


TO READ OR NOT TO READ— THAT WAS OUR QUESTION

Melodie A. Friedebach
Assistant Commissioner
Missouri Department of
Elementary and
Secondary Education



Missouri Outstanding Schools Act 1993

- What students must know and be able to do
- Standards based reform
- Show Me Standards
- State assessments for district and school accountability
- Accountability for all students

State Assessments

- Phased in beginning in 1995 for:
 - Communication Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Fine Arts
 - Physical Education

QUESTIONS

- How should students with disabilities be assessed in this new world of accountability?
- Should accommodations/modifications be allowed?

Time to Form a Committee

- NCEO – stakeholder group
- Recommendations for accommodations in 4 categories:
 - Time/scheduling
 - Presentation
 - Setting
 - Response format

Reading the Reading Test Rationale

- Impact upon district accreditation
- High stakes environment
- All students are assessed
- Time needed to improve reading instruction for all students
- Decision was controversial – both in and out of the Department

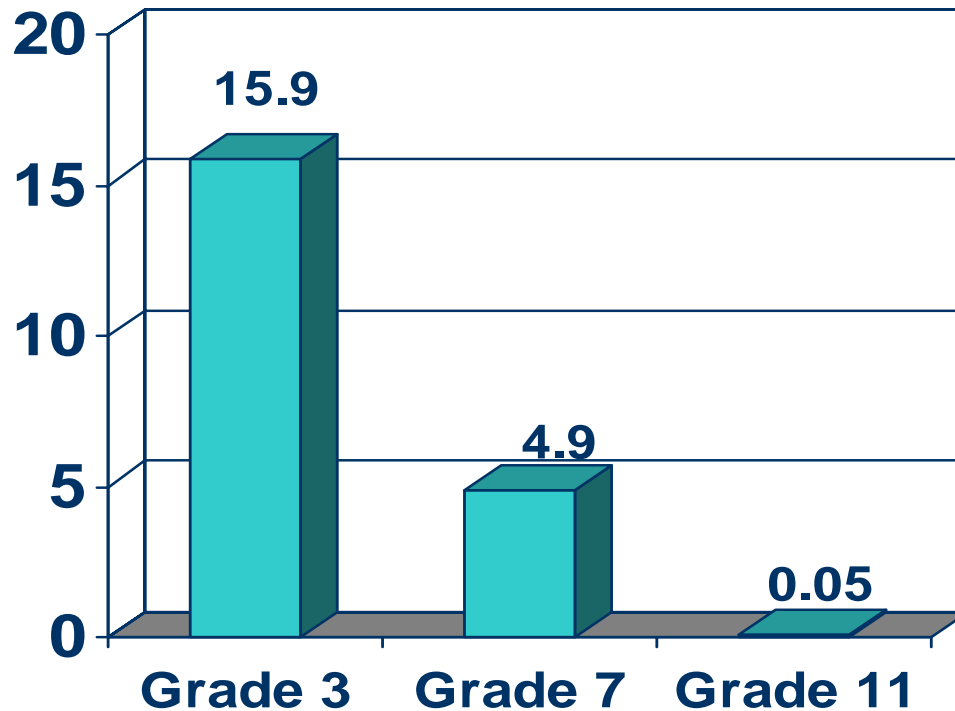
2005-A Review of the Decision

- At grade 3, approximately 50% of students with IEPs that had CA read to them in years 1999-2005
- At grade 7, percent of students with IEPs that had test read to them grew from 50% in 1999, to 60% in 2005

2005-A Review of the Decision (cont.)

- Oral accommodation did not result in significant numbers of children scoring at proficient or above
- Thus, little impact on improving scores for accountability systems

2005-A Review of the Decision (cont.)



■ % Scoring at Proficient and Above Levels with Oral Accommodation

Other Concerns and Considerations

- Advice from Technical Advisory Committee for assessment, to discontinue practice of reading the CA test
- Concern about gaining approval of State Assessment program through the U.S. Department of Education (valid accommodations)
- Concern about lowering expectations for students with IEPs and lack of focus on reading instruction for the students

Other Concerns and Considerations (cont.)

- NAEP and other large scale assessment measures of student achievement do not “count” reading accommodation as a valid accommodation when construct of reading is being assessed

2005 Decision

- Internal review by DESE
- Decision was made to discontinue use of reading the Communication Arts (CA) assessment beginning in Spring 2006
- Oral reading of the CA assessment will invalidate test for accountability purposes. All other assessments may be read to a student.

What's been the fallout?

- Letter writing campaigns from certain districts (usually high rates of use of the oral reading accommodation)
- No public negative comments from professional organizations
- Concern regarding the anxiety and stress created for students who can't read at grade level

What's been the fallout? (cont.)

- Greater interest in professional development regarding reading instruction for primary and middle school students with disabilities
- Expressed interest in the development of additional assessments for 2%

Next Steps

- Continue to invest in professional development focused on reading instruction (Reading First, DIBELS)
- Share impact of Reading First instruction on students with IEPs
- Develop plan for additional assessments for 2% of the students with IEPs