

Breakthrough Results in Third-Grade Literacy

In SY24, third-graders in Birmingham City Schools (AL) defied the odds and rose to a level of post-pandemic recovery rarely seen, with **81% scoring on or above grade level** in reading on the 2024 state exam (Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program, or ACAP), **up from 53% the year before.**

These gains were crucial for the third grade students of Birmingham City Schools (BCS). Per the Alabama Literacy Act passed by the state of Alabama in 2019, beginning in SY2024, students not reading at grade level by the end of the third grade could not be promoted to fourth grade.

How did BCS third-graders achieve these remarkable results?

Superintendent Mark Sullivan, determined to address third-grade literacy, partnered with District Management Group to implement a rapid-cycle intervention program called Breakthrough Results (BTR) across all BCS' 28 elementary schools.

BCS implemented an 8-week cycle of the Breakthrough Results program in the fall focused on comprehension and another 8-week cycle in the spring focused on fluency. The results of these two cycles on third-grade reading scores at BCS were astounding!

What participants said:



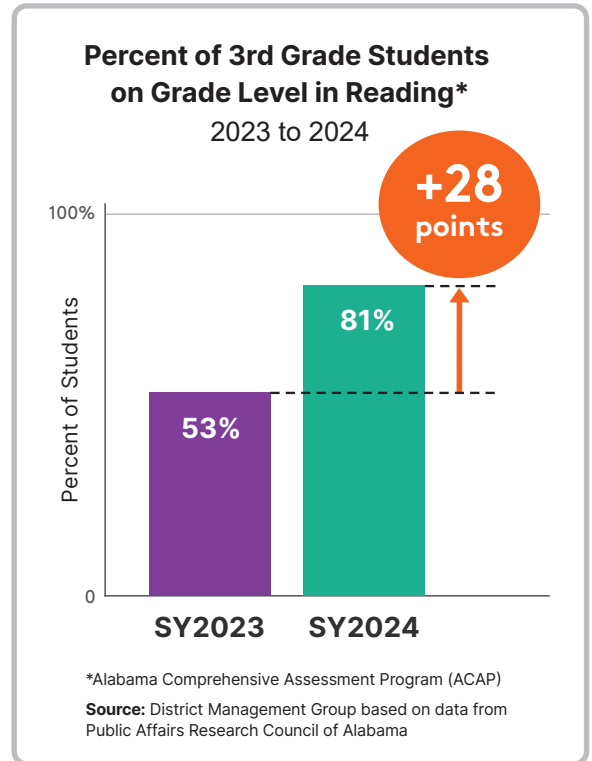
*I used to have a hard time with reading, but **my teacher helped me get better each day by working with me.***

– Luis, 3rd grader



*Our Performance Coach was "spot on" about **using best practices in our daily lessons with the students, providing encouragement throughout the process, and allowing the data to guide the next steps in our teaching and learning.***

– BTR School Team Lead



“Among large systems, Birmingham City Schools was the top in percentage point improvement, cutting the percentage of its students reading below grade level in half.”

– Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama

District Management Group's

Breakthrough Results Program

Proven to deliver measurable results
for students while building
staff capacity



"Successful change programs begin with results"* is the rallying call. A unique combination of focused goals, actionable data, short-cycle iterations, just-in-time professional development, and performance coaching delivers measurable improvements for students while building teacher and staff capacity.

It's All About Results

Based on Improvement Science and Continuous Improvement approaches, District Management Group's Breakthrough Results Program features:

- **Highly Specific Goal** that keeps a laser focus on results
- **Short Cycle** of 8-10 weeks to achieve the goal
- **Actionable Data** from DMG Data Analysis Team provides progress monitoring via a simple-to-use data dashboard
- **Dedicated Performance Coach** meeting weekly with teams to discuss data, support and coach rapid action iteration and innovation, and foster cross-functional collaboration
- **Professional Development and Coaching** provided on a just-in-time basis builds leadership capacity that lasts
- **Team Approach** to foster cross-functional collaboration within teams. Launching multiple teams simultaneously allows for shared learning and creates a healthy combination of collaboration and competition

Break Through and Get Results

