

Preliminary Report on Quincy Schools and the 7 Habits

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A. Student Performance and the 7 Habits

We first wanted to know what impact, if any, the 7 Habits would have on student performance in reading and math. We also knew that some schools had more fully implemented the 7 Habits than others. So, based on the opinion of those who had brought the 7 Habits to Quincy, we divided the schools into two categories: full implementation and moderate implementation. Four schools were “full implementers,” and four were “moderate implementers” as follows:

Adams	Full
Dewey	Full
Madison	Full
Washingtc	Full
Berrian	Moderate
Ellington	Moderate
Irving	Moderate
Monroe	Moderate

We then tracked the schools’ performances for the 6 years before the 7 Habits and then for the 2 years since the 7 Habits. We found that in Reading Performance, the average percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Illinois State standard varied by level of 7 Habits implementation, as follows:

For those schools who “fully” implemented the 7 Habits in 2007 and 2008, the six previous years yielded an average of 69.63% of students meeting or exceeding standards. But in the two years after fully implementation, the average jumped to 84.87%, a 15.23 point improvement in the averages.

“Moderate” implementers also showed improvement but the improvement was insignificant statistically: a 4.89 point change after moderate implementation, from 66.98 before to 71.87 after 7 Habits.

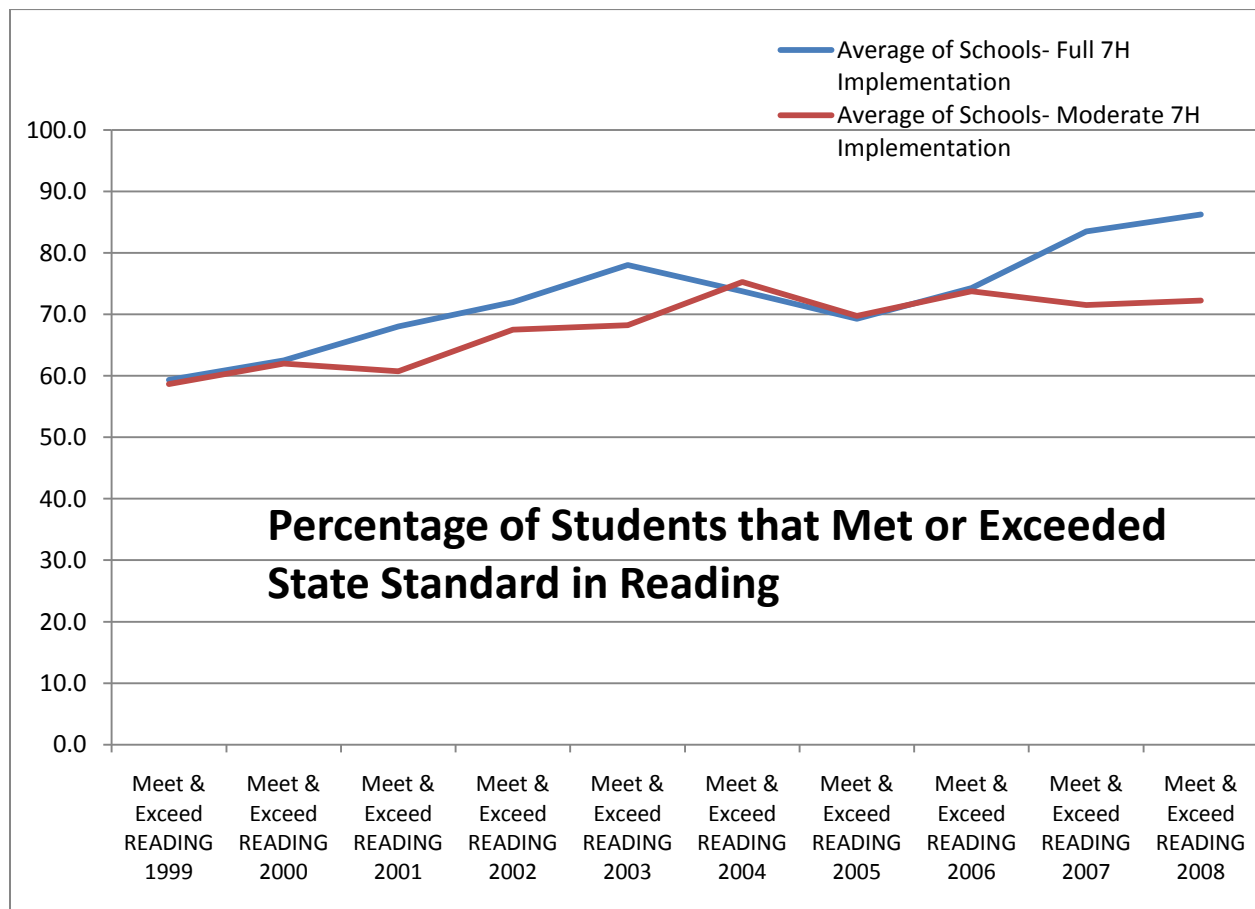
Thus, we learn that a moderate implementation of the 7 Habits has very little impact on student performance, but a full implementation has pronounced and significant (0.05) impact on student performance in reading.

We also found that the Reading “exceed” category in all schools did not improve as much as the “meet” category, suggesting that the 7 Habits biggest impact comes from “moving the middle,” or in other words, the large pool of average students benefitted significantly. This is not to say that the “exceed”

category was unaffected by the 7 Habits, for the “exceed” category reached its highest percentage in 9 years on the first year that the 7 Habits was introduced in the full implementation schools: 32%. By contrast, the moderate implementers actually declined that year to just over 20%.

Figure 1 shows reading performance of full and moderate implementers over a 9 year period. Notice that once the 7 Habits were introduced (the 2007 and 2008 years), the gap in performance widened considerably, with full implementers performing considerably better than their counter group.

Fig. 1
 Impact of Full and Moderate Implementation
 Of the 7 Habits on Reading Performance
 Blue Line = Full Implementers
 Red Line = Moderate Implementers



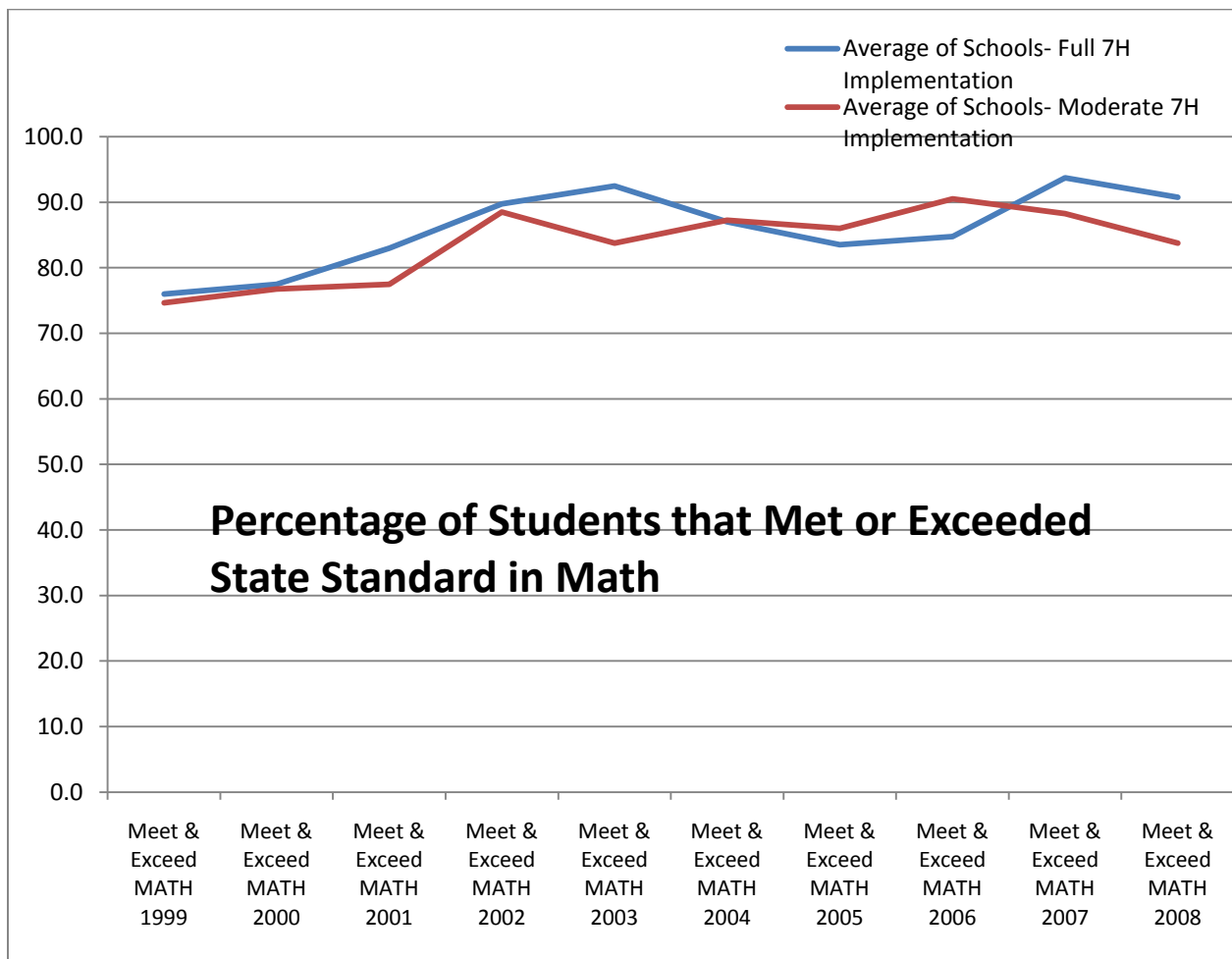
We wanted to know if the same results would apply to Math Performance. We found the movement of average scores to be in the expected direction of improvement after 7 Habits, but the changes in Math scores were not as pronounced. Moderate implementers had an average of 83.13% meeting and

exceeding the math standard before 7 Habits and 86.05% doing so after moderate implementation—an improvement of 2.92 points, and one which could have happened by chance.

Full implementers had 84.26% meeting or exceeding in the 6 years before full implementation, and 92.3% doing so for the 2 years after full implementation. Again this was statistically significant (0.05) movement in the right direction and with an improvement of only 8.04. Yet the trend for both groups seemed to be downward, which was a surprise. The 2009 results may alter this apparent trend. Figure 2 illustrates the math results:

Fig. 2

Impact of Full and Moderate Implementation
Of the 7 Habits on Math Performance
Blue Line = Full Implementers
Red Line = Moderate Implementers



We also wanted to know if the 7 Habits—at either full or moderate implementation—had any impact on student behavior, that is, disciplinary referrals. The average number of disciplinary referrals for full 7 Habits implementers was lower than for moderate implementers, but the difference was not great enough to be significant. That may, indeed, be the case, or it could be that our discipline numbers are not accurate. We were warned by several people not to place too much trust in discipline numbers as a reflection of actual behavior in schools because there is so much variation in teacher and administrator response to student misbehavior. Still, we hope to pursue this matter further.

B. Overall School Environment as Reported by Employees

In addition to student performance, we wanted to know if the 7 Habits had made any difference in certain aspects of the work environment for teachers and others in the schools. The School Level Environment Questionnaire (SLEQ) for 2007 and 2008 was analyzed for 12 schools, again comparing schools that had fully implemented 7 Habits versus those that had only moderately implemented or not implemented at all.

We found important differences, with full implementers reporting statistically significant differences in actual amounts of participation in decision-making.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Implementation</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Averages</i>	<i>Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Actual - Participation in Decision Making	Full	6	23.4	4.3	2.3	Sig @ 0.05
	Moderate	6	19.1		1.6	

We also found that in those schools where 7 Habits had been fully implemented, participation in decision-making increased from 2007 to 2008, as did the preferred level of participation. We found similar results for schools that had moderately implemented the 7 Habits. Thus we believe that 7 Habits has the effect of raising expectations for a larger professional role for teachers and also producing that actual effect. Below is a sample for full implementers:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Time 1-2</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Averages</i>	<i>Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Actual - Participation in Decision Making	1	6	17.2	6.2	1.6	Sig @ 0.05
	2	6	23.4		2.3	
Preferred - Participation in Decision Making	1	6	20.2	6.9	1.7	Sig @ 0.05
	2	6	27.0		1.6	

Staff Freedom and Resource Adequacy also show positive correlations with the 7 Habits, as does the desire among 7 Habits schools for their to be clear statements about the school’s mission and purpose. Other SLEQ categories did not have significant differences in average scores as related to the 7 Habits.

C. Student Perception of Classroom Culture

The My Class Index asks students to report their opinions on certain aspects of their classrooms. Students are asked questions about such aspects as how difficult the schoolwork is, how competitive the classroom culture is, how much friction is in the classroom and so on.

We correlated the student responses with level of 7 Habits implementation. We found statistically significant declines in student reports of friction in the classroom in full implementers versus moderate implementers. We also found that when schools had fully implemented the 7 Habits, the following resulted:

Student satisfaction with school went up significantly;

Students began to desire more cohesiveness in the classroom and less friction;

Students said school was not as difficult as before.

All of the above results were statistically significant for those schools where the 7 Habits had been fully implemented. Below is a sample of the results for one category: student satisfaction with school:

	Implem. Level	# of Schools	Average in 2007	Differences Full vs. Moderate	Std. Deviation	
MCI Actual -Satisfaction	Full	3	12.1	4.1	0.4	Sig @ 0.05
	Moderate	1	8.0		na	

D. Summary

This is a preliminary report, and there are many more aspects of this study we want to explore. But we can say at this moment that the 7 Habits appears to have a positive impact on student performance in reading and math; that it improves the level of participation in decision-making by teachers; and that it improves the classroom climate for students. Many variables could influence or produce these results (change in leadership, change in student population and so on), so we issue this report only tentatively until we have been able to control for the possible influence of these others variables. Yet, it appears to be very likely that the 7 Habits has been a factor in improving performance for students and climate for both teachers and students.