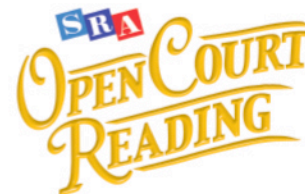




About the District:		About the Students:	
Grades:	PreK-12	African American:	81%
Number of Students:	37,000	Caucasian:	16%
Test(s):	MAP	Hispanic:	2%
Reduced Price Lunch:	84%	Asian:	2%
		Other:	-
		ELL	7%

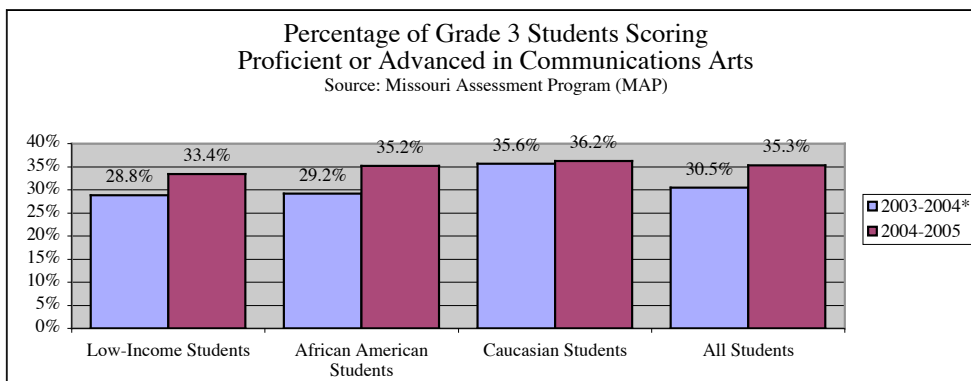


## St. Louis Schools Close Achievement Gap with Open Court Reading

Educators in the St. Louis Public Schools are watching the achievement gap close among African American and low-income students now that SRA/McGraw-Hill's *Open Court Reading* is in place.

Former Chief Academic Officer Dr. Lynn Spampinato said the most critical issue on the table for urban education is to advance academic achievement for all students.

"Our focus is on all, which means we must reduce the achievement gap among subgroups of students," she said. "We feel our 2005 scores demonstrate we're at the beginning of the end of the gap."



Spampinato said, before *Open Court Reading* began, St. Louis Schools did not have a systematic reading program district-wide. Educators searched for a program that provided continuity so students moving from one school to another could bring their materials with them and never miss a beat.

"*Open Court Reading* is what we needed because it provides consistency across schools," she said. "It focuses heavily on phonemic awareness, which is critical to language development, and is helping our subgroups of children attain proficiency."

District educators adopted *Open Court Reading* on Nov. 1, 2004, in Grades Pre-K-5. At-risk students also use an additional SRA program called *Kaleidoscope* for intervention. Throughout the adoption, teachers have participated in intense professional development.



“The most critical aspect of implementing a new program is staff development,” Spampinato said. “The trainers have worked with all elementary teachers using the program and also conducted a two-week session with 70 literacy coaches, who are now in our elementary schools.”

Spampinato routinely receives e-mails from teachers throughout the district asking her to visit their classrooms to see the progress they are making with *Open Court Reading*.

“When I observed a third grade class at Mark Twain Elementary School, I watched the students read with complete ease. Their teacher’s enthusiasm for the program certainly had transferred to the children,” she said.

#### **About St. Louis Public Schools**

Serving more than 37,000 students in Grades Pre-K–12, this district’s student population is 81% African American, 16% Caucasian, 2% Hispanic, and 1% Asian. Eighty-four percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-prices lunches, and 7% are English Language Learners. For more information about St. Louis Public Schools, visit [www.slps.org](http://www.slps.org).

#### **For More Information**

If you would like to learn more about success with *Open Court Reading* in your school or district, please contact us today at **1-888-SRA-4543**.