

### **Third Party i3 Evaluation of Success for All Shows Positive Outcomes in First Year**

Baltimore, Maryland – A study conducted by MDRC, a nonprofit and nonpartisan research organization, concluded that the Success for All (SFA) elementary literacy model had positive reading outcomes for students in the first year of implementation of its Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) grant. The study was conducted in 37 high-poverty schools throughout the U.S., with 19 assigned at random to use SFA and 18 to serve as a control group. This first report focuses on kindergartners, who will be followed through second grade.

The report concludes that kindergartners in SFA gained more than control kindergartners on the Woodcock Word Attack scale, a measure of phonics. There were no differences on a measure of letter-word identification. Outcomes were similar for all categories of children, including poor and non-poor children, African-American, White, and Hispanic children.

Observations and interviews found that although many teachers had difficulties at first, the great majority were implementing the program well by the end of the year, and there were clear differences between SFA and control teachers in use of such methods as cooperative learning and teaching of comprehension.

“We are delighted to see these results,” said Nancy Madden, Success for All Foundation’s CEO. “There are still two more years to go, but based on our experience the outcomes will keep getting better with each additional year.”

“i3 is hugely important in promoting development and rigorous evaluation of a wide variety of programs, and scaling up those that have been proven to work,” said Robert Slavin, Chairman of Success for All Foundation. “I hope the promising outcomes for SFA will also be found for many other i3 programs, to build up the shelf of programs from which schools can choose with confidence.”

Success for All was first developed in 1987 by Madden and Slavin, both researchers at Johns Hopkins University. The program provides extensive professional development to all teachers in methods such as cooperative learning, classroom management, frequent assessment and feedback, use of data to guide instruction, strategies for English learners, and family support. It also uses a response-to-intervention approach, including individual and small-group tutoring for struggling readers. In recent years, the program has added embedded multimedia elements to enrich lessons, add motivation, and model learning strategies.

In 2010, Success for All Foundation (SFAF) was awarded a \$49 million Investing in Innovation (i3) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to expand its comprehensive school improvement program. The \$650 million Investing in Innovation program, which is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, supports efforts to start or expand research-based innovative programs that help close the achievement gap and improve outcomes for high-needs students. SFAF was one of nearly 1,700 applicants to apply for the competition in its first year and one of just 4 to win a nearly \$50 million scale-up grant, the highest award available. SFAF had the highest-rated application of all scale-up proposals.

To help meet the mandatory 20 percent match required by the Department of Education, SFAF received financial support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the

Bowland Charitable Trust, Rural Schools and Community Trust, First Book, Pitney Bowes Management Services, HBP Inc., and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

SFAF is using the i3 grant money to reduce first-year costs of SFA to schools by offering \$50,000 grants to Title I school-wide projects. It also created local coaching support centers in high-poverty districts and improved the availability of high-quality coaching for SFA. Grant funds were used by SFAF to commission MDRC to carry out a large third-party, cluster randomized evaluation of SFA in high-poverty schools. The report released yesterday discusses MDRC's findings at the end of the first year of implementation. Reports will also be done at the end of the second and third years.

The full report by MDRC can be found

at [http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/The\\_Success\\_for\\_All\\_Model\\_FR\\_0.pdf](http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/The_Success_for_All_Model_FR_0.pdf).