GirlSMART

San Rafael California
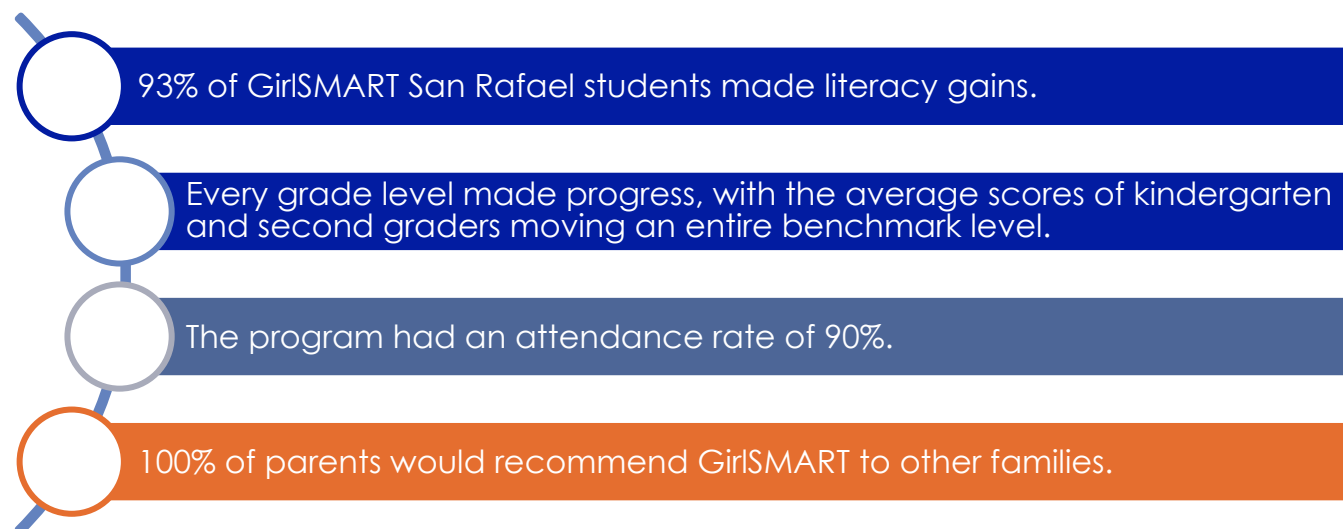
Annual Evaluation Report July 2013

Gia Rauenhorst
Nada Djordjevich
Gibson & Associates
Oakland, CA

Executive Summary

GirlSMART is a national afterschool literacy program designed to improve the reading outcomes of students at risk of falling behind in early literacy skills. Gibson & Associates (G&A), an education research firm, completed this external evaluation of the GirlSMART program in San Rafael, California. During 2012 – 2013, GirlSMART San Rafael served 65 girls in kindergarten through second grade at two sites: Bahia Vista Elementary School and Venetia Valley Elementary School. The program enrolled 100% English Learners from low-income families, subgroups statistically at risk for not becoming proficient readers by the end of third grade. Students attending GirlSMART San Rafael made significant progress in literacy, and the program achieved a high-level of client satisfaction based on survey data.

- 93% of GirlSMART San Rafael students made literacy gains.
- Every grade level made progress, with the average scores of kindergarten and second graders moving an entire benchmark level.
- The program had an attendance rate of 90%.
- 100% of parents would recommend GirlSMART to other families.

Literacy Assessment Measures

GirlSMART students are assessed three times during the year using the nationally normed Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Next battery of assessments. The DIBELS assessments provide indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. DIBELS measures the acquisition of literacy skills over time, providing a composite score benchmark goal based on individual assessments in developmentally appropriate areas. Students who meet the composite goal are considered to be meeting grade-level expectations and are considered at low risk for not meeting future literacy goals. Composite score goals shift upward throughout the year, as literacy expectations are raised.

Literacy Results

Grade Level Progress

The chart below shows average composite scores for all students tested. In Fall 2012, the average scores for both kindergarten and second graders were well-below benchmark. They moved into the next grouping below benchmark by May 2013. In fact, all grades made progress based on average composite score results: kindergarten (12 to 100), first grade (103 to 145), and second grade (98 to 169).
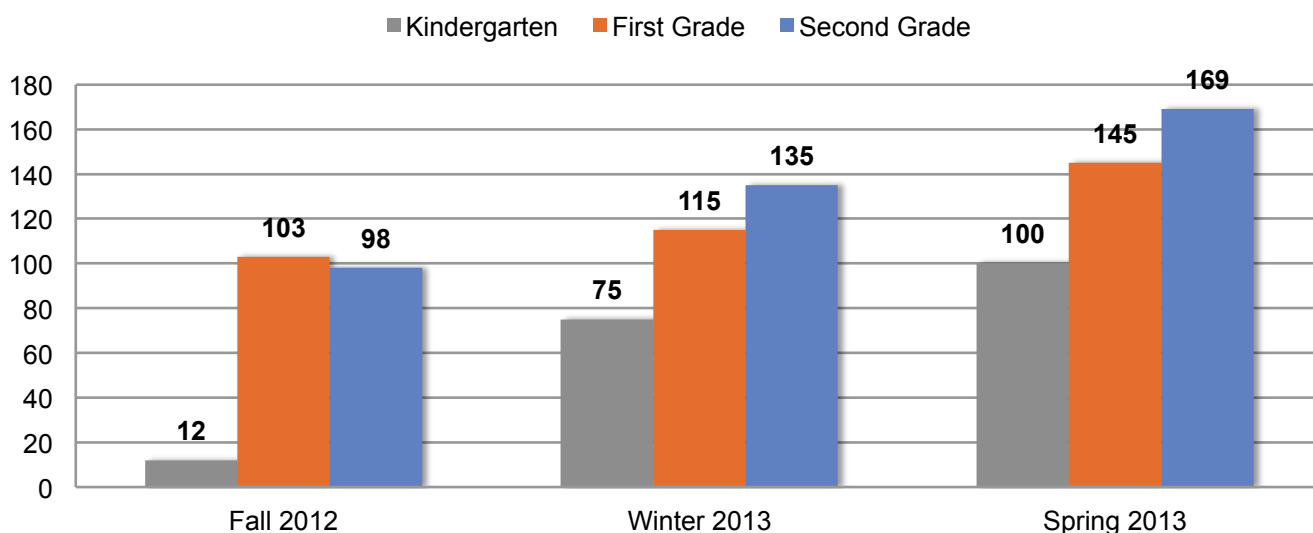
Individual Student Progress

The chart to the right indicates results for all kindergarten to second grade students with matched scores (n = 57). Over 90% made improvements in composite scores and 47% either maintained benchmark expectations or improved by an entire benchmark level.

 It should be noted that the average attendance rate for all students was 93%, a high retention rate throughout the first year of implementation.
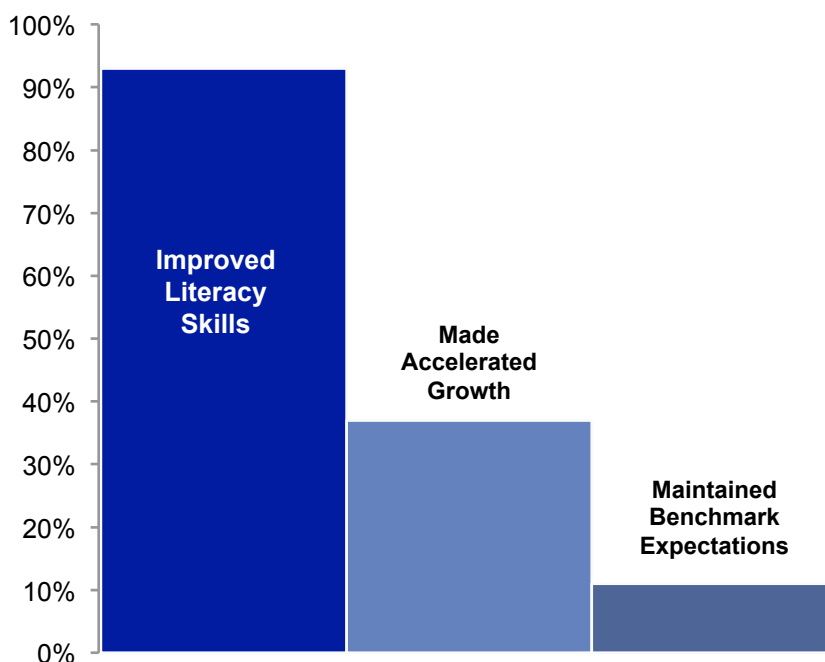
Survey Data

Parents and daytime classroom teachers were surveyed to assess the quality of the GirlSMART program in San Rafael.

"Me gusta que ayuda a mi hija entender mas el ingles y tambien ayudar con su tarea y ayuda a leer y gracias por todo su ayuda."

~Parent Survey Spring 2013

("I like that you help my daughter understand English and help her with homework and reading. Thank you for all your help.")

Parent Survey Results

Parent respondents (n=31) indicated high levels of satisfaction with the program.

I am satisfied with the GirlSMART program.	100%
I would recommend GirlSMART to others.	100%
My daughter continues to become a better reader.	100%

Parents reported on family literacy activities. According to survey data, approximately 40% of all families have ten or fewer children's books at home (including library resources) and bring their daughters to the library only once or twice a year, if at all. GirlSMART helps bridge the gap in home-based learning by providing access to engaging children's literature and promoting a positive attitude toward literacy.

Classroom Teacher Survey Results

Seventeen classroom teachers provided survey data regarding 52 GirlSMART participants. According to teachers, the majority of GirlSMART students displayed positive behaviors and attitudes in class and nearly all students made academic improvements. Students were selected for the program based on need, and teachers indicated that the majority of students were in the lower two-thirds of their class in reading/comprehension and phonics/vocabulary skills.

"I think that the GirlSMART program is a wonderful program for our young girls to be exposed to more literature and language art activities."

~Classroom Teacher Survey Spring 2013

Full survey and literacy assessment results are included in the Appendix.

84% of GirlSMART students showed a positive attitude toward reading during the school day.

96% of GirlSMART students' attitudes toward reading improved during the year, according to classroom teachers.

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