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Better Serving **All** Children:  
Partnering Parents and Teachers to  
Tailor Strategies to Support Individual  
Learner Needs in Reading Acquisition

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# Acknowledgments – Contributors to my Knowledge Base

*Pip*

## Research partners

- Academic
  - Colleagues
  - Students
- Agencies & Practitioners

## Research participants

- Children
- Families
- Staff of participating schools & agencies



# Today's Presentation

- 3 Themes

**Theme 1.** Families and schools working together to foster important developmental outcomes.

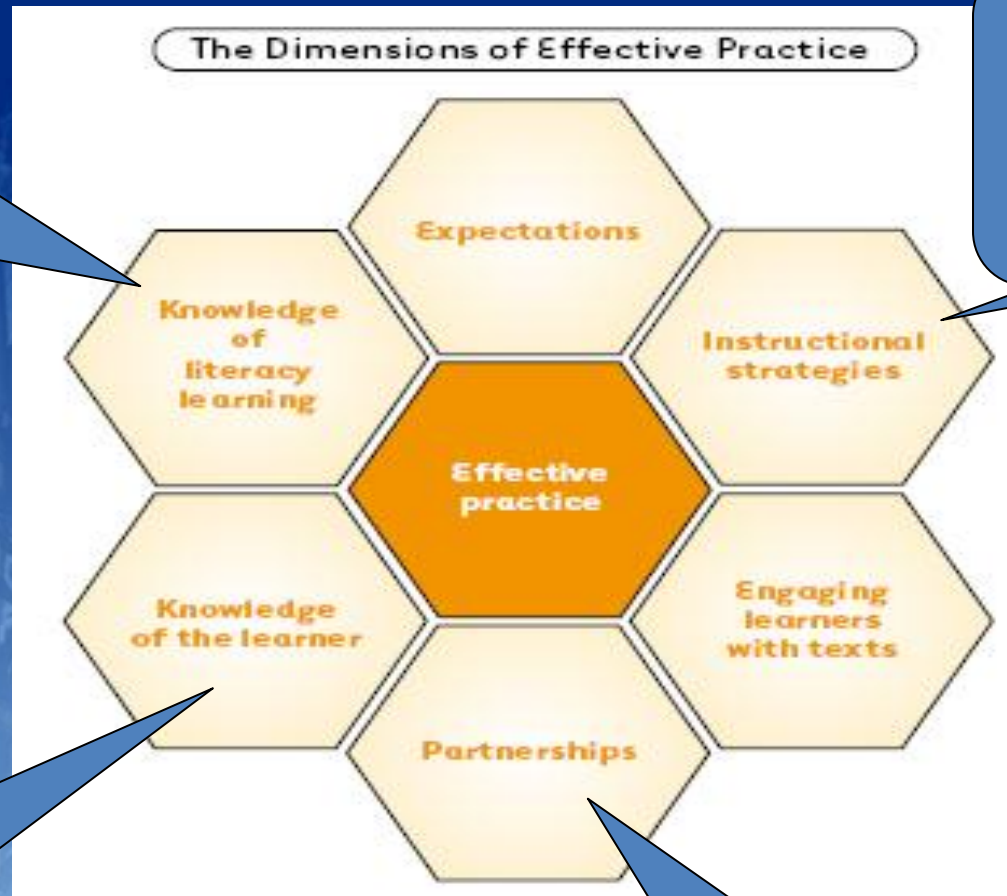
**Theme 2.** The developmental and educational research literatures as resources for practice.

**Theme 3.** Assessment informed differentiation of home support strategies.



*The research literature as resource...*

*The research literature as resource...*



*Assessment for differentiated instruction...*

*Families and schools working together...*

Ministry of Education 2009; 2003; 2006

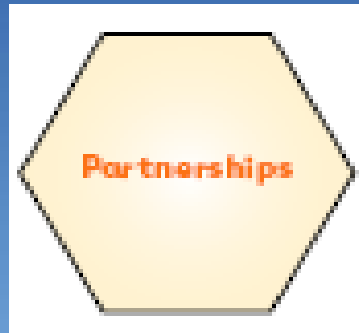


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# Family School Partnerships

- Big ideas from the research literature...

**Big Idea 1.** Fostering family-school partnerships is considered effective educational practice.



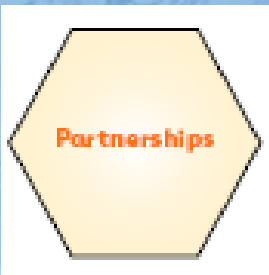
Alton-Lee 2003; Ministry of Education 2009

# General findings regarding family influence on achievement in New Zealand:

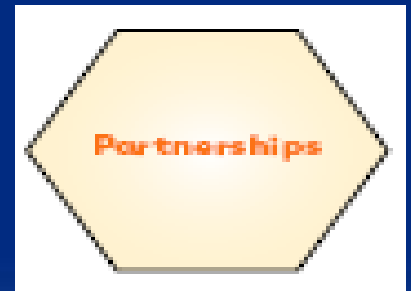
- Status variables (e.g., ethnicity and SES) correlate with outcome
- Structural variables less important than **process** and cultural capital resources

Biddulph, Biddulph, & Biddulph 2003

## Families: A natural resource



# Family School Partnerships



- Big ideas from the research literature...

**Big Idea 1.** Fostering family-school partnerships is considered effective educational practice.

**Big Idea 2.** Initiatives in which caregivers and school personnel collaborate to address *a specific target* tend to be more effective than more general initiatives.

Alton-Lee 2003; Cox 2005; Fishel & Ramirez 2005





*Ko te reo te taikura o te whakaaio marama*

Literacy is the key to understanding

Hobbs 2003

**Literacy:**  
*An Important Developmental Outcome in  
Today's Society*



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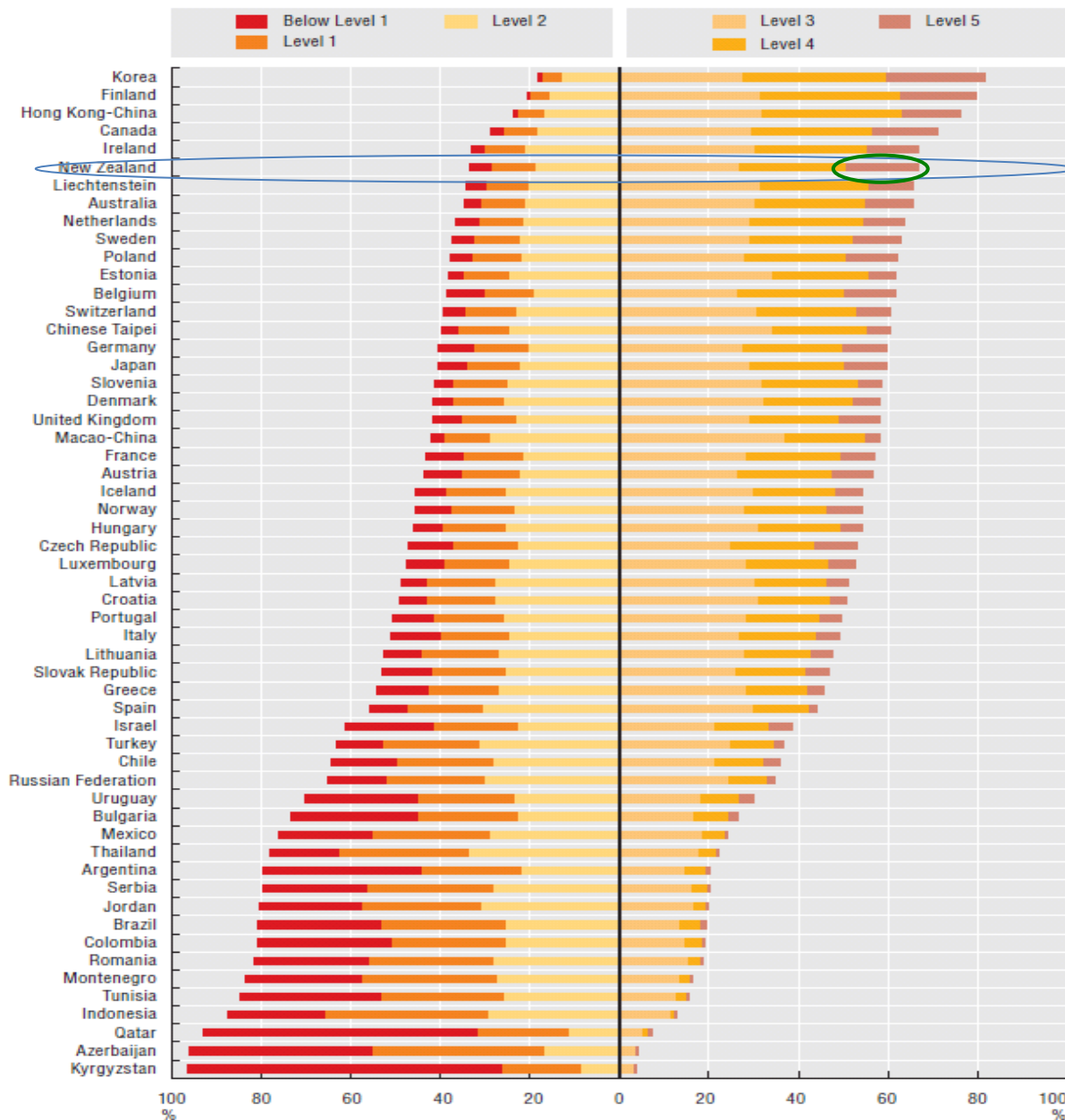
New Zealand's young people generally fare well in educational attainment, compared to other countries

Organisation for Economic Development  
[OECD] 2010

## The Good News

Figure S.2. Student performance in reading in PISA 2006

This figure shows the percentage of students at each performance level in reading; students with scores at Level 5 are the strongest performers, those at Level 1 and below are the weakest.



NZ

•6<sup>th</sup> from the top

•Similar proportion of young people reading at the highest levels as Finland & Canada (14.5%)



Not all New Zealand's young people  
achieve successful literacy, educational,  
and social outcomes

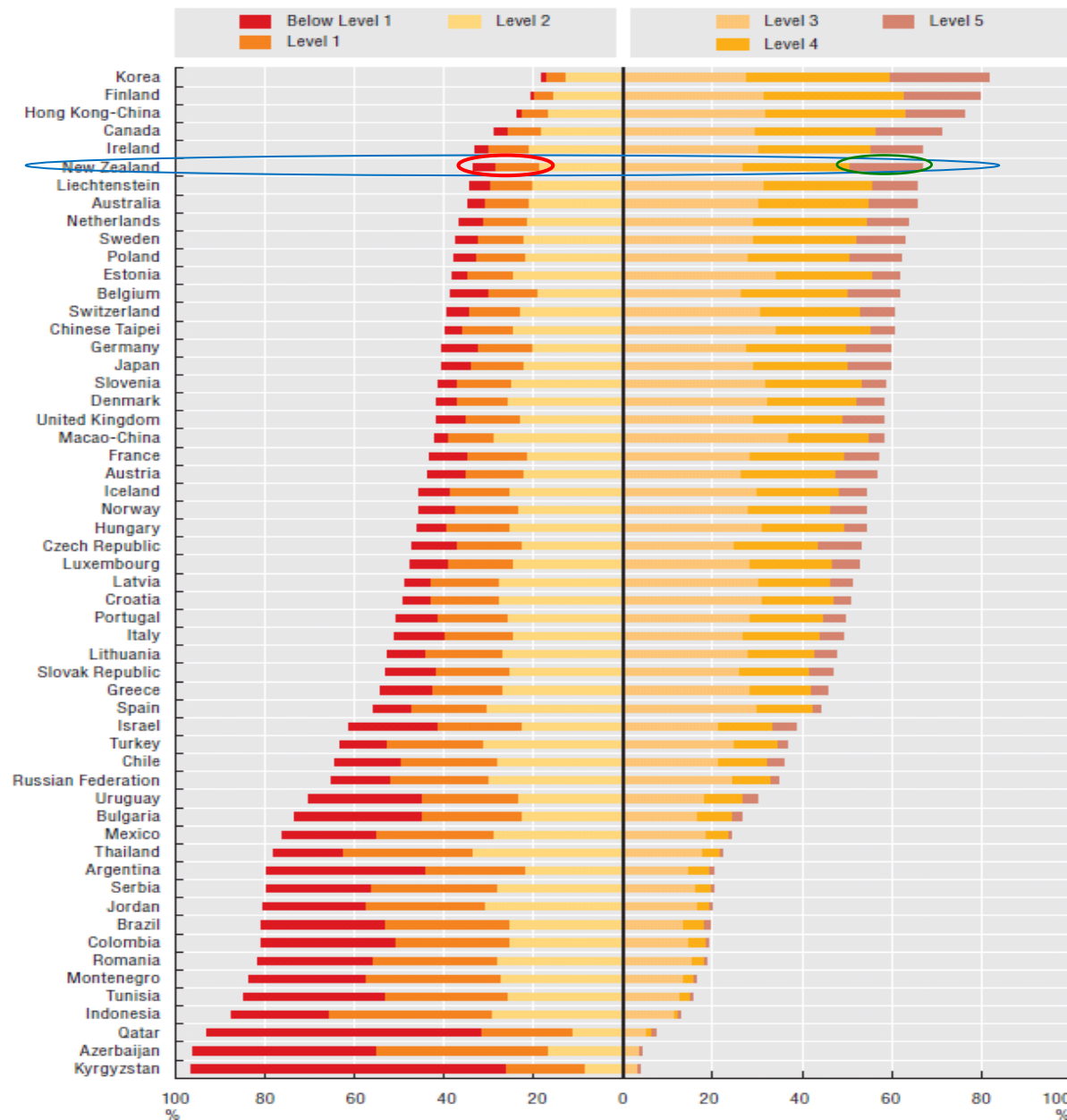
OECD, 2010; Tunmer, Chapman, &  
Prochnow, 2004, Wilkinson, Freebody, &  
Elkins, 2000

## The Bad News



Figure S.2. Student performance in reading in PISA 2006

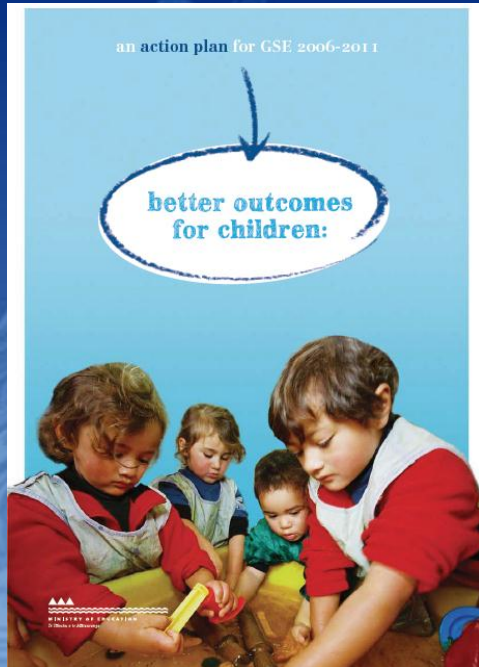
This figure shows the percentage of students at each performance level in reading; students with scores at Level 5 are the strongest performers, those at Level 1 and below are the weakest.



NZ

- Similar proportion of young people reading at the lowest level (14.5%)
- Leading to lower mean score than higher ranking countries (e.g., Finland: 4.8% lowest level)

# The Goal



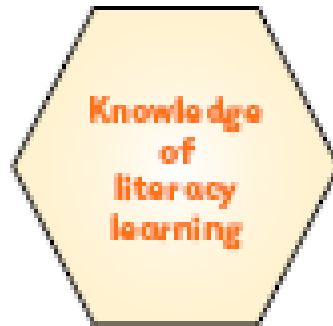
Ministry of  
Education 2006

*How do we get there?*


# Enhancing Literacy Outcomes

- Big ideas from the research literature...

**Big Idea 1.** Language and literacy skills are moving targets across the early years.



# The *Moving Target* of Literacy Development

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Learning to read —————> Reading to learn					
					

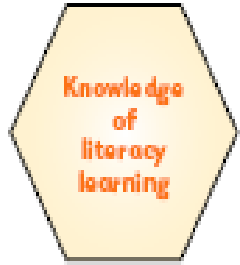
Ministry of Education 2009

See also Ritchey & Speece 2004 , Schaughency & Reese 2010

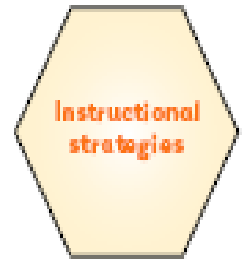


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# Enhancing Literacy Outcomes



- Big ideas from the research literature...

**Big Idea 1.** Language and literacy skills are moving targets across the early years.

**Big Idea 2.** Because learning and development imply change over time, how to support that development will also change.

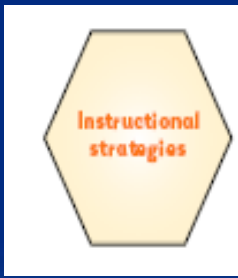
At school entry, New Zealand children differ significantly in early literacy skills predictive of successful reading acquisition.

Nicholson 2003

## The Bad News

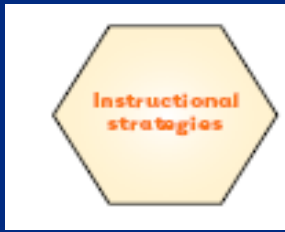


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# Enhancing Literacy Levels

- 8 claims with a significant body of supporting evidence
  - Focus on early preventive intervention.
    - *Instruct in phonological awareness and phonics at an early age*
    - *Detect early*
    - *Maximize chances of detection for early identification of all at-risk students*
    - *Intervene early*





# Enhancing Literacy Levels

- 8 claims with a significant body of supporting evidence
    - The remaining claims...
      - *Determine a student's strengths and weaknesses*
      - *Teach focused on individual learner needs*
      - *Increase intensity*
      - *Provide on-going assessment and support*
- ...acknowledge one size doesn't fit all...



# The Moving Target of Literacy Development

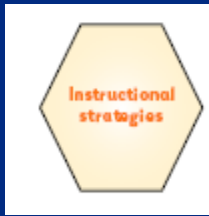
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Learning to read —————> Reading to learn					
 					

Ministry of Education 2009

See also Ritchey & Speece 2004 , Schaughency & Reese 2010



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# One size doesn't fit all in beginning reading...

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Learning to read			Reading to learn		
	Reading in connected text		Reading for meaning		

Some children may benefit from more explicit supports in:

- **code related** skills
- **language related** skills
- Or **both**



See Connor et al. 2007;  
Morrison & Connor 2009

Early home literacy environment is correlated  
disparities in literacy achievement among New  
Zealand's young people

Tunmer et al. 2004

## Families: A natural resource





# Enhancing Literacy Outcomes



- Big ideas from the research literature...

**Big Idea 3.** The ways that adults support skill development may be nuanced and *specific*.

**Big Idea 4.** Parents/caregivers typically *want* to support their children's learning and development – but some may not know how best to do this.

Raffaele & Knoff 1999



# The Steps to Reading



Reading with fluency and comprehension:



Blending: Knowing how to blend letter sounds together to say words



Letter Sounds: Knowing the sounds of the letters



Print awareness: Knowing about letters and words



Across the transition to schooling the nature of home literacy activities shift –  
**From:**

*parent* → *child*  
book reading

**To:**  
*child* → *parent*  
book reading

**To:**  
*Child* as  
independent  
reader



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# Working with Families to Foster Language and Literacy Skills in Beginning Reading



- The research:
  - Parent involvement can have a positive impact on reading acquisition.
  - **How** parents support that development matters:
    - In **general**...parents helping children learn specific skills tends to be more effective than...
      - Listening to children read...
      - Reading to children...

Senechel 2006

# Working with Families to Foster Language and Literacy Skills in Beginning Reading

- The recommendations
  - Use real *reading*
  - Be *easy*, *efficient*, and *enjoyable*
  - Provide *connection* between home and school
  - Enlist *ongoing* rather than single- or short-lived activities

See Fiala & Sheridan 2003



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# Working with Families to Foster Language and Literacy Skills in Beginning Reading

- Putting research and recommendations together...
  - **Child**→parent book reading is a typically occurring practice in beginning reading instruction in NZ
  - Time may be a potential barrier to **more** parental involvement for NZ parents
    - c.f. Struthers & Schaughency 2011
  - Could providing parents with guidance on **how** they could foster **developing** literacy and language skills in the context of child→parent book reading help support reading acquisition?



# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child* → Parent Book Reading

- Fostering **print-related** skills by
  - “*Calling Attention to Print*” (c.f., Justice et al. nd)
    - *Adapted* for, and *tailored* to, children’s developing literacy skills
      - To reinforce school teaching

For a child who has not yet mastered letter sounds, this might include ***prompts*** to practice a target letter sound in nightly reading.

Tommy has been learning about these

**Letter Sounds:** *P*

- Help him to find these letter/s in this book
- Practise saying the letter sound/s
- Practise reading words with the letter sound/s in them



# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Fostering *language* skills through parent ↔ child *conversations*\*
  - Consistent with ‘distancing’ prompts in dialogic reading
    - May support development of *narrative* skills
    - May convey acknowledgment of expertise of parents/caregivers,
      - with *oral language resources* to share with their children
    - May support the *connection* between school and home life
      - For children and parents

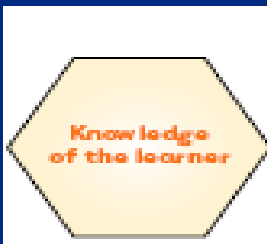
At the end of the story, you and Tommy could talk about the story.

You could help Tommy retell the story.

Does the story remind you or Tommy of anything?



\*Reese et al. 2010



# The Model

Reflection &  
Collaborative Homework Planning

Baseline

- Progress Monitoring on Developmentally Relevant Early Literacy Skills
- Dynamic Assessment

## Practice Rationale:

- To reduce false positives in risk identification<sup>1</sup>
- To inform instruction<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Compton et al. 2006, 2010;

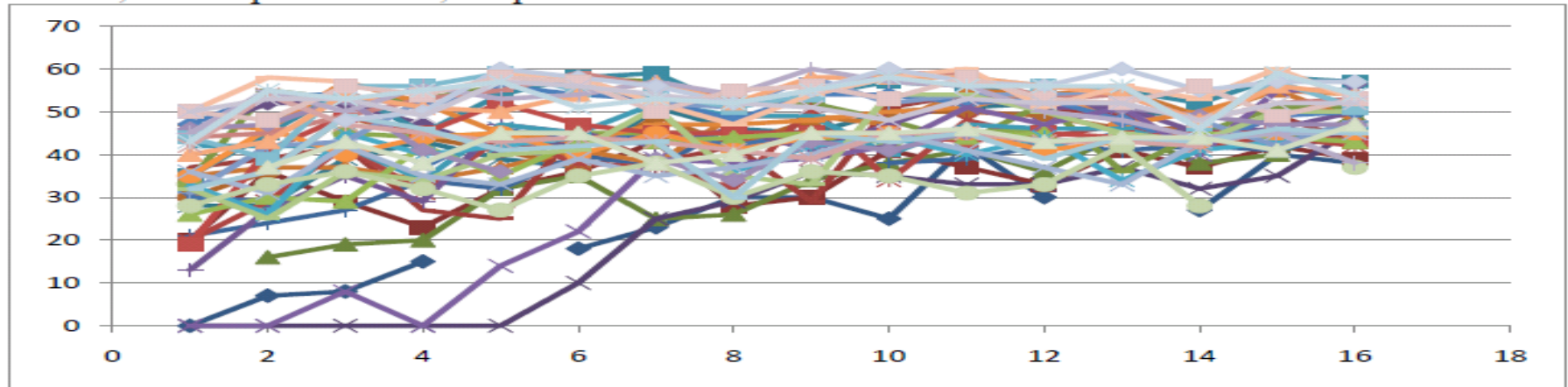
<sup>2</sup>Fuchs & Fuchs, 2008, 2007



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## 2 Classes for First Sound Fluency (Awareness of Onset Phonemes)

Class 1  
N = 41, Intercept = 40.383, Slope = 0.519



Growth mixture modelling suggests 2 developmental patterns for phonological awareness skills across Term 2.

Growth mixture modelling suggests three developmental patterns for letter sound fluency across Term 2:

- . Children who are learning these skills and show growth across the term (*typical/below*)
- . Children who already display these constrained skills at a high level so don't show much growth (*not shown*)
- . Children who display low levels of these skills and who display less progress across the term...

Reading is more than letter-sound correspondence.

Yet, response to such tasks may matter in beginning reading:

*Event-related potential data in response to a letter-sound matching task predict growth in word reading skills among first grade students*

Lemons et al., 2010

# The Steps to Reading

Knowledge  
of  
literacy  
learning

Reading with fluency and  
comprehension:



Blending: Knowing how to blend  
letter sounds together to say words



Letter Sounds: Knowing the sounds  
of the letters

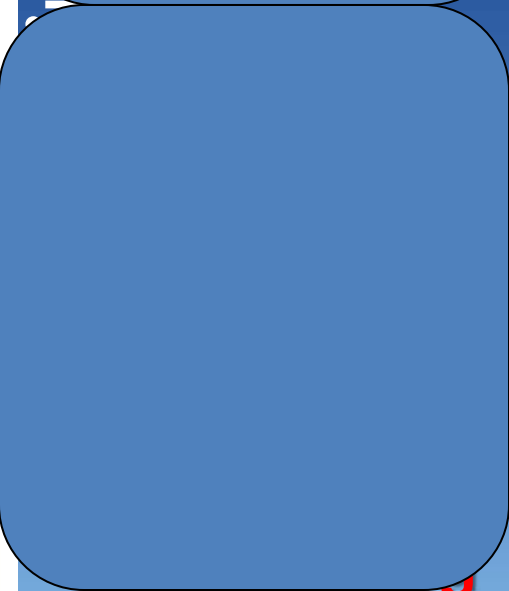


Print awareness: Knowing about  
letters and words

Knowledge  
of the learner



## Dynamic Assessment\*:



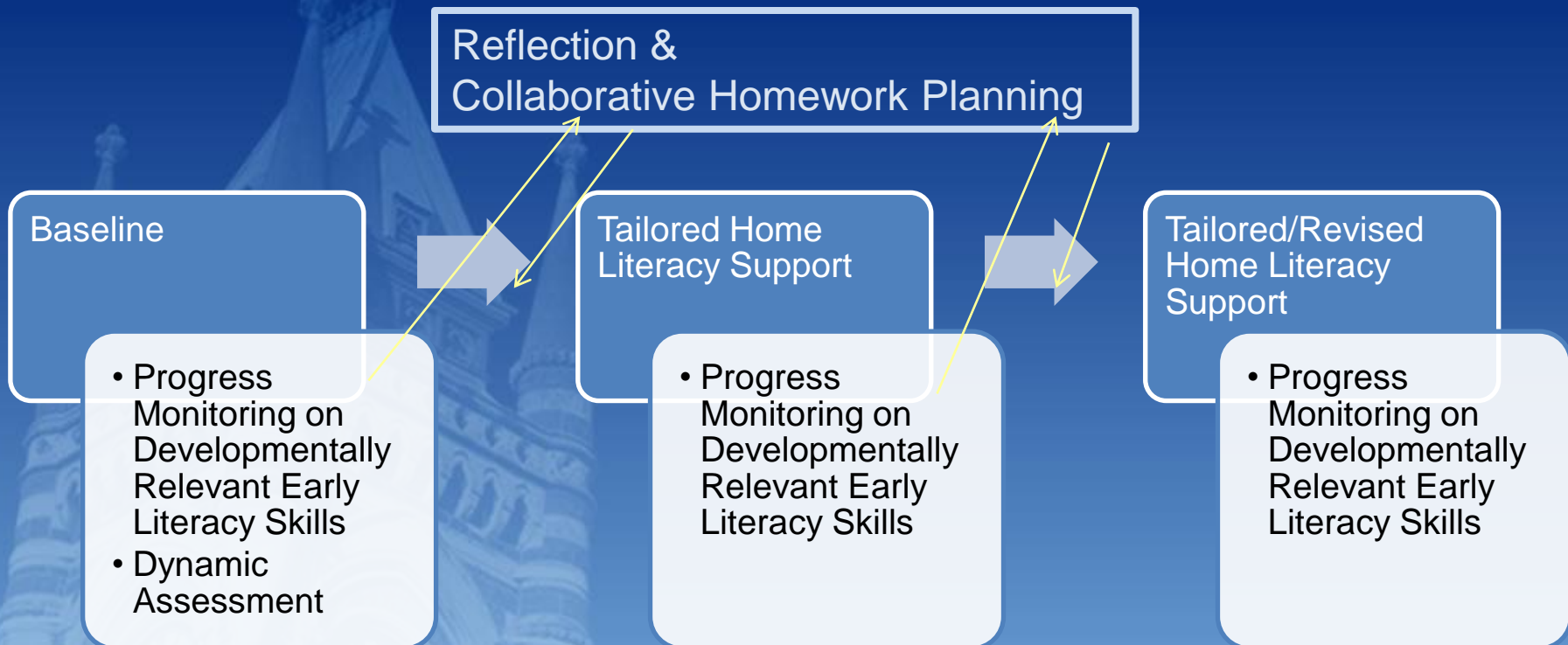
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\*Caffrey et al., 2008; Daly et al. 2010





# The Model



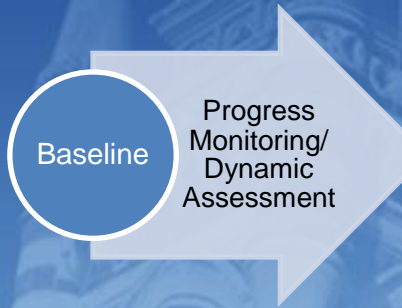
## Practice Rationale:

- To reduce false positives in risk identification
- To inform instruction

**Practice Rationale:**  
Systematic Formative  
Evaluation

# The Initial Trial 2010

3 schools, 9 teachers, 25 children



*Model as modified for initial implementation...*

# The Children

N = 25

## Gender

- 15 Boys
- 10 Girls

## Ethnicity

- 21 New Zealand European
- 3 Māori
- 1 Samoan

## Participating Caregivers

- 22 Mothers, 2 Fathers, 1 separated Mother and Father
- Average educational achievement: 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> form (Year 11 – 13); range = primary school – postgraduate qualification

# Performance of Participants and Their Classmates

## *Before* Parent HW Support Intervention

	HW Support Sample	
	Beginning ( <i>n</i> = 12)	Middle ( <i>n</i> = 19)
<b><i>Phonological Awareness</i></b>		
First Sound Fluency	14 0 - 39	< 30 0 - 59
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency		22 1 - 47
<b><i>Alphabetic &amp; Decoding</i></b>		
Letter Naming Fluency	13 0 - 25	< 23 5 - 72
Nonsense Word Fluency		18 0 - 46
<b><i>Word Reading</i></b>		
Word Identification Fluency		8 0 - 32
<b><i>Oral Language</i></b>		
Word Use Fluency	7 0 - 25	< 17 0 - 38
<b><i>Book Level</i></b>	1 1 - 4	< 5 1 - 15

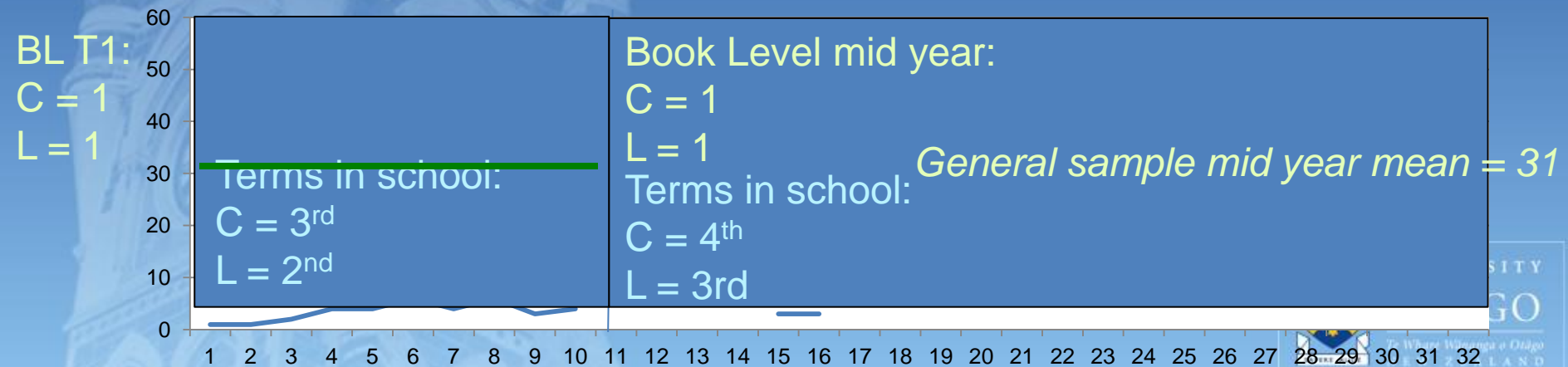
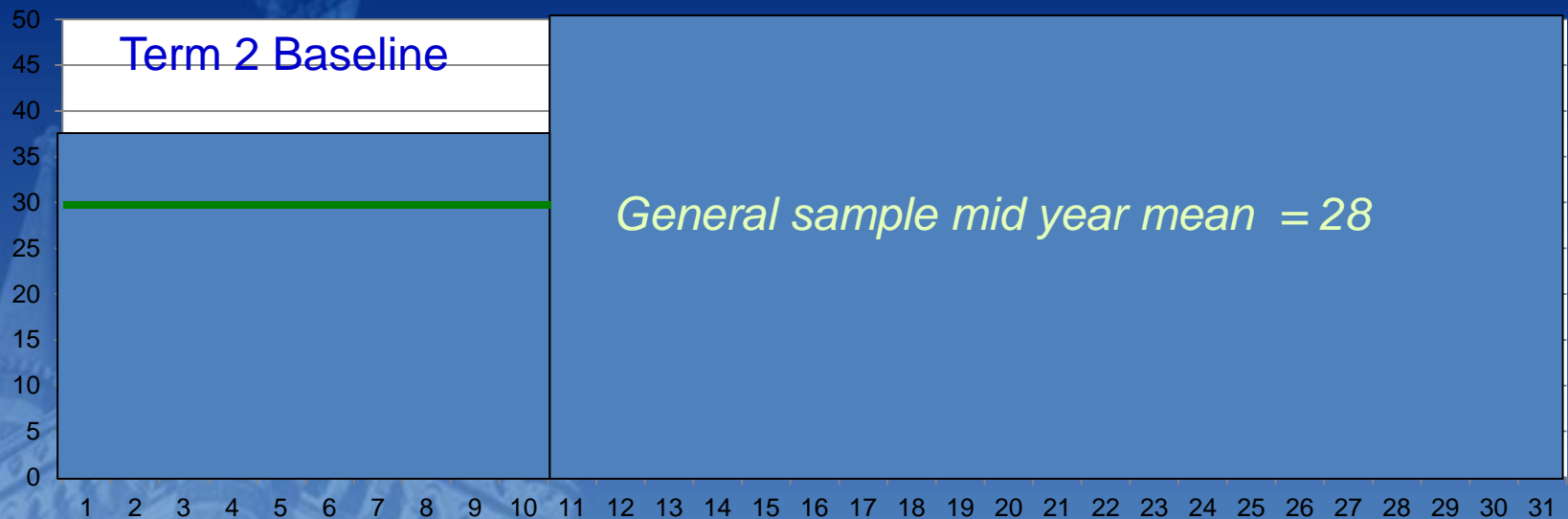
Children identified for participation in the home work intervention:

- Displayed a **range** of early literacy and reading skills
- **Increased in average performance** across the first half of the school year



# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

## Sample Results – Progress Monitoring



# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Preliminary results\*

- Parents/caregivers welcomed opportunity to learn how to support their children's learning
  - And most seemed to readily learn strategies taught
- Children generally show improvements on *targeted* skills ...

\*Struthers in progress

# Performance at End of Year 1

	HW Support Sample <i>(All means higher at end)</i>	General Sample <i>(All but WUF higher)</i>
<b><i>Phonemic Awareness</i></b>		
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency		
<b><i>Alphabetic and Decoding Skills</i></b>		
Letter Naming Fluency		
Nonsense Word Fluency		
<b><i>Language Skills</i></b>		
Word Use Fluency		
<b><i>Reading Skills</i></b>		
Word Identification Fluency		
Highly Decodable Passages		
Book Level		

# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Fostering **print-related** skills by
    - “*Calling Attention to Print*” (c.f., Justice et al. nd)
      - *Adapted* for, and *tailored* to, children’s developing literacy skills
        - Supporting children beyond learning letter sounds...
          - Considerations...
            - » Word ‘*coaxing*’ may be more effective than word ‘*supplying*’
- Evans & Shaw 2008
- » But difficult tasks are potentially aversive...



# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Some definitions
  - *Prompting* and *fading* provides a means to support success from the beginning
    - *Providing more help when skills are not known,*
      - *then fading that help to promote independence*
    - Adaptation of *paired reading*\* as a possible strategy to support transition to decoding?
      - In response to a miscue, parent and child *simultaneously* identify letter sounds, with child invited to join in as parent models blending the letter sounds to read word
      - Child invited to provide signal readiness to fade to more independent responding

\*See Fiala & Sheridan 2003

# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Some definitions
  - *Prompting* and *fading* provides a means to support success from the beginning
    - *Providing more help when skills are not known,*
      - *then fading that help to promote independence*
    - Adaptation of *pause prompt praise\** as a possible strategy to support transition to *independent* decoding?
      - Following the child's lead, the parent prompts use of decoding strategies..

\*See Fiala & Sheridan 2003 for discussion of Pause, Prompt, Praise, see Daly et al 2004 on teaching blending skills

# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- Preliminary results\*
  - Parents/caregivers welcomed opportunity to learn how to support their children's learning
    - And most seemed to readily learn strategies taught
    - With evidence that home reading increased in families in which it hadn't been occurring or had been problematic
  - Children generally show improvements on *targeted* skills
    - Parents reported that children enjoyed activities, especially parent↔child conversations
    - Teachers observed improved narrative skills in classroom activities
  - Principals observed increased presence at school for some participating parents

\*Struthers in progress

# Fostering Literacy & Language Skills in Beginning Reading Through *Child*→Parent Book Reading

- And some lessons learned
  - Need for adaptations to better serve some families
  - Importance of recognition that one size doesn't fit all in beginning reading
  - Recognition that “the actions needed to initiate the path to success and sustain resilience processes may be different.”
    - “Once resilience processes begin to produce success, these processes and gains need to be sustained.”

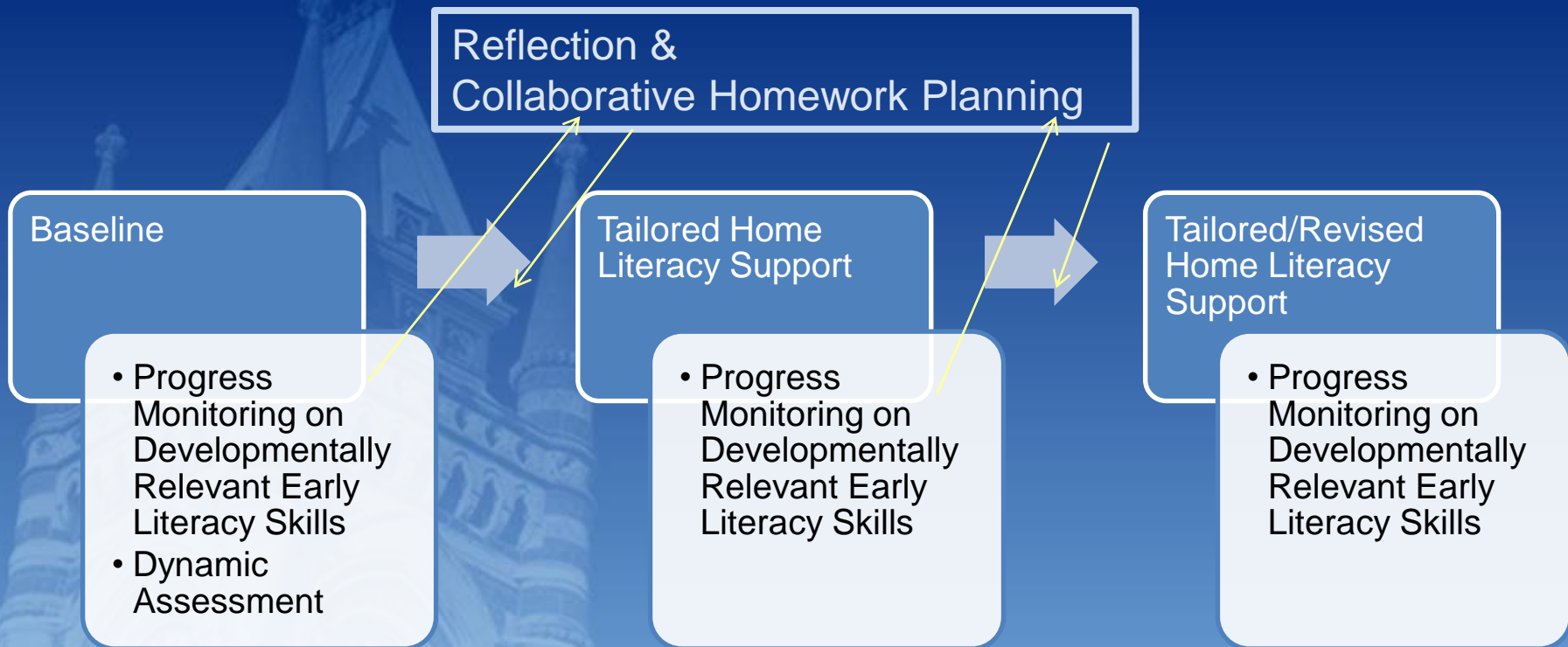
Pianta & Walsh 1998





# Field-Testing the Model with Teachers 2011

(4 schools, 11 teachers, 14 students)



## Practice Rationale:

- To reduce false positives in risk identification
- To inform instruction

**Practice Rationale:**  
Systematic Formative  
Evaluation



# The Children

N = 14

## Gender

- 9 Boys
- 5 Girls

## Ethnicity

- 9 New Zealand European
- 4 Māori
- 1 Fijian Indian

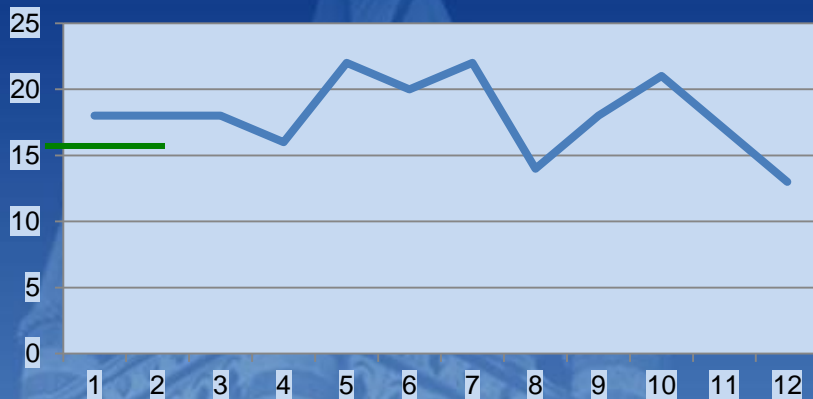
## Participating Caregivers

- 13 Mothers, 1 Father
- Parental educational achievement: Ranged from intermediate – postgraduate qualification

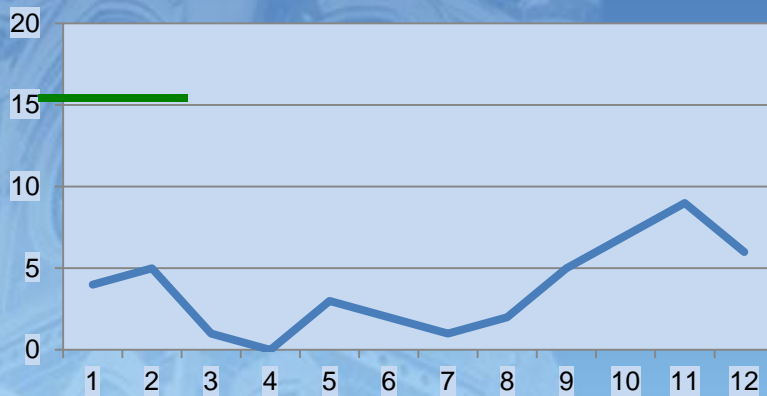
# Sample Results 2011

## Student Tipene Baseline Progress Monitoring Term 1

**Figure 1: First Sound Fluency**



**Figure 2: Letter Sound Fluency**



## *Teacher-Parent Collaborative HW Support Term 2*

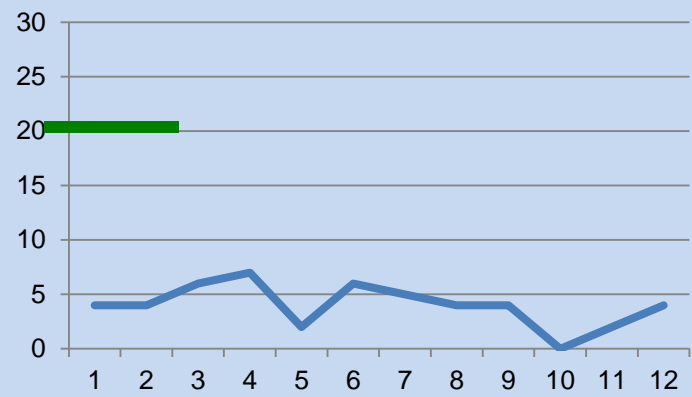
BL = 2

BL = 4

# Sample Results 2011

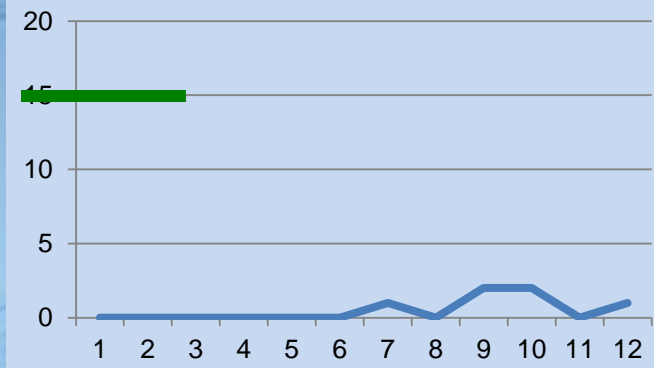
Student Blake Baseline  
Progress Monitoring Term 1

Figure 1: First Sound Fluency



Book Level = 1

Figure 2: Letter Sound Fluency



# Partnering Parents and Teachers to Tailor Strategies to Support Individual Learners' Needs in Reading Acquisition 2011

- Preliminary results\*

- Replicate and extend findings from 2010

- Replications of enhanced growth trajectories coincident with tailored homework intervention for many of the participants

- With potential benefits for reading and broader school outcomes

McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown in press

- Document potential utility as part of response-to-intervention framework for accessing services

- For those children with continuing learning needs, results were incorporated and supported referrals for specialist services

# Partnering Parents and Teachers to Tailor Strategies to Support Individual Learners' Needs in Reading Acquisition 2011

- Preliminary results\*
  - Indicate that teacher-parent reflection & collaboration can happen
    - Facilitated by professional psychology
  - Potential benefits of conjoint collaboration with parents & teachers, allowed for:
    - Better alignment of home support activities with classroom learning
    - Facilitated engagement of teachers, in:
      - Meetings with families of target children
      - Uptake of resources/processes with other children

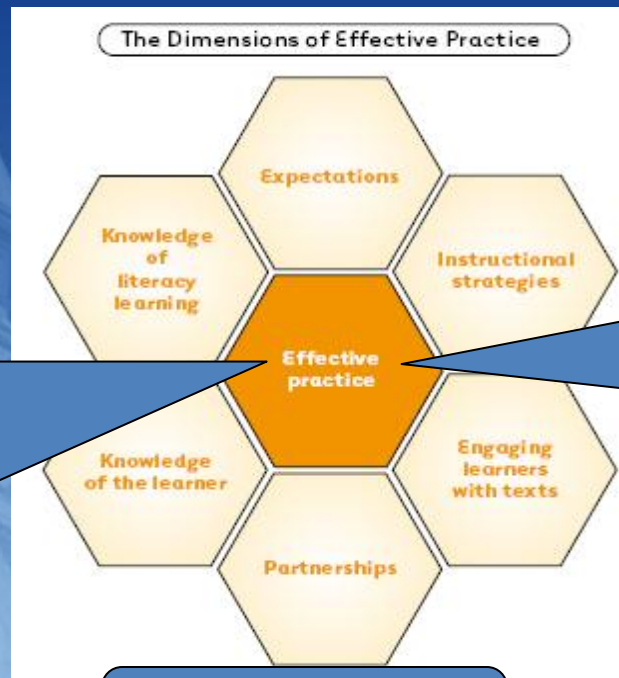


# Partnering Parents and Teachers to Tailor Strategies to Support Individual Learners' Needs in Reading Acquisition 2011

- Preliminary results\*
  - Potential benefits of conjoint collaboration with parents & teachers, allowed for:
    - Building relationships between parents and teachers
    - Inviting children into the process in some cases
  - Parents reported:
    - Liking the process
    - Liking learning how their children were doing
    - Appreciating learning how they could help at home

# Partnering Parents and Teachers to Tailor Strategies to Support Individual Learners' Needs in Reading Acquisition 2011

- Remaining needs



Professional development on components of efficient and effective professional practice for differentiating instruction

Supportive mechanisms and infrastructure to embed into practice

Schools/  
Families/  
Whanau

Specialist  
Professionals

Higher Ed/  
Research  
Community

Internal  
Resources

Linking

External  
Resources



*With dedicated, caring staff we do make a difference anyway, but with parents on board our waka is more stable and our paddling strokes way stronger.*

*-Principal, Kura Kaupapa Māori*

## Families: A Natural Resource



*“Mā te whiritahi, ka whakatutuki ai ngāpūmanawa ātāngata”*

Together weaving the realisation of potential



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- Department of Psychology

- Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position of funding agencies, and such endorsements should not be inferred.

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- Children
- Families
- Staff of participating schools

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Kathryn McLennan

Philippa Struthers

Research assistants,  
including:

Ryan Abraham



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