

Alta Vista Elementary School; Sarasota, FL

About the School:

Grades: PreK-5
Number of Students: 723
Test(s): FCAT
Reduced Price Lunch: 76%

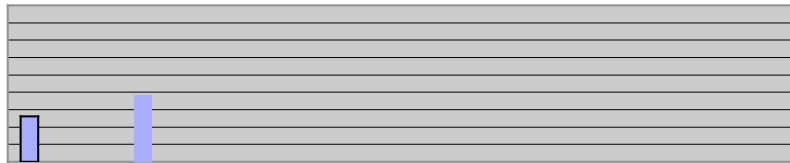
About the Students:

African American: 26%
Caucasian: 32%
Hispanic: 34%
Native American: 7%
Other: 1%
ELL: 32%

Florida School Moves from D Grade to A With Reading Mastery

When Alta Vista Elementary School received a D grade from the state of Florida in 1999, educators decided to implement a new core reading program – SRA/McGraw-Hill’s *Reading Mastery* – in Grades K–5 to close the achievement gap and raise the school’s grade.

The approach worked. By 2006, 69% of students in Grades 3–5 read proficiently – up from 51% before *Reading Mastery* was fully implemented. The achievement gap also is beginning to close. The school has received an A since 2004 and met all guidelines for *No Child Left Behind* for the first time in 2006.



Principal Constance White-Davis said Alta Vista Elementary School was the only Reading First school in Sarasota County to receive an A from the state of Florida in 2006. In addition, 77% of the bottom quartile of students made learning gains in reading on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) in 2005 and 2006. This was the highest gain among all elementary schools in the district in 2006.

“As a result of hard work, determination, and unrelenting focus on high achievement for all children, we reached our goal of being an A school, proving that the achievement gap can be closed and every child can learn,” she said.

White-Davis said Alta Vista Elementary School is a Reading First school, and *Reading Mastery* is aligned perfectly with that program.

“*Reading Mastery* empowers our teachers to use direct, systematic, and explicit instruction,” she said. “They work in small groups, monitor students during independent reading, and maintain academic focus. The Direct Instruction approach has catapulted students’ reading achievement.”

In addition to improved reading achievement, students have improved greatly in math, too.

“Ninety-three percent of students in the lowest quartile of math made learning gains on the FCAT in 2006,” she said. “This was the highest gain in the district. *Reading Mastery* has definitely had a great impact on academic performance across subjects.”

About Alta Vista Elementary School

Serving approximately 723 students in Grades Pre-K–5, this Title I school’s student population is 34% Hispanic, 32% Caucasian, 26% African American, 7% Native American, and 1% multicultural. Seventy-six percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 32% are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and 34% partake in Exceptional Student Education (ESE). For more information, visit www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/av.

For More Information

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