



# ASSESSMENT IN A PLC AT WORK™

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

## Kildeer Countryside Community Consolidated School District 96

BUFFALO GROVE, ILLINOIS

IEP reading scores increased from 62.3 percent in 2003 to 81.8 in 2012. IEP math scores increased from 66.9 percent in 2003 to 87.7 in 2012.



## DEMOGRAPHICS

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- 227 Teachers
- 3,054 Students
- 11.3% Free and reduced lunch
- 10% Limited English proficient
- 13.6% Special education
- 1.3% African American
- 7.7% Hispanic
- 21.2% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 6.4% Other

*Kildeer Countryside Community Consolidated School District 96 is located in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, Illinois.*

## CHALLENGE

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Early in Kildeer's PLC journey, administrators recognized that as a system they did not have clear answers to the four critical questions of a PLC. There was a lack of consistency regarding what students learned, and while assessment existed in the system, it was used to determine student grades, not to inform instructional practice. This realization led to a focus on the four questions as the basis of the district's school improvement processes, and remains the focus today. As Kildeer continues its journey, answers to the four questions get sharper and more refined, leading to higher levels of student achievement.

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## IMPLEMENTATION

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Kildeer's implementation strategies began with the first question: what is it we expect our students to learn? Their work centered around the development of a guaranteed and viable curriculum districtwide. Using state standards, and then later the Common Core Standards, district teams worked to determine the essential standards and learning targets for every content area at every grade level throughout the system. From there, teams developed trimester pacing guides to ensure there was a common instructional focus in all grades for all content areas in the district. The next step was focused on the second question: how will we know when they have learned it? Teacher teams worked together to develop common formative assessments and district

benchmark assessments to measure student progress and establish appropriate instruction, interventions, and extensions. Teacher teams continue to refine and expand this work every year.

"One of the most impactful steps in the system has been scaling targets," Technology Coach Vail Kieser, a former third-grade teacher, says. "This collaborative process allows us to gain a deep understanding of learning targets which ultimately blossoms into addressing the following questions: What can we do if a child doesn't know the target to meet standards? What can we do if a child already knows the target?"

“Access to the deep pool of experts at Solution Tree who push our thinking and build our capacity has been a key ingredient to our continued growth.”

—Superintendent Julie Schmidt

“Many Solution Tree authors and researchers have worked with District 96 throughout this journey, shaping our work and contributing to our progress. Through Solution Tree’s guidance, we believe we have built a premier school district where we strive to ensure that every student achieves, every day in every school.”

—Assistant Superintendent Jeanne Spiller

## RESULTS

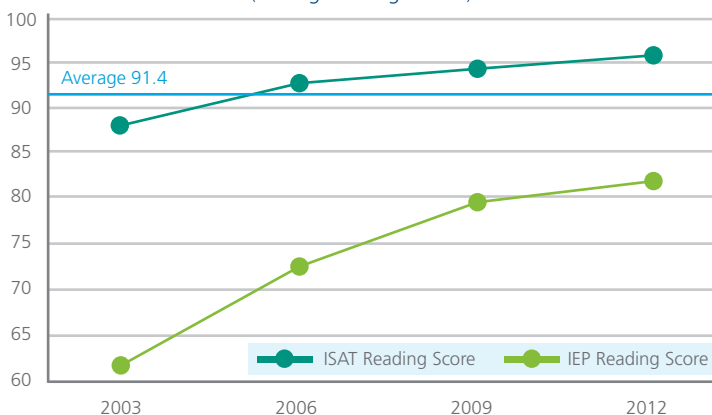
From 2001 through 2012, Kildeer saw a steady rise in districtwide average Illinois Standards Achievement Test scores. For the 2011–12 school year, Kildeer scored 108.1 on the ISAT index compared to the statewide index of 100. Most impressive is the comparison of ISAT indices based on students with Individualized Education Plans. Compared to the statewide score of 89.9, Kildeer achieved an index of 101.5. Across Kildeer, IEP reading scores increased from 62.3 percent in 2003 to 81.8 in 2012. IEP math scores increased from 66.9 percent in 2003 to 87.7 in 2012.

In 2004, Kildeer ranked 54th out of 868 districts in Illinois. Between 2004 and 2012, the district improved its state rank each year, and in 2012, the school ranked 8th in the state. Technology Coach Kieser attributes these increased levels of student achievement to the assessment strategies

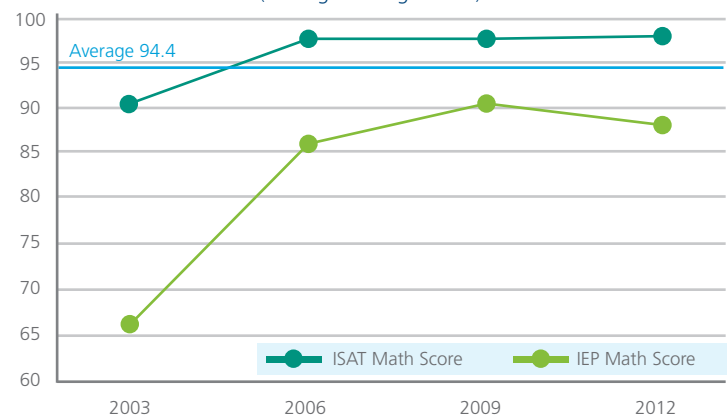
implemented over the last decade: “Assessment in District 96 is one of the most powerful tools we have to promote critical thinking by teachers, set high expectations for all students, and ultimately provide clarity and common language for all who have a stake in developing students’ maximum potential.”

Rethinking the way they assess has provided other benefits, according to Kieser. “Through multiple methods of assessment, we provide check-in points to promote assessment *for* learning versus solely *of* learning. This provides teachers, coaches, and building principals an opportunity to examine current practices, help each other solve problems, and provide the best possible learning opportunities for students. Coming from a classroom position to a coaching role, I understand how deeply our methods of assessment positively benefit learning in our district.”

**District ISAT and IEP Reading Scores 2003–12**  
(Average through 2011)



**District ISAT and IEP Math Scores 2003–12**  
(Average through 2011)



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