

# Documented Results Using *The Spalding Method*

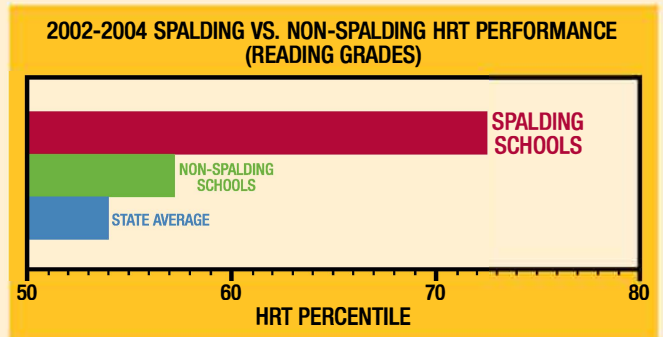
## About the Study...

1. Over the past two decades, SEI has conducted an informal longitudinal study of norm-referenced testing data within the state of Arizona and is currently engaged in prospective research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Spalding program. Each year, language arts performance at Spalding schools is compared with national, state, and district averages where *The Writing Road to Reading* is used as a primary reading program.

In order to qualify as a Spalding School, the language arts staff must have completed 90 hours of instruction within Spalding's Professional Development Program (SPDP). This course meets the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) as a high quality professional development experience rather than a one-day or short-term workshop. In addition, each grade level must have at least one Spalding Certified Teacher.

## About the Results...

- During the 2002-04 academic years, Spalding Schools outperformed local district and state scores by significant margins (roughly 16 percentile points or approximately 30% better than their local district counterparts). Three Spalding Schools were the top performing of the state's 1130 public and charter schools.



## About the Study...

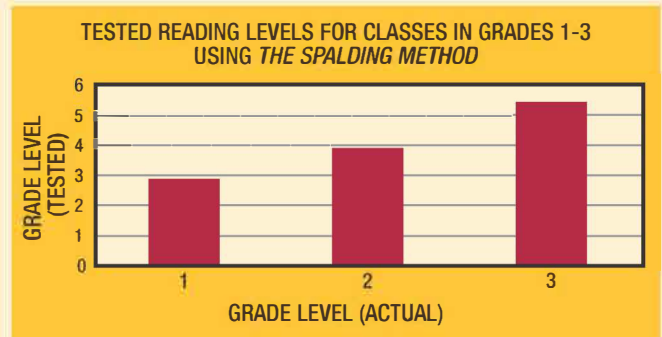
2. In his text *Approaches to Beginning Reading* (1984), Dr. Robert Aukerman validated *The Spalding Method*. He investigated and described over 100 different approaches to beginning reading. Aukerman devoted ten pages to *The Spalding Method*, citing national test scores from Spalding schools in twelve states. He stated:

*“A rather significant and up to date body of data has been assembled showing the indisputable success that many schools are enjoying with The Spalding Method. ... The data cover scores on standardized achievement tests in reading reported by the schools for children of a wide range of backgrounds and intelligence. **Moreover, they are from a representative sampling of small and large schools, public, parochial, and private (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, New Hampshire, Texas, and Virginia.** It should be noted, also, that the class sizes range all the way from a small class of only eight students to the large classes of 50 or more. In all, 20 schools of varied types and localities are represented with more than 120 different teachers. (Aukerman 1984, 541). The Spalding Method was observed in several Honolulu schools in 1967 and again in 1982. In January, for example, in a first grade class the children were reading at an almost unbelievable level of comprehension, voice inflection, and knowledge of word attack.*

*Scores that are consistently far beyond the national norms and testimonials of gains made by illiterate adults, new arrivals from the rim of the Pacific, learning disabled children, and others who had not previously learned to read in regular classrooms using standard means should be proof enough of the effectiveness of *The Writing Road to Reading*.” (Aukerman, 1984, 545-546).*

## About the Results...

- The average grade level score of the 13 first grades in his sample was 2.95; of the 14 second grades, 3.99; and of the 10 third grades 5.41.



## About the Study...

3. Two longitudinal studies involving *The Spalding Method* were reported in Clinical Studies of Multi-sensory Structured Language Education for Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders. The first set of findings evaluated the effects of Spalding language arts instruction on special education students in a resource room setting in the **El Paso (TX) Independent School District**. The primary purpose of this longitudinal study was to quantify students' growth using *The Spalding Method*. During the third year, over 500 boys and girls in grades one through eight who met the Texas Education Agency eligibility criteria for a handicapping condition were studied.

The second study cited involved a seven-year longitudinal investigation of the use of *The Spalding Method* with the entire special education population at **Middletown (DE) High School** to determine whether high school is too late to improve the literacy skills of low-performing students.

## About the Results...

- In both studies, students made statistically significant gains in reading, writing, and spelling as assessed by the Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, a written composition, and the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale (North 1995).
- Statistical analysis of pre- and post- achievement test scores for 111 Middletown High School students demonstrated significant improvements in word recognition, passage comprehension, and spelling (0.0001 level). Convincing evidence was found that, with appropriate instruction, literacy skills of most special education students can be improved even in high school (Hoerl and Koons 1995).



## About the Study...

4. **The Peoria (AZ) Unified School District**, which in the early 1980s was experiencing standardized achievement test scores at or below 50 percentile rank, designed a pilot study to compare the effectiveness of *The Spalding Method* with the district's adopted program. Kindergarten through third-grade classes were matched in five schools: one high, two middle, and two Title 1 schools. Mrs. Spalding trained the 20 pilot teachers.

The pilot project was extended into grades 4 through 8 as a spelling program in 1986. Matched-classes compared Spalding with a commercial spelling program.

## About the Results...

- By the end of the 1985-86 pilot year, Peoria Spalding class percentile rank scores for reading comprehension ranged from the upper 80s to the high 90s on the state-adopted norm-reference high stakes test (ITBS). Scores for the control classes remained at or below 50 percentile rank. The district's Governing Board adopted Spalding for kindergarten through third-grade in 1986. A decline in learning disability resource room populations was noted after classroom instruction incorporated *The Spalding Method*.
- After the pilot's extension, spelling scores for grades 4 through 8, measured on the ITBS in April of the 1987-1988 pilot year, demonstrated that Spalding-trained students had a five percentile rank advantage over non-Spalding trained students. Statistical analysis was done by a researcher at Arizona State University. The Governing Board subsequently adopted Spalding for spelling in Grades four through eight in 1988 (Peoria's achievement test scores for the period 1986 to 1991 are available at the SEI office). Results of this and other pilot studies were reported in the *Annals of Dyslexia* (North 1991) published by the Orton Dyslexia Society (now International Dyslexia Association), a peer-reviewed journal.



## About the Study...

5. **The Gallego School in Tucson, Arizona** has been a “Spalding school” since 1983. Almost 90% of the students at the school are minorities and over 60% receive free or reduced-price lunch. The program was organized there by court order after a group of parents requested the implementation of a phonics-based program to help their children learn to speak and read English. The *Tucson Citizen* reported that a majority of these students could not speak, write, or read English at the beginning of first grade.
6. Spalding has also been shown to be effective with at-risk students in a quasi- experimental study conducted by the **Tasmanian Office of Education (Australia)** in 1999 at the Youngtown Primary School with a population of at-risk students in grades 1 and 2 (including those suffering from ADD and dyslexia).

## About the Results...

- After five months of Spalding instruction during the program’s inception year, first grade students were reading at the 3.9 grade level. Grade 3 reading proficiency in this predominately disadvantaged school continues to be observed in the 80-85 percentile range as measured on the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS).
- Students showed significant progress on three assessments: In eight teaching months, grade 1 students made 12 months, 14 months, and 16 months progress on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Test, Wadding Bray, and South Australian Spelling Test, respectively. Grade 2 progress in eight teaching months was measured at 14, 10, and 19 months on these assessments.

