 Major Elements of Success for All

Success for All is a schoolwide program for students in Grades pre-K to 6 which organizes resources to attempt to ensure that virtually every student will reach the third grade on time with adequate basic skills and build on this basis throughout the elementary grades, and that no student will be allowed to “fall between the cracks.” The main elements of the program are as follows:

A Schoolwide Curriculum. During reading periods, students are regrouped across age lines so that each reading class contains students all at one reading level. Use of tutors as reading teachers during reading time reduces the size of most reading classes to about twenty. The reading program in Grades K–1 emphasizes language and comprehension skills, phonics, sound blending, and use of shared stories that students read to one another in pairs. The shared stories combine teacher-read material with phonetically regular student material to teach decoding and comprehension in the context of meaningful, engaging stories.

In Grades 2–6, students use novels or basals but not workbooks. This program emphasizes cooperative learning and partner reading activities, comprehension strategies such as summarization and clarification built around narrative and expository texts, writing, and direct instruction in reading comprehension skills. At all levels, students are required to read books of their own choice for twenty minutes at home each evening. Cooperative learning programs in writing/language arts are used in Grades 1–6.

Tutors. In Grades 1–3, specially trained certified teachers and paraprofessionals work one-to-one with any students who are failing to keep up with their classmates in reading. Tutorial instruction is closely coordinated with regular classroom instruction. It takes place twenty minutes daily during times other than reading periods.

Preschool and Kindergarten. The comprehensive, theme-based, preschool and kindergarten programs in Success for All cover all domains of learning, with a particular focus on language and literacy.

Quarterly Assessments. Students in Grades 1–6 are assessed every quarter to determine whether they are making adequate progress in reading. This information is used to suggest alternate teaching strategies in the regular classroom, changes in reading group placement, provision of tutoring services, or other means of meeting students’ needs.

Solutions Team. A Solutions Team works in each school to help support families in ensuring the success of their children, focusing on parent education, parent involvement, attendance, and student behavior. This team is composed of existing or additional staff such as parent liaisons, social workers, counselors, and vice principals.

Facilitator. A program facilitator works with teachers to help them implement the reading program, manages the quarterly assessments, assists the Solutions Team, makes sure that all staff are communicating with each other, and helps the staff as a whole make certain that every child is making adequate progress.

Data to Drive Instruction

Close monitoring of student progress is a central element of Success for All. Students are informally assessed daily and weekly, and formally assessed on summative measures quarterly. The quarterly assessments and other information are used to guide daily instruction and change class groupings, especially to accelerate students making good progress. Classroom data and quarterly assessments are reviewed by teachers and facilitators to design instructional modifications for struggling students, including assignments to tutoring.

Schoolwide Structures

Success for All schools have Solutions Teams that meet to plan schoolwide strategies for parent involvement, community involvement, classroom management, attendance,

and outreach to other agencies to solve health and social problems. Principals and facilitators receive leadership training and support to help them lead a change process, use data effectively, and make effective use of resources. The development of a positive school climate is fostered with the use of Getting Along Together, a program that builds peer cooperative and conflict resolution skills.

Professional Development

Success for All provides a high level of onsite professional development, averaging twenty-six days of trainer time onsite in the first year. Principals, facilitators, and Solutions Team leaders attend a five-day seminar for new SFA school leaders. After a three-day initial training for all teachers, monthly visits from trainers and frequent telephone contacts help maintain program quality. Building facilitators work full time in each school. They visit in teachers' classes and organize large and small meetings to review data, help set goals for students' achievement, and help create individual, class, and schoolwide plans. Annual national conferences supplement onsite professional development by providing opportunities for sharing among leaders from many schools, and by targeting particular issues, sharing updates, and recharging enthusiasm.

Overview of Success for All Components

The elements of Success for All are described in detail in the early chapters of this monograph, but before we get to the particulars it is useful to see the big picture.

Reading Program

Success for All uses a reading curriculum based on research on effective practices in beginning reading (e.g., Adams, 1990; National Reading Panel, 2000) and on development of comprehension strategies (Pressley & Woloshyn, 1995), as well as the use of cooperative learning to increase student engagement and motivation (Slavin, 1995, in press; Stevens, Madden, Slavin, & Farnish, 1987).

Development of oral language and vocabulary as well as a love of reading are the keys to reading success. Reading teachers at every grade level begin the reading time by reading children's literature to students and engaging them in a discussion of the story to enhance their understanding of the story, listening and speaking vocabulary, and knowledge of story structure. In kindergarten and first grade, the program emphasizes development of basic language skills by involving students in listening to, retelling, and dramatizing children's literature. Big books as well as oral and written composing activities allow students to develop concepts of print as they also develop knowledge of story structure. Specific oral language experiences are used to further develop both receptive and expressive language.

KinderCorner

Formal reading instruction begins in kindergarten with Stepping Stones, which emphasizes phonemic awareness, concepts about print, and synthetic phonics. Letters and letter sounds are introduced in an active, engaging set of activities that begins with oral language and moves into written symbols. Individual sounds are integrated into a context of words, sentences, and brief stories. Reading of longer text begins with KinderRoots, using a series of phonetically regular but meaningful and interesting

minibooks. KinderRoots emphasizes repeated oral reading to partners as well as to the teacher. The minibooks begin with a set of “shared stories,” in which part of a story is written in small type (read by the teacher) and part is written in large type (read by the students). The student portion uses a phonetically controlled vocabulary. Taken together, the teacher and student portions create interesting, worthwhile stories. KinderCorner and KinderRoots are described in Chapter 3.

Reading Roots

Beginning in first grade, students are regrouped for reading based on their instructional reading level. Growth in reading skills proceeds rapidly in first grade with Reading Roots. In Reading Roots, direct instruction in phonics using FastTrack Phonics builds students’ mastery of letter/sound correspondences and sound blending. These skills are applied as they are taught in phonetically regular “shared stories” like those in KinderRoots. As students’ skills build, the teacher portion diminishes and the student portion lengthens, until students are reading the entire book. This scaffolding allows students to read interesting literature when they only have a few letter sounds. Examples of shared stories appear in Appendices 4.1 and 4.2.

In Reading Roots, instruction is also provided in story structure, specific comprehension skills, metacognitive strategies for self-assessment and self-correction, and integration of reading and writing. Development of oral language and vocabulary continues through thematically related readings and speaking activities requiring every child to use specific language structures and vocabulary.

Spanish bilingual programs use an adaptation of Reading Roots called Lee Connigo (“Read With Me”). Lee Connigo uses the same instructional strategies and activities as Reading Roots, but is built around shared stories written in Spanish. Reading Roots is described in further detail in Chapter 4.

Reading Wings

When students reach the second grade reading level, they use a program called Reading Wings (Madden et al., 1996), an adaptation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) (Stevens, Madden, Slavin, & Farnish, 1987). Reading Wings uses cooperative learning activities built around story structure, prediction, summarization, vocabulary building, decoding practice, and story-related writing. Students engage in partner reading and structured discussion of stories or novels, and work toward mastery of the vocabulary and content of the story in teams. Story-related writing is also shared within teams. Cooperative learning both increases students’ motivation and engages students in cognitive activities known to contribute to reading comprehension, such as elaboration, summarization, and rephrasing (see Slavin, 1995). Research on CIRC has found it to significantly increase students’ reading comprehension and language skills (Stevens et al., 1987).

In addition to these story-related activities, teachers provide direct instruction in reading comprehension skills, and students practice these skills in their teams. Classroom libraries of trade books at students’ reading levels are provided for each teacher, and students read books of their choice for homework for twenty minutes each night. Home readings are shared in presentations each week during “book club” sessions.

Materials have been developed to support Reading Wings through the sixth grade level. Supportive materials, called Treasure Hunts, have been developed for more

than one hundred children's novels and informational trade books and for most current basal series (e.g., Houghton Mifflin, Scott Foresman, Harcourt, Macmillan, Open Court). The upper-elementary Spanish program, *Alas para Leer*, is built around Spanish-language novels and basal series. Reading Wings is described in further detail in Chapter 5.

The Reading Edge

The same powerful learning strategies built around cooperative learning are used as the basis for *The Reading Edge*, the reading program developed specifically to meet the needs of adolescent learners. The Reading Edge is designed for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Often students enter the middle grades without the reading skills they need to succeed in challenging content area courses. The Reading Edge provides instruction in phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension at the level needed by the individual student, and accelerates them as quickly as possible to grade level using age-appropriate text and activities. The Reading Edge is described further in Chapter 6.

Regrouping

Students in Grades 1–8 are regrouped for reading. The students are assigned to heterogeneous, age-grouped classes most of the day, but during a regular ninety-minute reading period they are regrouped by reading performance levels into reading classes of students all at the same level. For example, a reading class taught at the 2–1 level might contain first, second, and third grade students all reading at the same level. The reading classes are smaller than homerooms because tutors and other certified staff (such as librarians or art teachers) teach reading during this common reading period.

Regrouping allows teachers to teach the whole reading class without having to break the class into reading groups. This greatly reduces the time spent in seatwork and increases direct instruction time, eliminating workbooks and other follow-up activities which are needed in classes that have multiple reading groups. The regrouping is a form of the Joplin Plan, which has been found to significantly increase reading achievement in the elementary grades (Slavin, 1987).

Quarterly Reading Assessments

At nine-week intervals, reading teachers assess student progress through the reading program. Assessments include summaries of weekly comprehension and vocabulary assessments, periodic fluency checks, observations of strategy use, and a formal test that gives an estimate of reading level. The formal test may be either a standardized benchmark test, such as the Gates McGinitie or SRI, or it may be a benchmark assessment called 4Sight that is designed to predict scores on state assessments. The results of the assessments are used to examine students' reading-level assignments and organize new reading groups for the next quarter. This regrouping allows students to move to higher reading levels quickly as they gain skill, and enables students who are reading below grade level to catch up. Results are also used to determine who is to receive tutoring, to suggest other adaptations in students' programs if they are not progressing at an acceptable rate, and to identify students who need other types of assistance, such as assistance with behavior, family interventions, or screening for vision and hearing problems. This process is described further in Chapter 4.

Reading Tutors

One of the important elements of the Success for All model is the use of tutors to promote students' success in reading. One-to-one tutoring is the most effective form of instruction known (see Slavin, et al., 1989; Wasik & Slavin, 1993). Some tutors are certified teachers with experience teaching Title I, special education, and/or primary reading. Often, well-qualified paraprofessionals also tutor children with less severe reading problems. Tutors work one-on-one with students who are having difficulties keeping up with their reading groups. The tutoring occurs in twenty-minute sessions during times other than reading or math periods. A computer-assisted tutoring tool, *Alphie's Alley*, is available. *Alphie's Alley* provides both a motivating setting for students and strong lesson planning and presentation support for tutors. Tutor and student work together using the computer, which presents the reading and assessment activities. Tutoring can also be provided without the computer.

In general, tutors support students' success in the regular reading curriculum, rather than teaching different objectives. For example, the tutor generally works with a student on the same story and concepts being read and taught in the regular reading class. However, tutors seek to identify learning problems and use different strategies to teach the same skills. They also teach metacognitive skills beyond those taught in the classroom program. Schools may have several teachers serving as tutors depending on school size, need for tutoring, and other factors.

During daily ninety-minute reading periods, certified teacher-tutors serve as additional reading teachers to reduce class size for reading. Reading teachers and tutors use brief forms to communicate about students' specific problems and needs and meet at regular times to coordinate their approaches with individual children.

First graders receive priority for tutoring, on the assumption that the primary function of the tutors is to help all students be successful in reading the first time, before they fail and become remedial readers. Tutoring procedures are described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Preschool and Kindergarten

Most Success for All schools provide a full-day kindergarten for eligible students, and many provide a preschool program as well. The Success for All preschool and kindergarten programs, *Curiosity Corner* and *KinderCorner*, focus on providing a balanced and developmentally appropriate learning experience for young children. While both programs are comprehensive programs that cover many developmental domains (personal, interpersonal, cognitive, mathematical, language and literacy, creative, physical, science, and social studies), they emphasize the development and use of language. Both provide a balance of academic readiness and nonacademic music, art, and movement activities in a series of thematic units. Readiness activities include use of language development activities and *Story Tree*, in which students retell stories read by the teachers (Karweit & Coleman, 1991). Preschool and kindergarten programs are described further in Chapter 4.

Solutions Network

Parents are an essential part of the formula for success in Success for All. A Solutions Network (Haxby, Maluski, & Madden, 2007) works in each school, serving to make

families feel comfortable in the school and become active supporters of their child's education as well as providing specific services. The Solutions Network consists of the Title I parent liaison, vice principal (if any), counselor (if any), facilitator, and any other appropriate staff already present in the school or added to the school staff.

The Solutions Network works toward good relations with parents and to increase their involvement in the schools. Solutions Network members may complete "welcome" visits for new families. They organize many attractive programs in the school, such as parenting skills workshops. Most schools use a program called Raising Readers in which parents are given strategies to use in reading with their own children. Solutions Team staff also help introduce a social skills development program called Getting Along Together, which gives students peaceful strategies for resolving interpersonal conflicts and creates a positive climate of cooperation in the school.

The Solutions Network also intervenes to solve problems. For example, they may contact parents whose children are frequently absent to see what resources can be provided to assist the family in getting their child to school. Solutions Network staff, teachers, and parents work together to solve school behavior problems. Also, Solutions Network staff are called on to provide assistance when students seem to be working at less than their full potential because of problems at home. Families of students who are not receiving adequate sleep or nutrition, need glasses, are not attending school regularly, or are exhibiting serious behavior problems may receive assistance.

The Solutions Network is strongly integrated into the academic program of the school. It receives referrals from teachers and tutors regarding children who are not making adequate academic progress, and thereby constitutes an additional stage of intervention for students in need above and beyond that provided by the classroom teacher or tutor. The Solutions Network also encourages and trains parents and other community members to fulfill numerous volunteer roles within the school, ranging from providing a listening ear to emerging readers to helping in the school cafeteria. Solutions Networks and integrated services are described further in Chapter 9.

Program Facilitator

A program facilitator works at each school to oversee (with the principal) the operation of the Success for All model. The facilitator helps plan the Success for All program, helps the principal with scheduling, and visits classes and tutoring sessions frequently to help teachers and tutors with individual problems. He or she works directly with the teachers on implementation of the curriculum, classroom management, and other issues, helps teachers and tutors deal with any behavior problems or other special problems, and coordinates the activities of the Solutions Team with those of the instructional staff. The role of the facilitator is described further in Chapter 2.

Special Education

Every effort is made to deal with students' learning problems within the context of the regular classroom, as supplemented by tutors. Tutors evaluate students' strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies to teach in the most effective way. In some schools, special education teachers work as tutors and reading teachers with students identified as learning disabled as well as other students experiencing learning problems who are at risk for special education placement. One major goal of Success for All is to keep students with learning problems out of special education if at all possible (see Slavin, 1996), and

to serve any students who do qualify for special education in a way that builds a strong connection between their regular classroom experience and their additional services. Implications of Success for All for special education are described in Chapter 11.

Teachers and Teacher Training

Support for teachers in Success for All is extensive and ongoing. Every teacher receives teacher's manuals that provide detailed daily lesson plans that integrate the powerful instructional processes built into Success for All with curriculum materials and assessments. Three days of initial training for each teacher at the beginning of the startup year builds a strong understanding of the core research-proven practices as well as the basic procedures. For classroom teachers of Grades 1 and above and for reading tutors, training sessions focus on implementation of the reading program (either Reading Roots or Reading Wings), and their detailed teachers' manuals cover general teaching strategies as well as specific lessons. Preschool (Curiosity Corner) and kindergarten (KinderCorner) teachers and aides are trained in strategies appropriate to their students' preschool and kindergarten models. Tutors later receive two additional days of training on tutoring strategies and reading assessment.

Change at the instructional level requires ongoing support. Success for All Foundation staff members spend twelve to fifteen days onsite during a startup year, making classroom observations, answering questions, holding small group and individual discussions, reviewing data, and assisting with setting goals for continuous improvement in student achievement and implementation quality. In addition, additional inservice presentations are provided by the facilitators and other project staff on such topics as classroom management, instructional pace, and cooperative learning. Facilitators also organize many informal sessions to allow teachers to share problems and problem solutions, suggest changes, and discuss individual children. The staff development model used in Success for All emphasizes relatively brief initial training with extensive classroom follow-up, coaching, and group discussion. Training and monitoring procedures are described further in Chapter 2.

Relentlessness

While the particular elements of Success for All may vary from school to school, there is one feature we try to make consistent in all: a relentless focus on the success of every child. It would be entirely possible to have tutoring, curriculum change, family support, and other services, yet still not ensure the success of at-risk children. Success does not come from piling on additional services, but from coordinating human resources around a well-defined goal, constantly assessing progress toward that goal, and never giving up until success is achieved.

None of the elements of Success for All is completely new or unique. All are based on well-established principles of learning and rigorous instructional research. What is most distinctive about these elements is their schoolwide, coordinated, and proactive plan for translating positive expectations into concrete success for all children. Every child can complete elementary school a confident, strategic, and joyful learner and can maintain the enthusiasm and positive self-expectations they had when they first came to school. The purpose of Success for All is to see that this vision can become a practical reality in every school.