

Ridgeroad Middle Charter School

North Little Rock, Arkansas
2006–2010

Arkansas

Ridgeroad Middle Charter School (RRMCS) presented its original charter in November 2002 and was approved by the state in February 2003. RRMCS currently serves 455 students in grades 7–8, 90% of whom receive free/reduced lunch.

RRMCS utilizes aha! Process and the philosophies of Dr. Ruby Payne to help transform instructional practice through intensive professional development. RRMCS has partnered with aha! Process (focused on the principles of Ruby Payne) since its inception in 2003–2004 and continues to have a strong commitment to the processes of this work, as evidenced by the continued planned partnership with aha! Process outlined in its 2009–2010 charter renewal application. Over the years of the charter, aha! Process training and technical assistance has decreased, but the model has been sustained as the teachers have adopted the strategies and implemented them in their classrooms.

At the onset of the implementation, all teachers were trained in Ruby Payne's A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Learning Structures, and Meeting Standards and Raising Test Scores. Training was also provided on middle school concepts. Following these sessions, technical assistance sessions were provided. In addition, 14 days of leadership training and support were provided.

Over the first three years (2003–2004, 2004–2005, and 2005–2006), eight days of technical assistance were provided per subject area in English/language arts, math, science, and social studies per year. (Note: In 2004–2005 math technical assistance was seven days instead of eight). Non-core subject area teachers received four days of technical assistance in the first year.

Dr. William W. Swan conducted extensive analyses on the impact of aha! Process on RRMCS from 2003–2006. His findings indicate a significant increase in literacy achievement in 2003–2004, a positive impact on literacy and math achievement in 2004–2005, and a significant increase in student achievement in literacy and math compared to traditional approaches in 2005–2006.

Following Dr. Swan's analyses, technical assistance decreased as the strategies became embedded in instructional practice in the classrooms. From 2006–2010 each subject area received a minimum of two days of technical support and a maximum of five days of technical support, typically averaging three days of support per subject each year. Model fidelity continued to be assessed through 2008 as measured by the Instructional Framework Scale – Observation and consistently indicated high fidelity, achieving a score of 50% or higher.

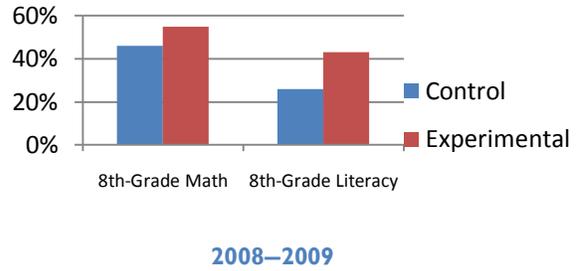
Moving forward, RRMCS will utilize aha! Process to provide intensive professional development in the areas of curriculum development, reading strategies, writing strategies, classroom management, and differentiated instruction to develop literacy in social studies. Emphasis will also be placed to target the academic achievement of the African American male population and special education. In addition aha! Process will support leadership training on the processes of the School Improvement Model for low-performing schools. aha! Process consultants will train building administration and support teachers in monitoring implementation of these processes.

aha Process/Ruby Payne's Principles	
Principle	Ridgeroad Story
Finances do not have to define a student.	Despite the fact that 90% of the students at RRMCS receive free/reduced lunch, students are experiencing success as a result of the aha! Process strategies and core beliefs that are central to the mission and charter of this school.
Relationships are fundamental for student success.	Student relationships with teachers have been improved as teacher mobility has been reduced dramatically, providing students with consistency and reliability from the teaching faculty at RRMCS.
Students need hope/future story .	As students experience continued academic success, they begin to see the world with new possibilities for themselves. This change in belief will guide the students of RRMCS to future achievements beyond their success in middle school.

Ridgeroad Program Results										
<p>Achievement gains over time in literacy by seventh- and eighth-grade students</p> <p>Seventh- and eighth-grade students at RRMCS realized increases of 8% and 5% respectively in literacy from 2007–2009 when comparing annual high-stakes test results as measured by the Augmented Benchmark Exam (ABE).</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Literacy Gains by Grade</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>2006–2007</th> <th>2008–2009</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7th Grade</td> <td>~28%</td> <td>~36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8th Grade</td> <td>~48%</td> <td>~53%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Grade	2006–2007	2008–2009	7th Grade	~28%	~36%	8th Grade	~48%	~53%
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<p>Seventh- and eighth-grade students demonstrate gains in mathematics over time</p> <p>Seventh- and eighth-grade students at RRMCS realized increases of 14% and 13% respectively in mathematics from 2007–2009 when comparing annual high-stakes test results as measured by the ABE. Twenty-eight percent of seventh-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the ABE in 2007, compared with 42% in 2009. Similarly, eighth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased from 30% to 43% in the same time period.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Mathematics Gains by Grade</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>2006–2007</th> <th>2008–2009</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7th Grade</td> <td>~28%</td> <td>~42%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8th Grade</td> <td>~30%</td> <td>~43%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Grade	2006–2007	2008–2009	7th Grade	~28%	~42%	8th Grade	~30%	~43%
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<p>Ridgeroad seventh-grade students outperform control group in literacy and math</p> <p>The percentage of seventh-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the ABE at RRMCS was 7% higher than the control group in mathematics and 14% higher than the control group in literacy.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Comparison with Control Group (2008–2009)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Subject</th> <th>Control</th> <th>Experimental (RRMCS)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7th-Grade Math</td> <td>~28%</td> <td>~35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7th-Grade Literacy</td> <td>~21%</td> <td>~35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Subject	Control	Experimental (RRMCS)	7th-Grade Math	~28%	~35%	7th-Grade Literacy	~21%	~35%
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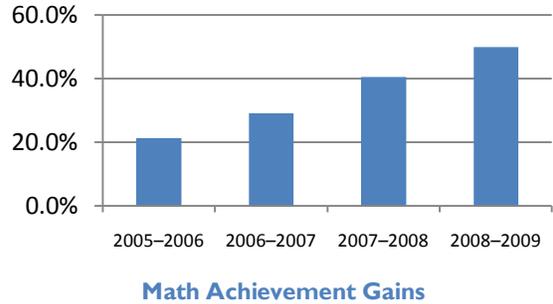
Eighth-grade students at Ridgeroad outperform control group in literacy and math

The percentage of eighth-grade students at RRMCS scoring Proficient or Advanced was 17% higher in literacy and 9% higher in math than a control group when comparing annual high-stakes test results as measured by the 2008–2009 ABE.



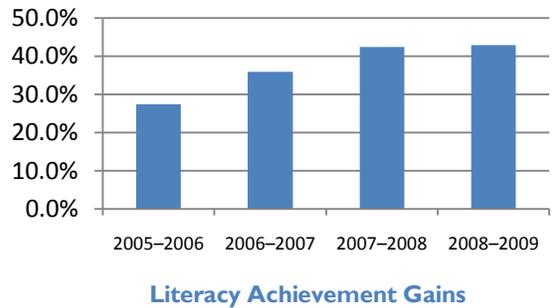
Economically disadvantaged students display academic gains in math over time

Economically disadvantaged students steadily increase performance in mathematics over time, increasing 28.5%, from 21.4% in 2005–2006 to 49.9% in 2008–2009.



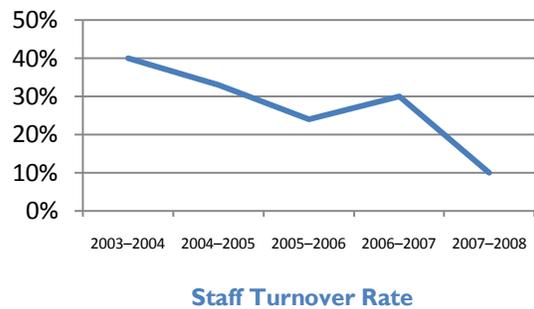
Economically disadvantaged students display literacy gains over time

Economically disadvantaged students steadily increase performance in literacy over time, increasing 15.5%, from 27.4% in 2005–2006 to 42.9% in 2008–2009.



Teacher mobility decreased as a result of aha! Process strategies

Successful implementation of the aha! Process model has decreased staff mobility at RRMCS from 40% in 2003–2004 to 10% in 2007–2008.



Report Findings

Using aha! Process elements as their foundation, RRMCS has increased achievement over time and is outperforming a control group in literacy and math.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students at RRMCS have demonstrated literacy and mathematics gains over time. Data illustrated in this report find that seventh-grade students realized gains of 8% in literacy and 14% in math between 2005–2006 and 2008–2009. RRMCS eighth-graders realized gains of 5% and 13% respectively in literacy and math during the same time span.

Furthermore, these students outperformed control group students at a school with similar demographics. Seventh-graders outperformed their control group counterparts by 7% and 14% respectively in literacy and math, while eighth-graders outperformed the control group by 17% in literacy and 9% in math according to the 2008–2009 test scores reported for the ABE.

When looking collectively at the seventh- and eighth-grade students eligible for free/reduced lunch, these students show consistent gains over time, increasing achievement in literacy by 15.5% and in mathematics by 28.5% according to a comparison of 2005–2006 test results with those reported in 2008–2009.

Finally, an impact on overall school climate can be seen in the reduction of teacher turnaround from 40% in 2003–2004 to 10% in 2007–2008. Teacher mobility was cited by RRMCS as a barrier to student success. As a result of the partnership between RRMCS and aha! Process, this barrier has been dramatically reduced.

Research Profile

School Profile	455 Students, Grades 7–8 90% Free/Reduced Lunch 9% White 82% African American 8% Hispanic 0% Asian American 0% Native American 5% Limited English Proficient 14% Special Education 9% Gifted/Talented
Research Instruments	State Test Data – ABE Implementation Report Data Testimonials
Timeframe	2006–2010

Validity Review

An external review was conducted through the University of Georgia, led by C. Thomas Holmes, to validate the results of the RRMCS findings from the 2003–2004, 2004–2005, and 2005–2006 school year reports by Dr. William W. Swan. This review revealed the following findings:

- The quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test design with analysis of covariance is an appropriate and sound design.
- The numerical results are well summarized with attention to sample size, adjusted means, direction of difference, statistical outcomes, and probability levels associated with the calculated statistics.
- The reports were controlled for previous years' performance.
- There was assessment for model fidelity.
- Dr. William W. Swan's conclusions followed directly from the obtained results.

Building on this powerful foundation, RRMCS has continued to implement aha! Process strategies with high fidelity. Data indicate that aha! Process strategies continue to have a positive impact on the student achievement of economically disadvantaged students, as evidenced by scores on the ABE in literacy and math, as well as on school climate, as evidenced by the reduction of teacher turnover.

Selected Testimonials

"Time, patience, consistency with strategies, the structure of our school day, and our continuous working relationship with aha! Process have taken us to higher heights."
–Lenisha Broadway, Principal, RRMCS

"The School Improvement Model has affected achievement here ... Every year I've had students that have improved in literacy. Last year, out of 110 of my students, 75 of them improved their scores. I've had students who were scoring below Basic and moved up to Proficient, and that's a large gain. And I feel it's because of the strategies that we use and the building of the relationships that we've used through Dr. Payne's philosophies."
–Arclista Story, RRMCS Language Arts Teacher

Supporting Evidence

2003–2004 Report by Dr. William W. Swan:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/Report_Arkansas_2003-2004.pdf

2004–2005 Report by Dr. William W. Swan:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/Report_Arkansas_2004-2005.pdf

2005–2006 Report by Dr. William W. Swan:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/Report_Arkansas_2005-2006.pdf

External Review by C. Thomas Holmes:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/ExternalReviewRevised.pdf

DataSpeaks Report #1:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/DataSpeaks01.pdf

DataSpeaks Report #14:

http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/DataSpeaks14.pdf